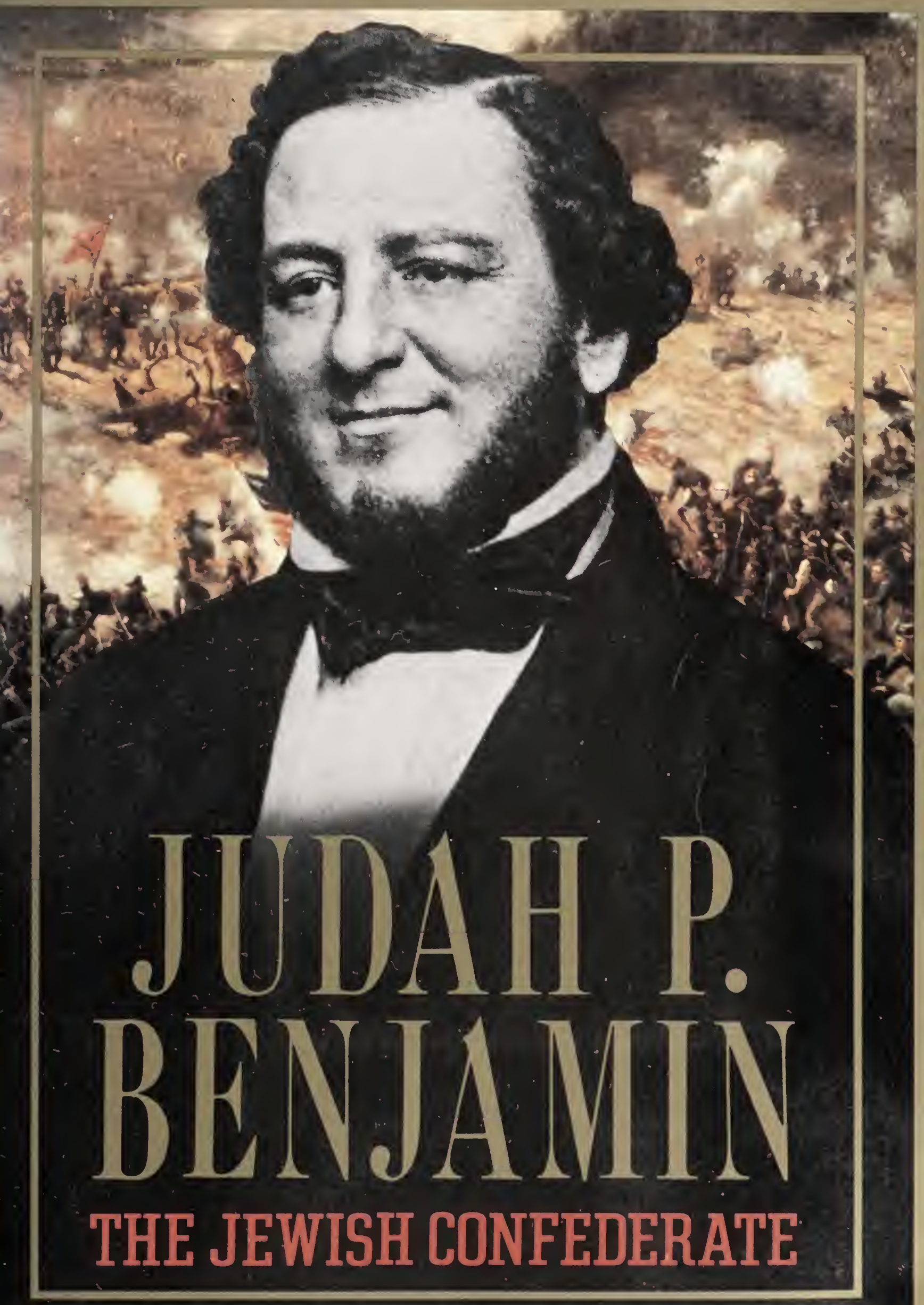
"A very fine and moving book"

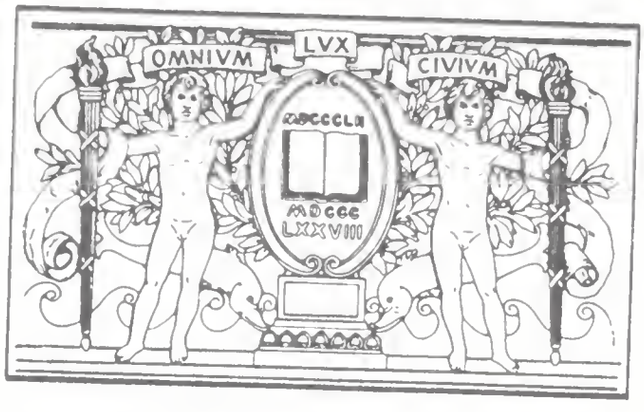
—C. Vann Woodward in *The New York Review of Books*



JUDAH P. BENJAMIN

THE JEWISH CONFEDERATE

ELI N. EVANS



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Judah P. Benjamin

The Jewish Confederate

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". . . Romantic, improbable, and spell-weaving . . . Some of the best history is written by historians with roots deeply planted in the past of which they write. This often means emotional involvement and that can also produce some of the worst history. But if emotions are harnessed not to partisanship or defensiveness but to a passion for understanding and an uncompromising concern for the truth, those dangers can be avoided. Eli Evans has avoided the dangers and gained much from his involvement and emotion. The main part of the past he relates here lies at an anguished juncture in the history of Jews and Southerners. But the past he taps to illuminate that scene, and especially the Jewish role in it, is much older and deeper. It is a past and a theme rarely available to the understanding of non-Jewish historians. For that reason, we are all the more indebted to him for this very fine and moving book."

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Yale University
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"Evans has filled a host of voids and in the process of doing so, he has written a thoughtful, easy-paced narrative that is a solid addition to Civil War literature. This is one of those rare studies that will stand unchallenged for decades to come."

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"This well-written and well-researched volume replaces Robert Meade's biography (1943) as the standard study and is a significant contribution both to Southern Jewish and Civil War history."

Library Journal

"No writer has really captured this stellar Southern statesman until now. Evans' book tells a remarkable story and is the definitive biography of Benjamin."

Edward D.C. Campbell, Jr.
Editor, *Virginia Cavalcade*
in *Civil War Times Illustrated*

JUDAH P. BENJAMIN

The Jewish Confederate

Eli N. Evans

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To my father, Emanuel J. "Mutt" Evans, who carved out his own place in Southern Jewish history as Mayor of Durham, North Carolina, from 1951 to 1963, and inspired many of the insights in this book

and

To the memory of my mother, Sara Nachamson Evans, who raised her family, even in a small town, to believe that every Jew walks in the footsteps of history, Southern Jews especially

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From *John Brown's Body*

BY STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

(1927)

Judah P. Benjamin, the dapper Jew,
Seal-Sleek, black-eyed, lawyer and epicure,
Able, well-hated, face alive with life,
Looked round the council-chamber with the slight
Perpetual smile he held before himself
Continually like a silk-ribbed fan.
Behind the fan, his quick, shrewd, fluid mind
Weighed Gentiles in an old balance. . . .

The mind behind the silk-ribbed fan
Was a dark prince, clothed in an Eastern stuff,
Whole brown hands cupped about a crystal egg
That filmed with colored cloud. The eyes stared,
searching.

"I am a Jew, What am I doing here?
The Jew is in my blood and in my hands,
The lonely, bitter and quicksilver drop,
The strain of myrrh that dyes no Gentile mind. . . .
A river runs between these men and me,
A river of blood and time and liquid gold,
—Oh white rivers of Canaan, running the night!—
And we are colleagues. And we speak to each other
Across the roar of that river, but no more.

I hide myself behind a smiling fan.
They hide themselves behind a Gentile mask
And, if they fall, they will be lifted up,
Being the people, but if I once fall
I fall forever, like the rejected stone.

That is the Jew of it, my Gentile friends,
To see too far ahead and yet go on. . . .
It is the Jew, to see too far ahead. . . .

Jefferson Davis, pride of Mississippi . . .
I sent you a challenge once, but that's forgotten
And though your blood runs differently from mine,
The Jew salutes you from behind his fan,
Because you are the South he fell in love with
When that young black-haired girl with the Gentile eyes,
Proud, and a Catholic, and with honey lips,
First dinted her French heels upon his heart . . .

Tell me, you Gentiles, when your Gentile wives
Pray in church for you and for the South,
How do they pray? . . .
You do not have so good a prayer as mine,
You cannot have so good a prayer as mine . . ."

One day he is there and smiling
The next he is gone as if he had taken fernseed
And walked invisible so through the Union lines.
You will not find that smile in a Northern prison
Though you seek from now till Doomsday. It is too
wise . . .

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Prologue

Judah P. Benjamin served as Attorney General, Secretary of War, *and* Secretary of State to the Confederacy from 1861 to 1865. Though historians have routinely called him "the brains of the Confederacy," they knew relatively little about him. Many historians of the Civil War have referred to him as President Jefferson Davis's most loyal confidant. Yet Davis himself, in a laborious 1881 memoir of the war, referred to Benjamin in the most perfunctory fashion, mentioning his name only twice in the 1,500-page, two-volume work. That is especially odd if, as Varina Howell Davis, the First Lady of the Confederacy, testified in a letter written in 1889, Judah P. Benjamin spent ten to twelve hours a day in the office with her husband and was his "right hand," a central figure in events.

I first became curious about Judah P. Benjamin fifteen years ago when I began my research for *The Provincials: A Personal History of Jews in the South.*[*] I was intrigued with the ways in which Jews and Southerners were alike—stepchildren of an anguished history—and yet how different. Whereas the Jewish search for a homeland contrasted with the Southerner's commitment to place, Southern defenders of the Confederacy often used Old Testament analogies in referring to themselves as "the chosen people" destined to survive and triumph against overwhelming odds. Benjamin fascinated me then because of the extraordinary role he played in Southern history and the ways in which Jews and non-Jews reacted to him. He was the prototype of the contradictions in the Jewish Southerner, and the stranger in the Confederate story, the Jew at the eye of the storm that was the Civil War. Objectively, with so few Jews in the South at the time, it is astonishing that one should appear at the very center of Southern history. Benjamin himself avoided his Jewish-

[*] Full information for bibliographic references in the Prologue can be found in the Selected Bibliography.

ness throughout his public career, though his enemies in the Southern press and in the halls of the Confederate Congress never let the South forget it. The virulence of the times, which saw an outpouring of anti-Semitism such as in no previous period in American history, required a symbolic figure as a catalyst for an ancient hostility and perhaps contributed to his intentional elusiveness.

If Benjamin's role in history has been misjudged by historians and was minimized even by participants, much of the responsibility for that lies with Benjamin himself. He chose obscurity early in the war with the unwavering decision that he could best serve the South by serving Jefferson Davis and remaining in the presidential shadow. For reasons that puzzle historians, Benjamin burned his personal papers—some as he escaped from Richmond in 1865, and almost all of the rest just before he died—because he left only six scraps of paper at his death. One historian called him a "virtual incendiary."

Benjamin fled to England after the war and built a second career as a successful international lawyer. He had been known in the U.S. Senate as one of its outstanding orators, but in England he gave no published speeches on the war. He wrote a classic treatise on commercial law in England known even today to law students as *Benjamin on Sales,* but he left no articles, essays, or books about his role in, or any other aspect of the war. Indeed, he made only two public statements in nineteen years involving the war. The first was a three-paragraph letter to the *Times* of London in September 1865, just after he arrived in England, protesting the imprisonment of Jefferson Davis. The second was a short letter in 1883 contradicting the charge that millions of dollars in Confederate funds were left in European banks, under his control. There were no letters, even to family or friends, defending strategy or admitting error; nor does history record any revealing war-related conversations with students or scholars. He spent a few evenings at dinner with Davis when the ex-President visited London five times between 1868 and 1883. Otherwise, he avoided nostalgic encounters with friends from the South. It is one of the enduring mysteries that Benjamin's behavior after the war contrasted so dramatically with his hunger for recognition and fame before the war. He chose to erase all ties to his previous life. In fact, he never even returned to the United States, dying in Paris on May 6, 1884.

Benjamin survives, then, as he willed it: a shadowy figure in Civil War history, widely thought of as a dependable administrator for Jefferson Davis. But a man of his analytical skills and personal dynamism, acknowledged by scholars to have been one of America's most

brilliant legal minds and most arresting orators, could never have served merely as "Mr. Davis's clerk" or administrative assistant.

To understand the story behind Judah P. Benjamin requires an exploration of motivation and character extending to other major figures in the Civil War. Chief among them is the President he served. Though the subject of dozens of biographies over the past century, Jefferson Davis, too, still stands as an enigmatic figure in the Confederate adventure—staunch and exhausted, hobbled by physical illness and overwhelming pressures, a restless and arrogant military man trapped at his desk, a political leader who hated politics and politicians. Yet, give Jefferson Davis his due on one level—he was the first chief executive in America to appoint a Jew to his Cabinet, and he confirmed that decision twice more in the face of the storm of controversy surrounding Judah P. Benjamin.

Oddly, Jefferson Davis has grown less heroic with the passage of time, perhaps because of his colorless personality, severe manner, and unsympathetic treatment by historians. Overshadowed by Lee and Lincoln, he remains what Senator Clement Clay of Alabama called him in the beginning, "the Sphinx of the Confederacy," and, in Frank Vandiver's phrase, "a leader without a legend" and "a strangely muffled man." To understand the complexity of the drama that was the Civil War, one must probe the intricate interplay between these two secretive men who controlled the destiny of the South.

Among Jews in the United States, Judah P. Benjamin's acceptance has taken time. He was a neglected figure for almost seventy years after the Civil War. The immigrant generation was not yet secure enough in America to celebrate or even acknowledge ties to the leadership of the Southern states that led a rebellion in behalf of slavery. Although some experts estimated that more than 10,000 Jews fought for the Confederacy, American Jews preferred to celebrate an earlier and safer personality, Haym Salomon of Philadelphia, who helped finance the American Revolution.

In the 1930s, when America began to take a new look at Robert E. Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson and to put the Civil War into perspective, Judah P. Benjamin emerged also in pamphlets, children's books, and patriotic essays, and in American Jewish literature as one of the men in American history who substantiated Jewish claims to American roots. If it was now all right for the non-Jews to accept the South's part in the war as a heroic chapter of the nation's history, it was acceptable for the Jewish community as well.

Pierce Butler in 1907, and Robert Douthat Meade in 1943, wrote

the two standard biographies of Benjamin, pulling together the thousands of Civil War orders and letters to friends and family in England, France, New Orleans, Charleston, and elsewhere that he was unable to destroy. Butler interviewed Benjamin's contemporaries, including Varina Howell Davis. Meade spent twelve years traveling—researching diaries, memoirs, and papers, and interviewing Benjamin's family members and friends. This book revealed Benjamin, in the words of others and in his letters to friends and family, both as a gifted tactician with a philosophical nature and an urbane manner, and as a gourmet, an inveterate gambler, and a man whom women adored. Still, it acknowledged a paucity of material.

Meade and Butler were both Southern historians unfamiliar with American Jewish history. Judaism for them represented strange and unsteady territory, which they, perhaps too deeply ingrained with the attitudes of their times, were not prepared to explore. Butler treated Jewishness as if it were an unpleasant component of his admiring portrait, one that he was reluctant but duty-bound to include briefly. He referred to Benjamin's father as "that *rara avis,* an unsuccessful Jew," and described Benjamin in England as "this wonderful little Jew from America." Meade, writing during the sensitive period of the rise of Nazi Germany just before World War II, was more circumspect, yet observed that "like so many of Jewish blood today, Benjamin tended to become cosmopolitan." In the late 1930s, no Southern historian could convey the harshness of the anti-Semitism surrounding Benjamin without seeming prejudiced himself.

I have investigated the research papers of both men—Butler's papers are at Tulane University, and Meade's papers were given to the University of Virginia in 1978. Both interviewed acquaintances and surviving relatives who had known Benjamin, but they left out of their books much material they collected that reflected on Benjamin's Jewishness and other personal matters. I have now attempted to reinterpret the research they used, for whatever insights might now be revealed.

Meade and Butler also drew from the research of the spare beginnings of an unfinished biography by Francis Lawley, the Richmond and Washington correspondent of the London *Times* during the war, who became, according to Meade, "devoted to Benjamin, who doubtless helped to color his vivid dispatches with a sympathetic attitude toward the Confederacy." Benjamin kept up a relationship with Lawley for the rest of his life, but only six pages of the biography

Lawley planned exist, along with fewer than a dozen letters. Two of the letters, dated 1898, are from Varina Davis to Lawley. They describe in fascinating detail Benjamin's relationship with her husband.

This book is partly an interpretive study of the unusual relationship between Judah P. Benjamin and Jefferson Davis, using a reconstruction of events and personalities pieced together from the shards of evidence. Civil War literature offers to the historian insights, usually unavailable to researchers of other periods, into the social and political atmosphere of another era. Numerous people kept diaries and verbatim accounts of meetings and debates—even of tea parties, balls, banquets, and social events. Many other accounts and reminiscences by Cabinet members, governors, congressmen, senators, and generals, as well as their wives and aides, offer the kind of detail that allows the historian to speculate with more confidence than would normally be the case. More than 60,000 books have been written on the Civil War, and every detail of all manner of things has been collected: clothing, furniture, architecture, religion, food, manufacturing techniques, slave customs. That kind of detail allows the careful writer to recover much of the age without distorting history.

For me, the City of Richmond, Virginia, is a living, breathing thing, with near-human characteristics. There is a rich literature concerning the city during the Civil War period. It was a far more fascinating place than Margaret Mitchell's Atlanta, for it changed from the self-confident capital city of both Virginia and the Confederacy into a teeming campground of raw recruits and black industrial slaves, the scene of gambling dens, a hotbed of political intrigue and espionage. The Union Army and Abraham Lincoln, just 100 miles away, viewed it as a tempting plum on the Confederate cake. For four years, the two armies battled back and forth across Virginia, transforming Richmond slowly into a hospital for the wounded, besetting it with deprivation and hunger, and finally consuming it with fire. Richmond was the great stage for Judah P. Benjamin and Jefferson Davis. But it was more than just their physical home; it was the struggling heart of the Confederacy.

This book undertakes four lines of inquiry which I believe have not been appropriately treated before by historians.

First, it tries to place Benjamin in a Jewish context, to explore and illuminate the profound dilemma of the Jew in the nineteenth-century South. For Jewish scholars of American Jewish history, Judah P. Benjamin has presented complex problems. Subconsciously, as Jews themselves, they may have wanted to put as much distance between him and Jewishness as possible, because he was incomprehensible as a Jewish figure. As a Confederate leader who once owned 140 slaves, he was to those historians part of a failed culture, not a Jew whom scholars of American Jewish history could explain, and therefore it was easier to dismiss him as Jewish than try to probe him and understand him as an integral figure in American Jewish history. Benjamin's story has also been either misinterpreted or overlooked by Southern historians, who cannot be expected to bring an awareness of Jewish experience to Confederate history. For Southern scholars, Benjamin was more of a Rorschach test for personal feelings about Jews than a historical figure. They tended to rely heavily on the statements of his contemporaries, many of whom held anti-Semitic views, for their assessment of him. Contemporary perceptions of his "fatalism," his "exotic" birth, or his "oriental qualities" were repeated over and over, again, embellished and elaborated until transfigured into fact. He was an apparition who from time to time took on human dimension, but then would disappear again into Jewish stereotype.

Judah Benjamin's boyhood was much more steeped in Jewish culture and tradition than either Southern or Jewish historians have acknowledged. It was easy superficially to dismiss him as a Jew. He married out of the faith, had little to do with religious institutions, did not speak or write of his religious beliefs, and failed to keep Jewish laws and to celebrate Jewish holidays. But one cannot judge Jewish identity only by public acts. It is my thesis that to presume him simply a nonbeliever, as historians have, represents a fundamental error in Southern history and has been the main reason for the shroud of mystery that surrounds him.

From the facts of Benjamin's boyhood, another conclusion is more justifiable. He was reared in Charleston, South Carolina, and grew to manhood in New Orleans, two of the largest Jewish communities in the United States in the early nineteenth century. His father was one of the twelve dissenters in Charleston who formed the first Reform Congregation of America. The character of a Jewish boy reared in Charleston by a deeply involved Jewish family would be shaped by that experience the rest of his life. He could stand apart

from his Jewishness in public, but he could not run very far from it psychologically. He could try to assimilate, but the powerful would not let him forget his roots. And no Jew can make the leap from a childhood with religious immigrant parents to an assimilated Southern leader in twenty years, without retaining psychological ties to his Jewish past. Thus when newspapers, political enemies, and military leaders ridiculed his Jewishness, attacking and insulting him with stinging phrases of religious prejudice, there had to be demons loosed inside him. In Stephen Vincent Benet's words in *John Brown's Body,* what lay behind the "perpetual smile"?

Part of my fascination with Judah P. Benjamin comes from my own life as a Jewish Southerner. At times, I provide my own insights in the book, because I cannot help but feel that even though our boyhoods were separated by more than a hundred years, Benjamin is not remote. He is somehow familiar because there are certain changeless verities to growing up Jewish in the Bible Belt and passing for white in that mysterious underland of America. The problems Benjamin experienced are not very different from those of other Jews in the South who have had to deal with having power, with race, with religious fundamentalism, with anti-Semitism. As Bertram Korn pointed out in *American Jewry and the Civil War,* the nation both North and South experienced the "greatest outpouring of Judaeophobia in its history" during the Civil War, and Judah P. Benjamin was its most convenient target. Political and internecine passions were unbridled and flared into war. It was a time of primitive attitudes by Southerners toward Jews, and Benjamin was unique as a visible symbol of the mighty; but, illustrious as his life was, he did not escape the hatred. Nor, as we shall see, did other members of the Jewish communities that this book examines in the three cities where he lived—Charleston, New Orleans, and Richmond.

The second line of inquiry builds on the insights into Benjamin's Jewishness to explore his many-sided relationship with Jefferson Davis. It is my view that there were elements in each man that deepened the relationship; that their boyhood, parental attitude, religious heritage, cultural history, and education were so different, yet so similar, that they became, as Varina Davis described them, "two master minds which seemed to be the complement of each other . . . breasting as one man the heavy storm." Davis was rural and physical, the unusual mixture of Southern Baptist and Catholic, with family ties to the American Revolution and to the War of 1812. Benjamin, on the other hand, was urban, intellectual, Jewish, and

an immigrant, with parents who did not arrive in the United States until 1813. As their separate and entangled stories unfold, it is apparent that Judah Benjamin becomes as it were a lens through which one can better focus on and understand Jefferson Davis. Like two flintstones in darkness, they make sparks when brought together. To understand one is to explore the other; they are twin pieces of a puzzle, together less of a mystery than apart.

In the beginning, Benjamin and Davis were cool to each other because neither had been raised to trust easily. Benjamin's Jewishness stood in the way of both men, raised as outsiders and bred to suspicion. The presence of a remarkable woman—Varina Howell Davis, the second wife of the President of the Confederacy, who married him at eighteen when he was thirty-seven—was the crucial element that fostered the growth of trust between the two men and made it sustain itself. Author of a two-volume book about her husband and the Confederacy, she was a wise and perceptive woman and, like many women in Richmond during the war, deeply involved in the strategy debates that swirled around the Confederate White House. While most historians dismiss her book as dull and unimportant, her writing contains nuggets of information and insight. She was schooled in politics from her earliest years, and Judah Benjamin was her obvious fascination. At the end of her life, she wrote of Benjamin that his "greatness was hard to measure . . . I loved him dearly." Did Benjamin, caught in the pain of a strange marriage of his own to a New Orleans wife living in Paris, find solace in his affection for Varina Davis? How did Benjamin and Varina Davis interact with the President, who was suffering under intense physical strain and emotional pressure? The story then is three-cornered, a triangle with Varina Davis as the bridge between an ailing President and his Jewish jack-of-all-trades. This book is the first to treat the three of them together.

The third line of inquiry concerns the evolving attitudes of both men toward slavery. We are just beginning to understand in depth the unusual plantation life of the slave communities at Davis Bend, the more than 11,000 acres that belonged to Joseph and Jefferson Davis. Two recent books have explored with great care their slave records still on file in Mississippi: Clement Eaton's 1977 biography of Jefferson Davis, and a 1981 book by Janet Sharp Hermann entitled *The Pursuit of a Dream.* Both reveal that the attitudes of the Davis family on their own plantation, influenced by British utopians, were much more progressive (one might say even democratic) than on perhaps any other plantation in the South.

As for Judah Benjamin, Jewish historians have reacted with revulsion to the fact that he owned slaves at all and have been unable to consider the question of his views on slavery with anything but embarrassed dismay. To understand Benjamin on this score, one must put him into context as a political figure against a backdrop of planter dogmatism and Abolitionist fervor. Such an exploration leads directly to an extraordinary episode of the war in which Benjamin played a central role: the effort to persuade Jefferson Davis to issue a Confederate Emancipation Proclamation, which would promise slaves freedom in exchange for military service. That move, which began to take shape early in the war in the minds of military and political leaders but did not surface until 1864, is usually dismissed as a desperate gamble made at the end of the war to lure the British into the fighting. As the clouds of defeat gathered, Judah P. Benjamin spoke before 10,000 people in Richmond, delivering a remarkable speech in favor of a Confederate offer to free the slaves who would fight for the South—the first major address in four years from a frustrated master orator.

The fourth strand of this book is concerned with Benjamin's personality. It explores the anomaly between his early hunger for recognition and fame and the utter secrecy and privacy of his later life. I shall suggest that the key to understanding his silence after the war is his creation of a Confederate spy ring in Canada, and the subsequent proclamation, conceived by the Union's Secretary of War, Edwin Stanton, and issued by Lincoln's successor, President Andrew Johnson, for the arrest of Jefferson Davis and seven Canadian Confederate spies after the Lincoln assassination. History, by means of the trials of the conspirators, by exhaustive investigations, and by endless inquiries of both scholars and buffs, has absolved both Judah P. Benjamin and Jefferson Davis from any responsibility. But what has not been previously considered is the inner man, the psychological and emotional impact on Benjamin of the long period of hysteria that followed the assassination. It took several years for Northern vengeance to subside: "Wanted for the Assassination of Lincoln" posters dotted the South for Davis and the leaders of the Canadian spy ring, and eventually Davis spent two years in prison under the cloud of charges of complicity in the assassination. Had Benjamin been captured could he, as a Jew, have received a fair trial? Would Northern leaders as ruthless as Stanton, looking for a scapegoat, have been able to resist the opportunity to exploit the explosion of anti-Semitism that would have been released by his capture and the accusation? Four people were hanged, at least one on little evi-

dence. John Wilkes Booth was called the "American Judas." Would Benjamin have been spared?

When the earliest wave of Civil War history was written by its participants, no one in the South knew for certain what to think about Jews—nor were Southern Jews themselves very psychologically self-aware. Newly emancipated from centuries of nonvoting and nonparticipation in public life, most Jews were politically innocent; Christians, especially in the Bible Belt, were inexperienced in dealing with Jewish political accomplishment. Jewish self-consciousness in literature and history has developed as a *twentieth*-century phenomenon. Today, Judah P. Benjamin deserves a new evaluation, a reexamination of the events of his life and times by a contemporary writer aware of Southern Jewish history. It may be that the hidden Jewish experience of this major figure can clarify some of what has been impenetrable about the Confederate story. Significant as well is what Benjamin's rise to prominence says about America.

Judah P. Benjamin achieved greater political power than any other Jew in the nineteenth century—perhaps even in all American history. At the height of his career, when he served as Secretary of War and Secretary of State to the Confederacy, he was at the center of events shaping America, leaving in his letterbooks more than 2,000 official memoranda, letters, and telegrams to the military, ambassadors, political figures, and influential citizens; writing speeches for Jefferson Davis; consulting with the President on almost every decision, large or small; a familiar figure to those on the battlefields and in the legislative halls, known at home and abroad. Yet, he was never permitted by the press or political opponents to forget his Jewishness, and though he was a nonpracticing Jew, he never attempted to deny his faith. Benjamin thus must stand as a symbol of American democracy and its openness to religious minorities. In spite of the bigotry surrounding him, not only was he elected to the U.S. Senate and appointed to three high offices in the Confederacy, but he was also offered an appointment as the Ambassador to Spain and a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court. The nineteenth-century emancipation of the Jews, which began in Europe after the French Revolution, was as great a shock to Jews as were the centuries of persecution that preceded it. Judah P. Benjamin was the main beneficiary of that emancipation and its most visible symbol in America.

In the final years before the war, Benjamin was widely admired nationally in both Jewish and non-Jewish communities for his pres-

tige as a Southern leader and his eloquence as an orator. His election as the first acknowledged Jew in the U.S. Senate was a watershed for American Jews. Because of the war, he became the first Jewish political figure to be projected into the national consciousness. Jews in the South were especially proud of his achievement, because he validated their legitimacy as Southerners. A pivotal figure in American Jewish history, Benjamin broke down the barriers of prejudice to achieve high office. After him, it was more acceptable for Jews to be elected to office and to aspire to service in the councils of national power.

Although Judah P. Benjamin concealed himself in the shadows of his own times, only a fresh effort to understand him, rooted in new perspectives one hundred years after his death, can reveal him in his proper place at center stage in the bitter struggle that shaped this nation.

Eli N. Evans
Durham, North Carolina
August 1, 1987

1

JEWISH SOUTHERNER

1808–1860

1

Charleston: *Boyhood in the Reformed Society*

Judah Philip Benjamin (1811–84) was descended from the Sephardics, Spanish Jews who flourished for three hundred years on the Iberian peninsula in the "Golden Age." Their name derived from the Biblical reference to "Sepharad," a mysterious place where wandering Hebrews gathered after the Babylonian exile and the destruction of Solomon's temple in Jerusalem.[1] The Moorish conquest of Spain from North Africa in the eighth century caused both Islam and Judaism to gain in power and grandeur. The Moors found among Spanish Jews a respect for learning and culture kindred to their own. Although in 1215 Pope Innocent III tried to hold back the progress of Jews into the professions by forcing them to wear stigmatizing yellow badges, after 1200 the Jews in Spain and Portugal dominated the medical profession and were prominent as judges, architects, writers, scientists, and teachers. The courts of Aragon and Castile relied on them as advisers, ministers of finance, financiers of military expeditions, and royal counselors; as leaders in international commerce and colonial expansion; as merchants; and, in the technical professions, as navigators, mapmakers, and astronomers.[2]

Nowhere in the world did Jewry occupy a more influential place than in the court of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella. The Queen's

confidential secretary was Jewish, as were other court officials and her closest female friend. The general bailiff of Aragon, the grand treasurer, the comptroller general of the royal household, the vice chancellor of the Kingdom of Aragon, and three top military officers under Ferdinand's command all were Jews.

As Moorish power diminished, however, so did the safety of the Jews. Simple envy and jealousy gave way to a far greater danger: Christian suspicion growing into subsequent persecution. In 1479, Ferdinand and Isabella initiated the Inquisition, confining Jews to specific ethnic areas and expelling them from certain cities and provinces. As Jewish properties were seized, the greed of the populace grew. Finally came the Expulsion Edict of 1492: "We order all Jews and Jewesses of whatever age that before the end of this month of July they depart with their sons and daughters and manservants and maidservants and relatives, big and small . . . and not dare to return."[3] Hundreds of thousands of Jews fled in the ensuing few months, prompting the Sultan of Turkey to exclaim, "The King of Spain must have lost his mind. He is expelling his best subjects and [Spain's] wealth."

Thirty of the most prominent Jewish families of Spain escaped to Portugal as a group. One of them bore the name of Mendes.[4] Several generations later a Mendes descendant migrated to the Netherlands, where he married a Dutch Jewish woman. The couple had three daughters; one of them, named Rebecca, would be Judah Benjamin's mother. The family moved to London, ultimately living in suburban Finsbury with the most prosperous class of Jews.

Both of Rebecca's sisters married wealthy West Indian planters and moved to Caribbean islands. Rebecca married a small, intelligent, olive-skinned Sephardic named Philip Benjamin, who soon afterward opened a shop in London in which Rebecca worked selling dried fruit. Later they, too, moved to the British West Indies. Philip's grandmother had lived on St. Eustatius, where she had achieved a local reputation as a doctor and a midwife. (The records state that she allowed her house to be used by worshipers after the local synagogue was destroyed in a hurricane in 1772.) Philip rarely spoke of his ancestors, however—perhaps because of his wife's more illustrious lineage. For an ambitious boy like Judah, who would scale the heights in his newly adopted country, the achievements of the aristocratic Jews of Spain would follow him as part of his family heritage all of his life.

Judah Philip Benjamin was born on August 11, 1811, on the island

of Saint Croix, which at the time was part of the British West Indies. He was thus entitled by birth to British citizenship. Although his father was later naturalized in the United States, Benjamin retained a tie to Britain all of his life. Like the religion of his birth, the place of his birth reinforced his status as an outsider: Whereas many American children he would grow up with could claim roots in the American Revolution, his roots would be in English territory, an island possessed by the enemy during the Revolutionary War.

"Judah" was an appropriate given name for a boy who would attain Confederate leadership. In Biblical times, the tribe of Judah, the largest and in many ways the most important of the twelve tribes, gave its name to the Southern Kingdom (also Judea), which split away from Israel in rebellion after the death of King Solomon. The word "Jew" was derived from Judah and, according to Jewish belief, the Messiah would spring from that tribe. Much of the Bible was written in Judah, where most of the prophets lived and wrote. Biblical tradition lent descriptive names to the tribes; Judah was "the lion." Benjamin was another of the twelve tribes. More aggressive than Judah, it was warlike and is referred to in Genesis as "ravenous wolf." Both names imply strength and courage. Clearly Judah Benjamin's name signified intellectual, spiritual, and Biblical roots in Jewish history and tradition.[5]

Judah Benjamin, one of seven children, inherited by fate the legal position of the first-born son. An older brother, also named Judah, had died in infancy. He began life conforming to Sephardic Jewish tradition, which named the eldest son after his paternal grandfather, who circumcised the boy himself. He was raised, therefore, as the oldest son, burdened with all of the family ambition attaching to his favored position.[6] He adored his older sister, Rebecca (whom he called Penny), his brothers Solomon and Joseph, and learned to protect his younger sisters, Hannah (called Harriet or "Hatty") and Judith, and his little brother, Jacob, named after his uncle in America.

Like other Sephardic Jews of London, his parents, Philip and Rebecca, had come to the West Indies searching for a new life but, with better opportunities beckoning them northward, decided to gamble on America. They sailed in 1813 for Fayetteville, North Carolina, on the Cape Fear River, where they stayed with Judah's Uncle Jacob, his mother's brother and the only relative in America with means.[7] But Jacob's small store could not support two families. As more children arrived, the port city to the south looked more promising. Philip's family settled finally in Charleston about 1821. There

the family earned a modest income selling fruit in the market on the docks.[8]

Charleston was the first community in the new world to grant Jews the right to vote. Charleston early in its history earned a reputation as a tolerant place where Jews could worship freely, trade openly, own land, leave property in wills, and generally prosper with the community. Historians explain such a unique attitude by the fact that the philosopher John Locke drafted the constitution for the colony at the request of his friend Lord Ashley, one of the eight noblemen to whom Charles II granted the Carolinas. Although the constitution recognized the Church of England as the official faith of the colony, Locke managed to include a provision that "Jews, Heathens," and others should have the chance to acquaint themselves with "the purity of the Christian religion and by good usage and persuasion . . . be won over to embrace . . . the truth." Thus, Charleston from the beginning attracted a diverse population.

Jews had lived in Charles Town, as it was known in colonial times, since 1695, and the Jewish population had grown steadily as the community developed into the largest seaport in the thirteen colonies, trading deerskins, rice exports, and indigo valuable to Jewish merchants in London as dye for the blue uniforms of the British merchant fleet. By 1749, Charleston had a Jewish congregation, Beth Elohim Unveh Shallom (House of God and Mansion of Peace), the fifth Jewish congregation in the United States. By 1800, Charleston had the largest Jewish community in America, five hundred Jews, with more than a thousand in the state of South Carolina. There were only 2,500 Jews in all of the United States at that time, including four hundred in New York and somewhat fewer in Philadelphia. The Jews of Charleston, as it happened, were a part of the cultural center of America. The city boasted two theaters and an opera house, the first paid orchestra in the colonies, frequent concerts by foreign artists, and lecture tours by the leading literary and scientific scholars of the day. There were wealthy Jewish merchants in Charleston, and the trade with the West Indies was brisk enough to furnish Philip Benjamin with information about its opportunities. Jews in Charleston were especially proud of the history of Francis Salvador, the Jewish son of an English merchant, elected as a revolutionary to the first and second Provincial Congresses of South Carolina in 1774, the first Jew in the modern world to be elected by Christians. Less than a month after the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, Salvador was ambushed with a band of patriot militia by a group of British-armed Indians and Tories, and scalped before help

could reach him. Francis Salvador died at the age of twenty-one, the first Jew to give his life for the American Revolution.

Though the Jewish community prospered in Charleston, Philip Benjamin was unsuccessful at everything he tried in business. Judah's mother, Rebecca, industrious and hardworking, held the family together financially by running a small fruit shop on King Street near the docks.[9]

According to Barnett Elzas's *Scrapbook,* a memoir of Charleston written at the turn of the century, "As a matter of fact, the Benjamins were not strict Jews. The mother kept her little shop open on the Sabbath and that at a time when strict Sabbath observance was general in Charleston. This was told to me by the late Sally Lopez, who died here in 1902 at the age of ninety-six. . . . This trading on the Sabbath on the part of Mrs. Benjamin was much resented by the old-time Jews of Charleston."[10]

Judah's ambitious mother and less practical father mirrored the differences in ancestral lineage between his mother and father. She ran the house and the shop with a strong and organized presence, while Philip spent an inordinate amount of time reading books and arguing the fine points of Jewish law with his friends. To a realist like Rebecca, the debates between synagogue leaders over tradition must have seemed a waste of time, but Philip was in fact a religious activist, committed to changing Judaism to conform to the realities of the modern world. The boy Judah listened to his father, and Philip took pride in the child's quickness. Judah inherited his love of ideas and books from his father and his ambition to make money from his mother.

Rebecca was a proud woman who always believed she deserved better. Considering herself an impoverished aristocrat, she taught Judah that he came from a proud heritage and at the same time suggested by her attitude that she had married beneath her. Philip, in reaction, withdrew from business affairs and returned to the Talmud and religious activism, to the issues raging in the Charleston Jewish community over Reform Judaism, knowing, that if he could never measure up to the Mendes line in terms of material success, he might achieve status in his own world of Jewish ideas as an outspoken leader.

Judah P. Benjamin's early biographer Pierce Butler interviewed one of Rebecca's granddaughters, who recalled "the stern and severe rule of the old lady, resolved to hold her head high in spite of poverty."[11]

Once when her two rich sisters sent a trunk of linens and other

luxuries to them from the West Indies, Rebecca promptly returned the chests unopened. She would take no one's charity, least of all her sisters'. Judah was the hope, the aspiration, the true heir to the Mendes blood, and she had to do everything for him: send him to the finest academies in the South and Yale Law School at fourteen, even if that meant violating her pledge of independence by accepting money from other families in Charleston. If it supported her son's education, she would make an exception.

Judah worked hard all his young life. At the fruit shop after school, he came to know every corner of the exotic market that stretched along the port. He played all over the Charleston market, visiting other shops to see all the wonderful things to buy from the world over. He lived a life of the senses. The Benjamin stand had colors and tastes: oranges from Florida and big, prickly pineapples from Cuba.

We know from historians that there was an eerie quality to the Charleston harbor. The air was permeated at certain times of the day with the smell of decaying fish and rodents left on the mud flats when the water ran out of the harbor at low tide, attracting huge buzzards, which roosted on the tall dead pines and the twisted cypress trees in the harbor. They fed off the remains as well as the carcasses, innards, and spoiled meat that the butchers dumped into the water. They sat on the roofs of the market, and their wings cast ominous shadows when they took flight. The city considered the buzzards so useful that there was a fine of five dollars, a large sum then, for killing one. Two of them were so tame that they crept along the meat market among the feet of the buyers. Though they had blood and flesh on their beaks and represented death to the adults, local historians tell us that children learned to accept them almost as pets.

Judah was raised with slavery all around him. Charleston was the largest port in the nation in 1800 and a prominent center for the slave trade. Although rich Gentiles looked down on the waterfront shopkeepers, records of the time reveal that even as modest a family as the Benjamins owned slaves.[12] The family had owned three house slaves in St. Croix before coming to Fayetteville to live with Uncle Jacob in 1813, when Judah was two. Uncle Jacob, the successful relative, owned a number of slaves, among them a mulatto, Margaret, who took care of Judah and her own child Jacob, named after her master. Uncle Jacob also bought a twenty-six-year-old named Isaac to protect Judah and his younger brother, Solomon. In 1817, Jacob freed Margaret and the child, but she stayed on as a housemaid.

When Judah's last brother, also named Jacob, was born in 1818, Uncle Jacob deeded "the mustee girl slave, Maria, and her future increase" to his namesake "in consideration of natural love and affection" and $10 paid by Judah's father, Philip.

Like many Southerners, Judah Benjamin might have romanticized the warmth he felt for blacks from his childhood. Margaret, his black mammy, had fixed his food and kissed his hurts from the age of five to age eleven; for five years he played with the older Isaac in the fields in Fayetteville. As he grew older, he would spend hours with Hannibal, the Benjamin house slave and later his personal servant, down in Beaufort, South Carolina. There they would harpoon the horned devil fish, which he later recalled as a mighty monster that would drag the boat along for a few hundred yards before coming to the surface exhausted and ready for the kill.

These stories which he told in later years indicate that to the mature Judah Benjamin, as to other white settlers of his time, those household slaves remained vivid personalities from his youth, strong influences in his life, and, in a real sense, part of his family history.

Judah was eleven years old during the dreadful days of Denmark Vesey's attempted slave uprising in Charleston in 1822.[13] A cache of arms was found near the synagogue, to be used, the newspapers claimed, for "murdering all the whites in Charleston, raping the women, robbing the banks, commandeering the ships for Santo Domingo, and burning the city as they left." The militia hanged twenty-two blacks at one time, including a slave who was owned by a member of Beth Elohim. The bodies were left dangling for a week for all to see. The leader, Denmark Vesey, had begun a nightmare come true for Charleston, a potential slave uprising turned into a mass retribution by the whites. As Benjamin's later biographer Robert D. Meade pointed out, "Of such stuff are conservatives made."[14]

Judah's boyhood coincided with a time of change for the Jews newly arriving from Europe, uprooted into a strange land. Immigrants brought with them new ideas of religious practice that were sweeping Europe and that found fertile ground in a turbulent seaport city. As the South became more vigorously Protestant, it was natural that it would become the seedbed for a more assimilated form of Judaism. In November 1824, Philip became one of the forty-seven people at Beth Elohim in Charleston to petition their trustees to shorten the service, to pray in English rather than in Hebrew or Spanish, and to require a sermon or "an English discourse" at each service. When the ruling trustees tabled the request, Philip joined with twelve others of the dissenters to form the "Reformed Society of Israelites."

No longer, they said in their second more far-reaching petition, would they worship as "slaves of bigotry and priestcraft." They would worship as part of an enlightened world. This time they demanded even more radical changes: preferring to call the synagogue "temple," editing their own prayerbook to include contemporary prayers in the service, worshiping with heads uncovered. Philip was elected to the "corresponding committee" of the Reformed Society, which, as described in Article VI of the Society's constitution, was an important leadership committee. Article VI stated that:

> There shall be annually elected from among the resident members a committee of five, entitled a Committee of Correspondence, for the purpose of conferring and corresponding at all times . . . with the several congregations, or respectable individuals, or sections of Jews throughout the United States, Europe, or elsewhere, as to any assistance or co-operation, which they may be disposed to afford this Society in its future operations.[15]

Charles Reznikoff and Uriah Engleman, in *The Jews of Charleston,* stated that Philip's election "would seem to show that he had ability and was not unrecognized."[16]

By being a leader in such a movement, however, he risked the enmity of most of the Jewish community. Such a bold departure would be bad for business and could cause the children to be ostracized. But he soon alienated even the Reformed Society, which could no more accept his keeping his shop open on the Sabbath than did the traditionalists. Finally, in 1827, the Society expelled him for the same offense. Rejected by both congregations in Charleston, he became deeply embittered.

It is often said by historians that Judah was a nonbeliever, raised without tradition in an assimilated home. It is true that, in rebellion, the family may not have practiced Judaism or kept the Sabbath and the daily rituals. But their nonpractice was activist in character, not lazy or indifferent. Neither was Philip a man bent on blending with the non-Jewish community, seeking out Gentile associations or denying his Jewishness out of shame of his heritage. Philip was an intellectual, well-versed in Jewish law, an assertive and argumentative personality who took matters of custom and practice seriously. Even as a poor man, he had paid a relatively large assessment to the synagogue the year before the dissent, which indicated the priority the family assigned to participation in the religious life of the Jewish community.

So Judah was not raised in ignorance of Jewish law and tradition.

The debate in the Charleston Jewish community between Reform and Orthodox Judaism raged all about him during his formative years, and he was an alert, curious boy. The children of the reformers were involved, for the petition stated that those who signed "cannot consent to place before their children examples which are only calculated to darken the mind and withhold from the rising generation the more rational means of worshipping the true God."[17]

It is difficult in modern times to convey the bitterness that characterized the early divisions of American Jewish history. But Charleston was where the debate began, and Philip helped alter the path of American Jewish history, one of the first Jews in America to challenge centuries of orthodoxy and, in the eyes of the city patriarchs, to dare violate the laws of God. Yet Philip was not a fallen-away Jew in flight from his people. He was a man who cared deeply about his beliefs, a man of principle punished for his views and his willingness to act on them. "Slaves of bigotry and priestcraft," the petition he signed had called the elders—strong words expressing intense emotions, no compromise in language; it was no document for the faint-hearted.

As the son of one of the leaders of the society, Judah understandably would have been deeply affected by the religious divisions. The reform movement was not just for adults; it sought to influence history through the children of its members and the generations to come. "The compilers act only for themselves, [and] for their children," one of the prayers adopted by the Society stated. The Society pledged itself in Article III of its constitution that "it will educate a youth or youths of the Jewish persuasion, classically in the English, Latin and Hebrew languages, so as to render him or them fully competent to perform Divine Service, not only with ability, learning and dignity, but also according to the true spirit of Judaism, for which this institution was formed."[18]

The Society substituted the "confirmation" ceremony for the bar mitzvah, requiring it for all boys who attained the age of thirteen. Its prayerbook laid out in careful detail the character and articulation of the confirmation ceremony and implemented it from the beginning, in 1824, when Judah P. Benjamin turned thirteen years of age. The ceremony was described as follows in the Society prayerbook:

Mode of Confirmation

(Any one born of Jewish parents, not under the age of thirteen, and desirous of expressing his belief in the Jewish faith, may, on

any Sabbath, make declaration of the same and be confirmed therein as follows. He advances to the minister's desk, and says:)

YOUTH: Here, in the presence of this congregation, and in the presence of that gracious God whose goodness has endowed me with reason, I desire to declare my firm and religious belief in the Divine origin of the moral law, and in the great Articles of the Jewish faith. I desire to appear in the presence of heaven and earth, an Israelite according to the faith and customs of the Reformed Society of Israelites, in whose temple of worship I now stand.

MINISTER: My son, dost thou act from thine own free will, and is this the wish of thy heart and the conviction of thy understanding?

YOUTH: It is. I have been taught to love the paths of piety and virtue; I hope to follow them. Through God's goodness, I also hope that I comprehend the essential points of our excellent religion, and I shall strive with my best endeavors, to observe and practice through life its moral and pious doctrines.

MINISTER: Repeat, my son, the Articles of that religious creed which thou has adopted, and in which thy parents and guardians, assisted by thine own industry, have happily instructed thee. Repeat them in sincerity and truth; for the offering thou art about to make, must be a free will offering to God. If any compulsion hath been exercised towards thee, the sin of hypocrisy will be thine, in declaring that which is not in thy heart, and the sin of tyranny and impiety on those, who have brought thee hither against thy will. Repeat to me, then, the Articles of our holy faith.

YOUTH: I repeat them freely, with sincerity, and truth. (He repeats the Articles of faith, of the Reformed Society of Israelites.)[19]

Unfortunately, no records of Jewish life in Charleston survived a fire in 1838 which burned the original (1794) Beth Elohim building, so whether young Judah Benjamin was confirmed with such vows cannot be verified. We know, however, that it was customary for members of the society, and expected of its leaders, to obey its constitution and follow its prayerbook. Therefore, it is probable that Judah was one of the first children confirmed in the new Reformed Society. The vows were written to fill those who were confirmed with deep memories and religious resolve. And, indeed, history shows that Judah P. Benjamin would never deny his Judaism or allow the judgment of the orthodox community to convince him that his soul

was not worthy or his Judaism unacceptable. He would be the double outsider, however, estranged not only from the non-Jewish world but from the established Jewish world as well.

At the age of thirteen, reliant on his own talent, Judah was cast into the Charleston community where secular influences enticed and confronted him without the certitude and support of his traditional religious group. New winds were blowing, and it was easy to stray from a narrow path. A Gentile schoolmate recalled in later years how he and Judah played together and how he used to sneak slices of ham off his mother's table for his Jewish friend. On the docks, crabs and other unkosher shellfish abounded in the stalls. Because Charleston was a population center, scores of traveling evangelists came to win the souls of the crowds of people who would gather in huge tents for the revivals. Diaries of the times record the fear and isolation felt by Jews during those periods of intense soul-saving. Southern Jews have always confronted a special kind of Jesus: a constant presence perched on the shoulder of every believer. Fearsome to Southern Jewish children is the role of Jews in the prophecy of the Second Coming, calling Jews to return to the fold and atone for rejecting Jesus by converting to Christianity. For every Jewish boy in the South, close Gentile childhood friends worried about the disposition of Jewish souls. And every Jewish child swimming in a sea of Bible Belt fundamentalism that was the nineteenth-century South heard the warnings of the old men around the synagogue: "Be careful of the soul-savers; converting a Jew is a special blessing for them."

Yet Southern Jews yearned to be a part of the Southern way of life and to be accepted as legitimate heirs to its cultural history. After Beth Elohim was rebuilt, Rabbi Gustavus Poznanski revealed an attitude in Charleston that was deeply ingrained in Judah Benjamin's generation of Southerners. "This synagogue is our temple," Poznanski exclaimed to a crowd of Jews and Christians, "this city our Jerusalem, this happy land our Palestine, and as our fathers defended with their lives that temple, that city and that land so will our sons defend this temple, this city and this land."[20]

Judah was sent to the school of the Hebrew Orphan Society (which was also for children of the poor) and grew into adolescence as an earnest boy devoted to his studies and eager to succeed. He plunged headlong into his father's library and scoured the Jewish community for more books. He would memorize long passages and recite them without a flaw, often with dramatic flourishes of rhetoric. His

teachers were astonished at his intelligence and absorptive capacities. One friend even recalled that he recited Shakespeare while playing marbles and that at recess he made preparations for the next lesson while other boys were at play.[21] Judah's talent caught the eye of Moses Lopez, one of the Jewish merchants of Charleston, who advised Rebecca and Philip of what they already knew—that their eldest son was extraordinary and must receive the very best education in America. He offered to pay for the boy's education at the finest academies in the South and, at the age of fourteen, to send him to Yale University to study law.

There is no record of any hesitation in Rebecca's decision to send her young son so far away from home. She helped him pack a few possessions, among them a Hebrew Psalter, for the thousand-mile journey to New Haven, Connecticut.

2

Yale:
A Mysterious Departure

Although Yale was far from Charleston, it was a natural choice for those who recognized the mark of excellence in young Judah Benjamin. Yale was known across the South as the "Athens of America," where the Southern gentry sent their sons to acquire the high polish of a gentleman and the disciplined habits of a scholar. The contingent of Southerners at Yale rose from 20 percent to almost 30 percent during Judah's stay, and, after New York, New Haven, and Hartford, Charleston had the fourth largest representation. But admission was not automatic: Judah had to pass entrance examinations in Cicero, Virgil, Greek testament, Latin grammar, and arithmetic.[1] Thus, for the first time in his life, Judah was tossed into the mainstream of competition with the sons of the most noted families in the South and could measure himself and them against the scions of Northern aristocracy as well. He was not the first Jew at Yale, but seventeen years separated him from the last known Jewish student.

Yale, which sought to build a hierarchy based on talent, did much to try to reduce class differences in the student body by mandating a uniform dress code. Judah, only fourteen and so short that he looked even younger, was required to dress in a uniform of black frock coat, black or white pantaloons, cravat, and vest. It was a costume that must have made a young boy look prematurely grave.

Though it was beginning to liberalize its curriculum, Yale still

described itself as a seminary. Activities started at daybreak, with morning prayers at six in the winter and five in the summer. Chapel attendance was compulsory in the morning and evening, with no exceptions for Jewish students.[2] Judah arrived at Yale with the Hebrew Psalter in his possession.[3]

A former classmate, W. W. Hoppin, recalled Benjamin's early days at Yale in 1884: "He was a small, bright-eyed boy, of a dark and swarthy complexion, evidently of Jewish blood. . . . He apparently passed his time in sauntering around the college grounds or dropping in at the students' room. . . . Without any attention to his studies, and following out this desultory and vagrant existence, he easily and without dispute, took at once the highest stand in his class, and was acknowledged to be a riddle and prodigy of intellectual power."[4]

This poor Jewish slip of a boy now found himself among the landed Southerners and the arrogant Northern merchant sons, plucked from his plain circumstances in Charleston and deposited into the Gothic ambiance of Yale. He was a Southern provincial woefully out of place. Paralleling the experience of his father in Charleston, he soon was alienated from his community: His Jewishness and his Southernness were a double barrier to acceptance. But he wore a mask of diffidence while working relentlessly to earn acceptance to at least some part of the university. The sons of the rich could ease their way into their family's fortunes after schooling, but Judah would have to strive all his life for every penny he earned and every recognition he was accorded.

The curriculum was rigid and demanding. He studied Horace, the Greek orators, philosophy, and astronomy; the curriculum required him to master logarithms, trigonometry, navigation, surveying, spherical geometry, French or Spanish, and Hebrew. From learning to read the Old Testament in the original, all the rest of his career he would be able to recall it in speeches and writing. Yale so emphasized forensics that he had to debate once or twice a week before instructors and practice declamation in the chapel before the professor of oratory, other faculty members, and students.

Judah's two years at Yale were a glorious confirmation of his brilliance and promise, building his self-confidence and sharpening his orator's wit. During his first and fourth semesters, he averaged 3.3, the highest in his class. In his second and third semesters, his 3.0 tied him for highest in the class. His tutor, Simeon North, reported in a letter to a Mr. Brayton that Benjamin had a "pleasing manner"

and that his academic achievements allowed him to be "regarded by his mates as an ornament to the class."[5] He won a Berkeleian Prize, a book inscribed by President Jeremiah Day for excellence in scholarship.

Judah was naturally drawn to the student debating societies, thriving in the atmosphere of repartee and exchange. He argued such questions as, "Are the abilities of the sexes equal?" (answered by the Society, according to the minutes, with a "gallant . . . affirmative"). He also participated in a debate on the question, "Was the confinement of Bonaparte on the island of St. Helena justified?"

Yale was neither isolated nor protected from the turbulence in the nation over slavery, and when a Northerner was elected president of one of the societies, the Southern contingent broke off to form a new group "as a sort of class to themselves," debating issues of interest to the South. They voted down a motion regarding the advisability of meeting with other colleges to assist in the "manumission of slaves."[6] Judah, ready for verbal combat, soon joined his fellow Southerners in the new debating society.

Benjamin learned many things outside of the classroom at Yale. Watching the rich boys carefully, he learned upper-class manners. He worked prodigiously to beat them academically, besting them in debate with crisp analysis and wit. He emulated their best qualities, discarding their foppish tendencies, and steeped himself in art, music, and poetry, the better to mask his humble origins. A lad of limited means cast into the world of America's elite, a country bumpkin with Jewish audacity, he became an eager emulator of the quintessential Yale man. It is likely that he inspired his share of jealousies and resentments when he spouted Shakespeare and Tennyson and bested his older classmates in every arena.

After only two years, Judah Benjamin suddenly left Yale under clouded circumstances that would follow him in the form of gossip and accusations the rest of his life. His departure from Yale became a matter of talk during the Civil War because of an article written thirty-three years after the incident, in 1861, just before he was appointed Attorney General in the Confederate Cabinet. The article appeared in the New York *Independent,* written by Francis Bacon, a member of one of Yale's most illustrious families and a graduate of the law school class of 1831. Coming from a respectable source, the article revived the speculation and made headlines in the Northern press. Although the personalities in the article were thinly veiled, the charges were unusually detailed:

The Early History of a Traitor

BY FRANCIS BACON

The class of 1829 in Yale College (two years in advance of mine) was the finest body of young men that I ever saw in college. There was one of the class whose name cannot be found on the list of graduates, or in any annual catalogue after 1827. He was and still is a handsome little fellow, looking very small in his class, who, with a few exceptions, were of full manly growth. This youth hailed from a great state of the chivalrous South, bright-eyed and dark-complexioned, and ardent as the Southern sun would make him.

In the early part of 1828 there was a mysterious trouble in that class. Watches, breast pins, seals, pencil cases, penknives, etc., etc., etc., and lastly, sundry sums of money lying around loose in students' rooms disappeared unaccountably. The losers looked gloomily at each other and suspiciously at others. Something must be done.

They finally constituted themselves a volunteer detective force, set their trap—baited with thirty-five dollars in good bank notes—and soon caught the thief. He confessed. On opening his trunk in his presence, they found it nearly full of missing valuables—jewelry, pocket cutlery . . . —he begged pitifully not to be exposed; they looked piteously on his handsome young face, and relented at the thought of blasting his opening young life. They agreed not to inform either the city magistrates or the faculty of the university, but ordered him to clear out at once and forever. He went instantly to good President Day, obtained a certificate of honorable dismissal and vanished.

The little thief is now a Senator in Congress, advocating and justifying and threatening the robbery of forts, and the stealing of the military hardware and cutlery generally of the Federal government, without any more color or shadow of pretext than he had for his like operations on his fellow students just thirty-three years ago.

A third of a century has not made and can never make, any change in such an originally inborn rascal. Had these early filchings been a mere boyish escapade, a momentary yielding to temptation while in great want, they would not deserve mention now; but they were systematized theft—long, continued, accumulated, and hoarded pilferings from trusted bosom friends.

Had the fellow not at length reproduced his private morality

> in public life, I would have allowed the secret of these early times to remain in the hearts of the few who then knew and now remember it.[7]

Since the incident looms so large in Benjamin's boyhood and later life and has drawn the detailed investigation of his biographers, it once again deserves some attention and analysis.[8]

Robert D. Meade and Pierce Butler both point out that *The Independent,* which published it, was an Abolitionist journal, an organ for the views of Henry Ward Beecher and Francis Bacon, who was a well-known Abolitionist spokesman. The New Orleans *Delta,* in defending Benjamin, asserted that "the story was hatched by abolition malice, and the place and time of the incidents were selected with cunning regard to the difficulty of refutation."[9]

Benjamin hired two well-known Northern attorneys to bring suit for libel, but they advised him against any legal steps for fear of fanning the controversy into a still more widely publicized exchange. Benjamin was caught on the horns of a dilemma. After secession, it would have been unseemly for a potential Cabinet member to sue in a Northern court, and Southern courts had no jurisdiction over disputes in the North. So he was stymied by events.

He wrote to friends: "I left college in the fall of 1827, in consequence of my father's reverses rendering him unable to maintain me there any longer." Should he point out the discrepancy of dates in the article, which claimed that the events occurred in 1828, "and get friends that were college mates to state that no such things ever occurred," he would risk a small correction of dates and the "whole affair again goes the round of all the newspapers at the North, with the most malignant comments that can be invented." In a subsequent letter to a friend, he continued that "there is something so inexpressibly loathsome and revolting at the bare idea of having one's name published in the newspapers in connection with so degrading a charge. . . . However, I have determined to yield to the advice of my friends and to let a life-long career of integrity and honor make silent and contemptuous answer to such an attack."[10]

Francis Lawley, the former London *Times* correspondent, investigated the charges in 1901 and received a letter from the only survivor of the class of 1829. The letter said that not long after Judah entered college, "he fell into association with a set of disorderly fellows who were addicted to card playing and gambling, and his abrupt withdrawal from college was understood to be occasioned by difficulties growing out of this practice."[11]

On January 14, 1828, after six painful weeks at home with his parents, Judah wrote to President Day asking for readmission. The letter, because it speaks of "shame" and "improper conduct," seems to confirm that at least some incident of moral turpitude caused his departure and confesses to his father's "pecuniary affairs" as the source of his trouble:

> HIGHLY RESPECTED SIR:
>
> It is with shame and diffidence that I now address you to solicit your forgiveness and interference with the Faculty on my behalf. And I beseech you, Sir, not to attribute my improper conduct to any design or intentional violation of the laws of the college, not to suppose that I would be guilty of any premeditated disrespect to yourself or any member of the Faculty. And I think, Sir, you will not consider it improper for me to express my hopes, that my previous conduct in college was such as will not render it too presumptuous in me to hope that it will make a favorable impression upon yourself and the faculty.
>
> Allow me, Sir, here to express my gratitude to the Faculty for their kind indulgence to my father in regard to pecuniary affairs; and also to yourself and every individual member of the Faculty for their attention and paternal care of me, during the time I had the honor to be a member of the institution.
>
> With hopes of yet completing my education under your auspices, I remain, Sir, your most respectful and obedient Servant.
>
> *J. P. Benjamin*
>
> P.S. May I solicit, Sir (if it is not too troublesome to you) the favor of a few lines in answer to this letter, that I may be able to judge of the possibility of my return to the University?[12]

Benjamin had to swallow much pride to reapply for permission to return. At any rate, after one reads the letter, precisely why he left remains a mystery. There is no record of President Day's having answered his letter. Nor is there anything in other Yale records to indicate why he left or even that the authorities actually asked him to leave. In similar cases, the faculty records usually carefully detail names and offenses of students who are punished, but Judah Benjamin's name does not appear. Those records were kept by Simeon North, his tutor, who told the New York *Times* in 1883 that because of his fondness for Benjamin, he had "closed his eyes to many college pranks."[13]

A letter from Simeon North does confirm, Meade points out, the

existence of debts to Yale in the amount of $64.34 and that his parents had been unable to deposit money for expenses. That much seems to confirm Benjamin's version of the story in his Civil War letters. Judah had left, North said, "without the knowledge or the permission of his friends or instructors," but he added a phrase that supports the more serious side of the story "in a manner that justly exposed him to sensure[sic]."[14] There is also evidence that his debating society investigated charges of "ungentlemanly conduct" against him and passed a motion to expel him from the society. "It was requested," the society's minutes stated, "that the charge against Mr. Benjamin be kept a secret." However, the Yale scholar Anson Phelps Stokes was of the opinion that the phrase "ungentlemanly conduct" suggested boyish mischief rather than criminal conduct as the reason for his departure.[15]

Further investigation seemed to deepen the mystery rather than resolve it. Dan A. Oren, the author of *Joining The Club: A History of Jews and Yale,* points out that Bacon may have been mistaken in the original charge and may have confused Benjamin with a student named "Peniman," who "did receive admonishment for playing cards on January 4, 1828 (after Benjamin left Yale), the year used in the Bacon letter."[16] Simeon North reported that when Benjamin became stranded in Rochester, New York, after leaving Yale and losing his pocketbook, students thought enough of him and were concerned enough about his well-being to take up a collection to help him return to South Carolina. Had he been stealing from substantial numbers of students, it is unlikely that fellow students would have responded so generously to his difficulties.

The truth grew more elusive as events unfolded after Benjamin's departure. A week before his letter requesting readmission, John D. Boardman, Benjamin's roommate, sent the faculty an apology "for whatever was done by me contrary to their laws or wishes, in the late affairs."[17] Did the apology refer to subsequent disorders, another incident, or to the Judah P. Benjamin affair? Was Boardman involved in the incident that embarrassed his roommate? Whatever the answer, Boardman remained at Yale and Judah left for New Orleans and a new life before hearing from the college concerning his request for readmission. Meade suggests that he may not have told his father the truth about the reasons he had to leave Yale and wrote the letter at his father's insistence, having already decided to leave for New Orleans. Subsequent events indicate that he saw his father little after leaving, though he managed to see his mother and sisters at least once a year. Leaving Charleston, his boyhood

home, was clearly the beginning of a deep estrangement between Judah and his father, which would never heal.

By the age of sixteen, Judah had suffered through years of humiliation, to such an unusual degree that dealing with humiliation would become a significant factor in his later life. His parents had come from the Caribbean with so little that the family had to live with a relative for several years. In Charleston, the family had to be supported by a small shop and the hard work of his mother, who did not let his father forget that dependency; his father had bolted from one congregation and had been expelled from another. The boy had arrived at the aristocratic campus of Yale University, a Southerner and the only Jew; he left Yale under a humiliating cloud of suspicion and returned to Charleston for what must have been the most miserable time of his young life. He was a disappointment to his father, to his mother, to his siblings, to his benefactor, and to himself. Had he stayed in Charleston, he would have been known as a failure, especially to his own family.

He chose to leave all that behind, to leave his family for another city where he was not known and where he could start over. To leave Charleston for New Orleans was to abandon a more traditional and stable Jewish community for one that was then almost nonexistent, freewheeling, and unanchored. Because it was Catholic and French, New Orleans presented the greatest challenge a Jew could have selected; but because it was unstructured socially as a seaport city where a single shipload of rum could make a man rich, a Jew would be less restricted, more able to be judged by his accomplishments, and more likely to prosper by his ability.

Moreover, Charleston by the 1820s had begun to dissolve as a trade center, its growth faltering from the competition in the Northeast boosted by the Erie Canal, discriminatory tariffs, and thermal navigation, which shortened the routes from Europe to Boston and New York. The migration westward had begun to lands unexhausted by yearly cotton crops, away from the epidemics of yellow fever and malaria that had given Charleston such a bad reputation. Contemporaries described the city at this time as a "place of tombs." As its economic base began to shrink, its ruling class became more inaccessible to those born at the bottom of the ladder. For a young Jewish Southerner looking for a brisk economy and a legal career as an apprentice to lawyers needing assistance, the great river port in Louisiana looked far more promising.

3

New Orleans to Bellechasse: *The Climb to U.S. Senator*

Young Judah P. Benjamin arrived in New Orleans in 1828 with but five dollars in his pocket—a daring young adventurer entering the most permissive, raucous, open, and mystical city in America.[1] It was a colorful place where the classes readily mixed, where fortunes were made and lost over the turn of a card—or the whim of the sea. New Orleans attracted shipping from both the river and the sea, with scores of steamboats, schooners, giant sailing ships, and flatboats loading and unloading at the docks where the muddy Mississippi flowed by on its way into the blue Gulf of Mexico. Passenger ships disgorged sailors, gamblers, travelers, traders—turning the city into a turbulent place where the talk was of land, slaves, cotton, and sugar; and where a man's mind and talent, not his religion or birth, determined his fate.

The richness of life in New Orleans suggested Liverpool or Alexandria: there were spices and silk from China, teakwood from Africa, oils from North Atlantic whales, indigo and rum from Jamaica. New Orleans was growing at a furious pace and would double in population—from 50,000 to 100,000—between 1830 and 1840. Judah Benjamin could not have picked a more promising place or time to start over and to begin a law practice.

By day, New Orleans was a commercial beehive; by night, sheer mystery. The city was laced with narrow streets full of people of every known color, couples who had just met; sailors and sinners gulped down fresh oysters with beer, pockets jingling as they wandered the French Quarter searching for music and watching for roulette tables and dancing girls; belligerent types just looking for a good street brawl for the sheer pleasure of it.

Benjamin worked for a time at odd jobs until he could get settled: in a mercantile house, processing due bills and ledgers, then teaching school part-time. Eventually, he reached the first rung on his ladder of ambition by becoming an apprentice to Greenbury R. Stringer, a notary attached to a commercial law firm. As Benjamin learned his craft, Stringer assigned him increasingly difficult cases. Meanwhile, Benjamin's circle of friends slowly began to spread to other young men of ambition in the city.

Soon after he had departed for New Orleans, Judah's mother and most of the rest of her family moved to Beaufort—known as "Little Charleston," where the rice-planting aristocracy lived.[2] Philip did not move with them: Historians have concluded that he and Rebecca had separated. For more than twenty years thereafter, Philip and Rebecca lived apart, setting an example for their son as to the way a marriage could remain publicly intact yet privately "adjusted."[3]

Each summer, when the New Orleans heat grew oppressive, Benjamin, loaded down with a trunkload of books and gifts, would visit his mother and sisters in Beaufort. The daughter of one of Benjamin's sisters told Pierce Butler how Judah delighted in reading stories to the whole family, that he performed novels with great zest and drama. That niece had no recollections of his father's ever being present on any such occasion.

Much refreshed, Judah would return to New Orleans, ready to plunge back into his law practice and the political activity of the city. He vowed to be a great lawyer, Yale or no Yale. The restrained aggression of the profession attracted him. He loved the courtroom as a self-contained arena of battle with rules and audiences, winners and losers; a place of structured competition where he could thrash his opposition with all the intensity, charm, brilliance, and powers of concentration at his command.

For ambitious young men in New Orleans, a daughter of a wealthy Creole represented the ideal. To marry into one of the Creole families was to marry into a velvet world of influence and money. The Creoles were the premier families of New Orleans, descended from the earli-

est French settlers. They preserved the characteristic form of French speech and culture. Benjamin's aspirations called for the access, power, and status a Creole connection could provide.

A struggling young lawyer in New Orleans would have to master the Napoleonic Code, which loomed like a mountain of legal tangle before him.[4] Judah Benjamin spoke not a word of French. As fate would have it, Auguste St. Martin, a Creole official of a local insurance company, hired him to tutor his daughter in English. The young upstart accepted—but only on the condition that she would teach him French.[5]

Natalie St. Martin was only sixteen and Benjamin twenty-one, when they met to begin their lessons and the first few months of their courtship. They were the only happy months of their relationship—and perhaps the happiest time of his life.

A painting of Natalie reveals a woman with large, dark, expectant eyes and bare shoulders, her lips curled into a smile perhaps a degree beyond propriety. Her skin was smooth and supple—almost an olive color—and her dark, plentiful hair ran down her back, making wild intricate turns, suggesting a rebellious nature that refused to be controlled by convention or channeled by upper-class expectations. She radiated the anxious sensuality of a Creole princess—undisciplined, selfish, and entrancing. She cast a spell over him like some sorceress.

Their meetings for lessons began to absorb him entirely. She was audacious, unafraid, and decidely experimental, always leading her English tutor into a new and exciting phase of their learning. History records her later indiscretions, but in the beginning she was a restless child-woman with the instinct of a courtesan. His life began to take on new dimensions as he studied at night for the bar and met Natalie to be instructed in French and other cultural nuances of a ripening young girl.

New Orleans in the summer and fall of 1832 experienced the worst plague of mosquitoes from the swamps in its history, spreading a devastating epidemic of yellow fever and Asian cholera. Five hundred people a day were dying, ultimately nearly one-sixth of the city's population. The city fathers lit pots of coals to produce black, acrid smoke to drive the mosquitoes away. Every hour, cannons were fired to stir the air. There was no place to escape, no way to block out the cholera or to avoid stacks of bodies awaiting coffins.[6]

Later in 1832, after the epidemic had passed, Benjamin was admitted to the bar. His relationship with Natalie matured into courtship.

It required a special audacity and self-confidence for a young man who was poor and Jewish to imagine himself marrying into the New Orleans Catholic aristocracy. Religion, in fact, was a problem. Natalie's father wanted Judah to convert to Catholicism for the sake of propriety, even though Auguste St. Martin himself was not a strict Catholic. But church records and later events prove that Benjamin did not convert. He agreed, however, that the couple's children could be raised in the faith of Natalie's mother and grandparents.

That apparently sufficed. Judah and Natalie were married on February 12, 1833, with a onetime justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court as a family witness. Perhaps to deceive the priest so that the marriage could proceed without his formal conversion, the marriage register recorded him as Philip Benjamin. Conforming to the custom of the time, he and Natalie spent their honeymoon in her parent's home. Throughout their marriage, Natalie called him by his French name, "Philippe." He never corrected her; it was her affectation, a name that assimilated him into French New Orleans and helped him submerge what he then thought would be his invisible past.[7]

For three years after their marriage, they lived with Auguste and his wife Françoise, also from a noted Creole family, in their large house on Chartres Street. He endured this with mixed emotions: fine surroundings, but total dependence. For a young man of fierce ambition, the St. Martin household was a daily reminder of his lack of power, of station, and of independent means.

Soon after her daughter's marriage, Françoise had a son, who was named Jules. As much from convenience as sentiment, the baby came to be taken care of more by the childless couple in the house than by the parents. Judah and Natalie taught the child to walk and cuddled the boy over the first ten years of their marriage. Jules St. Martin spent so much of his formative years with his "Uncle Judah" that he almost became the son that Natalie and Judah P. Benjamin never had.

Benjamin worked and saved but could not yet altogether afford a home of his own. When the St. Martins moved to Bourbon Street in the French Quarter, the Benjamins moved into an adjoining house, where Natalie could stand on the wrought-iron balcony and talk to friends in the street below. Thus, for ten years they either lived with or next door to the St. Martins.[8]

Benjamin worked constantly in the early days, late into each evening, eager for further independence, with an even larger dream of land and a home of his own, to make his wife and in-laws proud.

His cases, the records show, were the kind of low-level contracts and complaints that come to struggling young lawyers. Instead of waiting around for clients to show up, his boundless energy and ingenuity led him to begin a book on Louisiana law, which required the analysis of six thousand cases. He worked on the digest of cases with Tom Slidell, who would become a future Chief Justice of the Louisiana Supreme Court. The reference book, written in 1834, when Benjamin was just twenty-three years old, became a standard text for lawyers and judges in the state.[9]

His friendship with the Slidell brothers—the younger Tom became his law partner and John his political mentor—pushed him ever along in New Orleans legal and political circles. John Slidell was also a commercial and maritime lawyer who maneuvered his way into becoming the political "boss" of New Orleans and adopted Judah P. Benjamin as his protégé. Both were new men in the city, challenging traditional Creole leadership, and yet both married into the very Creole power structure they battled. Slidell would later be described as "a wire puller . . . a man who moves the puppets on the public stage." "Slidellian" became in New Orleans politics what "Tammany" was to New York, the city where Slidell was born in 1793, attended Columbia College, began his career, and learned his politics. He was not beyond ballot-stuffing or the manipulation of "repeaters" to get his candidates elected. He himself was elected to the U.S. Senate after running and being defeated twice. New Orleans politics was bitterly divided among many factions, which enabled a man like Slidell, with questionable tactics, to wheel and deal his way to success. His reputation for delivering the state would take him in 1856 to the rare heights of chief patronage distributor for the National Democratic Party during the Buchanan administration. James A. Buchanan later rewarded him with an ambassadorship to Mexico, an experience that placed him in line for a later Confederate appointment to France to conduct sensitive negotiations with Louis Napoleon's court. He looked the polished gentleman—large stature, sharp nose, a twisted mouth. Benjamin trusted him, and he would become ruthless in Benjamin's behalf; they became political colleagues in the Senate and as close as brothers.[10]

The law digest was a success and projected Benjamin in 1835 into association with a group of prominent New Orleans business, political, and professional men who planned to build the first Louisiana railroad. At the time, there were only 9 miles of railroad in the state. The syndicate dreamed of one great railroad extending all

the way to Jackson, Mississippi. It required public and private charters, financing, engineering, and Benjamin began to develop a familiarity with railroads that would help his career enormously.

There were great lawyers in New Orleans to fire a young man's ambition, to lift his vision of what was possible: Mazureaum, the outstanding Creole master of the Civil Code; Janin, a Portuguese nobleman who had been a general under Frederick the Great and spoke five languages and was now one of the most noted land lawyers in America; John Randolph Grymes, a Virginia aristocrat who had resigned his office as district attorney to defend the pirate Jean Lafitte for a twenty-thousand-dollar fee; and Roselius, who later turned down a partnership with Daniel Webster because he loved New Orleans.[11] Benjamin would be tilting with some of the great minds in America, and that meant work, careful preparation, more nights with the kerosene lamps. His specialty began to be commercial law, and because of his familiarity with precedents through the digests, he was beginning to be sought to write briefs and to argue more significant appeals to higher courts.

The panic of 1837 caused fourteen banks to fail and paralyzed business, thus setting him back in his practice. But by 1839, his law practice was growing dramatically, and he was handling major appeals to the Louisiana Supreme Court and outside the state as well. In 1839, he appeared in nine cases; in 1841, he won nine of eleven cases; in 1844, he won twenty-three of thirty-five; and in 1846, he or his firm appeared in forty-nine cases. They were, for the most part, civil suits of a technical nature regarding property claims, slavery disputes, mercantile conflicts, or shipping disagreements. His growing reputation as a persuasive advocate and eloquent speaker was drawing him into other arenas, and with John Slidell's encouragement he began attending political meetings, making important friends, and considering the opportunities for elective office.

Two stories from Robert D. Meade's papers give insights into Judah's attitude toward his Jewishness at this period in his life. First, Meade's papers contain a letter from William Cabell Bruce reporting a story given to him by John K. Cowen, General Counsel to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad:

"On one occasion," Bruce writes, "Benjamin, when in Baltimore, went before a Justice of the Peace to make affidavit to a paper. A blank had been left in the certificate of affidavit for the insertion of

the name of the affiant, and, when Benjamin handed the paper to the Justice, he asked him to fill in the blank. Instead of inserting the name 'Judah,' the Justice inadvertently inserted the name 'Judas'; whereupon Benjamin reclaimed possession of the paper and dashed it down with great force on the desk of the Justice, exclaiming, as he did so—'My God, man, is not Judah Jew enough?' "[12]

It was not the first time the question of his name had been raised, according to an interview that Meade had with Mrs. G. G. Myrover, who described her mother-in-law who had once lived near and later boarded with Benjamin's mother in Beaufort and was there during one of Benjamin's visits.

"She knew Benjamin well," Meade reported from his interview. "She said he seemed to hate to be a Jew. He asked his mother why she named him Judah, "and then said she heard Judah say 'You might well have written Jew across my forehead.' "[13]

Those two anecdotes point in an extraordinarily revealing way to Benjamin's discontent and anger toward his Jewishness. The incidents are not dated exactly, but both occurred after he entered the practice of law, perhaps in his mid-twenties or later, and provide a strong indication of a personality ashamed of his roots and in flight. He was not, as he has been portrayed in history, indifferent and uninvolved, assimilated and adjusted to a new identity. Even had he wanted a new identity, it would not have been possible. To Benjamin, Judaism was a burden, an inhibition to advancement, a restraint upon success. It caused him much suffering, especially from Christians who saw in him the personification of a story nineteen centuries old. At least in the struggling early years of his career as a Jew in a Catholic city, much indignation and resentment lay beneath the veneer of affability, self-confidence, and achievement.

But New Orleans was a city growing too fast for anti-Semitism to hold back a young lawyer with talent. There was almost no tradition, and so many young men were caught up in the idle world of whiskey, women, and fine clothes, that an ambitious, hardworking Jewish lawyer could get ahead. Besides, anti-Semitism had never been a strong local tradition. There were a number of prominent Jews whom Judah knew: Henry Hyams, an older cousin, who was Lieutenant Governor of Louisiana, and Dr. Edwin Warren Moise, Attorney General of Louisiana and Speaker of the Louisiana House of Representatives, were two of them.

Just before the Civil War, Salomon de Rothschild of the Parisian

branch of the noted banking family met Benjamin, Hyams, and Moise in New Orleans. He called Benjamin "perhaps the greatest mind on this continent" and added in a letter home: "What is astonishing . . . is the high position occupied by our coreligionists . . . who, having married Christian women, and without converting, have forgotten the practices of their fathers . . . and what is odd, all these men have a Jewish heart and take an interest in me, because I represent the greatest Jewish house in the world."[14] Thus, to an informed observer in the late 1850s Judah P. Benjamin appeared to have a "Jewish heart," no easy accomplishment in a city as incorrigible as New Orleans.

Marriage to Natalie took Benjamin far away from the Jewish community in New Orleans, not that it was such a substantial community in the 1830s. Jewish life followed the pattern of general religious observance in a city that was just too busy for worship. There were so many opportunities to pursue that the Jewish community did not really have a congregation until 1829 or take the synagogue seriously until 1840. With a community of seven hundred, only four households did not eat forbidden food, two-thirds of the boys were not circumcised, and almost no one read Hebrew.[15]

How could anybody take old Rabbi Rowley Marks seriously? The clownish self-styled rabbi in New Orleans was a part-time comic actor and fireman, a fake clergyman given to high jinks and ludicrous asides. Once, when a member of the congregation complained of Rowley's conduct during a High Holy Days service, he banged on the podium with his fist and shouted, "By Jesus Christ! I have a right to pray."[16]

The New Orleans congregation changed into a more religious and serious group after German Jews began arriving in large numbers in the 1840s. The Orthodox traditionalism of the newcomers, however, drove Judah as far away as the earlier rowdyism of Rowley Marks.

They just were too insular for him; they lived in the Old World, he lived in the New. Because they had been forced to live together in ghettos in Europe, they clustered together in New Orleans as well. He understood, but his history was linked to the Sephardics of Spain. In New Orleans, the Sephardics were the aristocrats of Judaism and the pillars of the general society; they married into the best Gentile families. Did anyone think they achieved such a position by looking inward?

In his new life, money and fine things seemed to make Natalie momentarily happy. Luckily, Benjamin's law practice allowed her trips, clothes, and jewelry. One can only imagine her reaction to his political friends and to the tiresome discussions of politics.

She must have liked the prestige that his participation in political life brought—the parties and the balls in the Governor's mansion when foreign dignitaries came to call. But she seemed to crave attention as strongly as a child does, especially as her husband's prominence grew. The diaries of the times record the reaction of other wives to her flirtations, beckoning men of all sorts but particularly Frenchmen, who seemed specially attractive to her, as if she were searching for some primal resolution to her Creole culture and her American birth.

Judah P. Benjamin's career blossomed in New Orleans as his marriage shriveled. Natalie resented the price she had to pay for his success, the loneliness, and the neglect of her husband.

Bellechasse was his answer. Money was so plentiful for Benjamin by the 1840s that a plantation near New Orleans, far enough away from Natalie's family, from other men, and from his legal and political involvement, seemed a perfect solution both for him and for Natalie, who could preside over a grand house and elegant parties.

First of all, Bellechasse fitted the thrust of his political career. To be successful in Louisiana politics, a man had to be a successful planter. To own land and slaves was to gain the trust of the propertied class, who cast the only votes that counted. That was especially so for a Jewish lawyer without property or slaves, for whom suspicion would abound, be he married to the best Creole family in all Christendom.

But Bellechasse offered more. His mother was getting old, and he wanted her to see him in the splendor of a Southern fantasy. He would design and build the most beautiful house in all Louisiana, on rich land with massive oaks. Natalie and he would make grand entrances down the spiral staircase, and it would not be just a showplace but a working, thriving plantation alive with slaves and sugar and boasting the riches of his toil and ingenuity.

Benjamin's eyesight had suffered from the late nights and long hours of his law practice. He had to give up and move to Bellechasse, where he sat in darkness for weeks. Characteristically, as he would approach all new challenges throughout his life, when he recovered, he plunged into the work of the plantation, spending hours implementing new ideas and techniques. What was extraordinary, looking

back on his life, was that such a cerebral personality could transform himself into a successful gentleman farmer and plantation owner. He wanted to show the South that sugar cane could be its future.[17] Sugar production was in its infancy in Louisiana, which was using primitive techniques for refining, handed down from father to son. From a trip to France in the early 1840s, Benjamin brought back new varieties of seed and the advanced techniques and inventions of French chemists whom he had interviewed in Paris. He experimented to develop precise drainage and fertilization methods and introduced the principle of boiling cane juice in a vacuum, so that little syrup was wasted and more pure sugar extracted from the molasses. The wife of his partner, Theodore Packwood, recalled that "I never see them riding about the field together without trembling for the consequences. Mr. Benjamin can talk him into buying any newfangled pot or pan he's pleased with for the moment and then Theodore has the worry of trying to make the thing work."[18] He was the fount of ideas, the theoretician, the researcher who combed books and articles for the latest techniques. He wrote and visited inventors and brought back drawings and designs. In Packwood, he had a willing implementer and master tinkerer.

Planters came from all over the state to dinner parties with experts from other countries, as did officials from the Federal government studying the latest refining techniques in Cuba and Louisiana. Having convinced himself of the practicality of his experiments, Benjamin wrote a small book with such clarity that it made the innovative process understandable for less competent planters and accessible to those who might try raising sugar cane for the first time. Even to read it today, it serves as a model of clear exposition to a person altogether unfamiliar with the process. It was distributed widely, adding to Benjamin's reputation statewide and creating a new role for him as a popularizer of new scientific knowledge.[19]

Benjamin's aspiration for Bellechasse required the purchase of 140 slaves. By then, he was in his mid-thirties and had years of travel behind him in the course of his law practice and his search for English and French techniques for his plantation. He was not therefore parochial in his views on slavery and was aware of the views toward it in other countries. Britain, in fact, had abolished slavery in the 1830s. He had felt the sting of the Abolitionists and had certainly discussed slavery abroad with men who did not agree with him.

Since Bellechasse was not a plantation handed down to him by

an earlier generation, he came to slaveowning late in life from an urban background. Consequently, he was not steeped in its traditional philosophy. He would acquire an articulated point of view, but without the Biblical justifications that sustained its most extreme advocates. Though he had entered the ranks of the planter class that ruled Louisiana, he never felt that slavery reflected the divine order of things. He was not taken in by distorted theories of the Bible; he never argued that blacks were of a lower order; and he hated the cruelty of the overseers he heard about. Benjamin took care to have a plantation noted for its humaneness and sought to be known across Louisiana as a gentleman who treated his slaves well. According to Pierce Butler, former Bellechasse slaves who were still living in the early twentieth century reported "none but kindly memories and romantic legends of the days of glory on the old place."[20]

But Natalie was miserable in his paradise. Benjamin had moved into a more graceful atmosphere, but once again he was too busy for her. After ten years of marriage, she was pregnant with Ninette. When the child came in 1843, she sank into an immense depression. They were isolated on the plantation, and Benjamin tried to dispel her melancholy with a frantic round of grand parties and dances, constant entertaining of the rich, and frequent trips to New Orleans for amusement and shopping. But it all went stale for her. She missed the variety of urban life and dreamed of the excitement of living in France. Suddenly she announced in 1844 her intention to leave Louisiana altogether and move to Paris.

Benjamin must have been torn over losing his child, if not Natalie, but he had no choice and reluctantly had to acquiesce. They would give it a trial; he would send her money to provide for her needs and would visit as often as he could. Benjamin probably thought she would tire of Paris and would find herself isolated again when the French treated her disdainfully as just another American woman who spoke French. He predicted she would feel a growing loneliness for her friends and a nostalgia for New Orleans. But France and Paris had always held an attraction for her. In vain he hoped that the reality of living there would get it out of her system, and that she would return to him in some new circumstance in a few years.

By marrying into the St. Martin family, Judah P. Benjamin managed to escape the career limitations of his Jewishness, but the marital relationship would cause him lifelong humiliation. A well-positioned Creole family like the St. Martins would never have chosen a struggling

Jewish lawyer had they been given a choice. They took him into their home and must have been kind, but he was forced to live with them for more than three years. Had he moved out of the family house, he could not have afforded to keep their daughter in the grand New Orleans manner. By staying, however, he signaled to the upper classes of New Orleans that he was not a success in his law practice and had to be subsidized by the St. Martins to live in their aristocratic style. He could have relaxed and become the *bon vivant* son-in-law; but he never broke stride from a pattern that would be sustained throughout his life: a pattern of hard work and unbridled ambition. It was as if he were becoming conditioned to accepting humiliation as an incentive to drive and push himself even harder than he otherwise might have. It happened in Charleston and at Yale; it would be the same in New Orleans. That meant nights and weekends at the office; after all, to return to the St. Martins was to be reminded that he was not the master of his own house.

In addition, in a Catholic world couples were expected to have children, yet he and Natalie did not, for ten years. They might have suffered a stigma from that childlessness—if not among the Catholic aristocracy of New Orleans, then surely in the eyes of the St. Martin family. Auguste St. Martin had every right to expect Natalie to continue the family line. When the Benjamins finally did have a child, the failure to do so earlier became his, not his wife's. If that did not call his manhood into question, it certainly reflected on his marriage.

After the Benjamins left the St. Martin home, Natalie's flirtatious and libertine nature brought new embarrassments into Benjamin's life. To outsiders, he not only could not father a child but had a wayward wife as well, facts humiliating enough in the telling to supply the insatiable gossip mill of the New Orleans elite. His instinct and life pattern since Yale and Charleston were to start over, to abandon the past and begin anew against almost impossible odds. Bellechasse was that kind of choice for a Jew raised in urban life and trained to use his mind in the courtroom, not his physical forces on a plantation. And Bellechasse seemed a way to isolate and control Natalie.

But there was more to it. Humiliation can cause a reaction of exaggerated self-sacrifice, which can be a manifestation of honor. A man in the South had to rise to any challenge, had to act honorably, and had to stand tall when others found the burden of the code

too weighty to bear. Financial success in the South did not in itself confer honor. That kind of success was a Northern standard. In the South, honor meant adherence to a gentleman's code—perseverance in adversity, disdain for those with a lesser standard, firmness against the winds of chance, unbowed by suffering. Benjamin was trying to change his social class, to become a gentleman of property, to transcend his birth and move into the planter class with its rewards of respectability and public office. That was the true purpose of Bellechasse, and he built it with his own brand of demonic activity.

To marry Natalie St. Martin was both an opportunity and a courting of humiliation. A poor Jew in a wealthy Catholic world could expect nothing less; a man with a faithless wife, notorious and open in her conduct, would have to learn to absorb intense pain. Natalie did not act otherwise than could have been predicted for her at Bellechasse. She could not remain indefinitely in her husband's velvet cage. What was not predictable was the extreme step she would take in reaction: She packed up their only child, almost as if the child was hers alone, sailed to Europe, and left him alone in his empty paradise. He had to accept a marriage of extended separation, similar to the marriage of his parents.

Benjamin did not let Natalie's departure deter him from carrying out the plans he had made to keep her at Bellechasse. He tore down the old house on the plantation and built an even more splendid new one, a square grand mansion surrounded by double balconies supported by twenty-eight square cypress columns. There were twenty rooms, with hallways 16 feet wide running through the house, crystal chandeliers, a marble fireplace, some statues he had purchased in Florence, a spiral mahogany staircase that ran up the middle of the structure, and a veranda around the entire house, so he could look out across his land in any direction and catch the air and a view of the flowing Mississippi River. No detail was overlooked: silver-plated doorknobs, great escutcheons, the finest furnishings.[21]

Bellechasse would be a Louisiana showplace and would add to the Judah P. Benjamin legend. He would be as successful a planter as he had been a lawyer.

But he, too, missed New Orleans. He found that by careful management he could both supervise the plantation and resume his law practice. Without Natalie, the isolation of Bellechasse became intolerable. Benjamin returned to his New Orleans law practice and an even more active life than before, including the consuming world

of politics. Since he would live in both city and country, the new Bellechasse would need a mistress. He invited his recently widowed older sister, Penny, and her young daughter, Leah, to come live with him, along with his aging mother, Rebecca. His father, Philip, remained in Charleston, uninvited to Judah's Camelot.

Bellechasse existed until 1935. Photographs show it to be of unusual design, ordered by a man obviously unafraid of innovation. It said to all Louisiana and even to Charleston that Judah Benjamin was a success, that he was rich and landed. The Benjamins had never owned land. When Rebecca arrived to see it she had a perfect view of the glorious mansion below, toward the river on grounds as far as the eye could see, the new shoots of sugar cane pushing up from the black earth, and fine horses grazing in the pasture.

The road into the grounds cut between two giant oaks framing the house, passing a white fence gate with a large silver bell. The bell had been made especially for him by a New York foundry, and Benjamin had provided two hundred silver dollars to be tossed into the molten kettle for clarity. It rang with a great throaty clang so that the noise resounded through the lowlands and signaled the house whenever guests arrived.

Judah P. Benjamin was now a gentleman, and he had made the Mendes-Benjamin name a lasting one by planting its future in the land.

Rebecca died in the autumn of 1847 and was buried in New Orleans, far from her husband and her homes in Charleston and Beaufort. Penny and her younger brother grew even closer than before.[22] To Penny, he was now "J. P." as she called him in all the glory of his maturity and achievement.

At Bellechasse, Penny and her child, Leah, provided Benjamin with a loving family and welcome companionship. Penny was a "sharer of my perplexities," Benjamin wrote, and an excellent manager of the house. Together they entertained with even more enthusiasm than Benjamin had when he was trying to entice Natalie to stay. He could return from the brutal legislative battles in Baton Rouge or the courts in New Orleans and Washington to the utter tranquility of the place. As a lawyer and a rising star in Louisiana politics, he could converse about the attractions of Bellechasse with other planter-politicians. For such men the plantation was an object of reverence, their refuge from the divisive turmoil of political affairs.

In 1846, when Benjamin was thirty-five, a description of him in *Sketches of Life and Character in Louisiana* appeared in New Orleans newspapers and stated that "as a speaker, he is calm, collected, forcible, though sometimes a little too rapid in his elocution. . . . His style is distinguished for its conciseness, and close adherence to the matter at hand. . . . To his many scholarly acquirement he adds the French language, which he speaks with fluency and elegance."

Clearly, Benjamin had come very far in his profession, but he had not managed to assimilate completely into Creole culture. The directory text continued: "Mr. Benjamin is by birth, and as his name imports, an Israelite. Yet how far he still adheres to the religion of his fathers, I cannot tell, though I should doubt whether the matter troubled him much."[23]

Judah P. Benjamin rose to political prominence in spite of the fact that in his young years he never showed himself to be an extremist on the question of slavery either in the cases he took as a lawyer or in the speeches he made as an emerging figure in Louisiana politics. He did not join with the politicians who spoke of reopening the slave trade, who stirred up racial hatreds and fears for personal gain, or who were intemperate in their language in the fist-pounding, red-faced, blowhard defense of it.

Benjamin was a pragmatist. He accepted what he could not change and built his career on issues he could influence: a railroad from Louisiana to the Pacific, for example. Like all Southern politicians, he, too, on occasion, was capable of changing his message on the subject, depending on the time, the place, or the audience. Historians would have defined him as an enlightened Southerner who could be passionately critical of the most inhuman aspects of slavery and could denounce its cruelties with eloquence, yet not be an opponent of the system itself.

In 1842, in one of the most celebrated insurance cases in American history involving slavery, Benjamin represented insurance companies who were being sued by slaveowners to recover the cost of some slaves they had lost because of an uprising at sea on the brig *Creole*. During the voyage from Virginia to New Orleans, nineteen slaves mutinied and forced the captain and crew to take the ship to Nassau. There the authorities arrested the mutinous slaves but let the others go free, because they were now in British territory. The owners brought suit in New Orleans for $150,000 against the insurance companies involved.

Benjamin argued before the Louisiana Supreme Court that the

British did not have to recognize the status of the slaves on the ship:

> The position that slavery is a contravention of the law of nature is established by the concurrent authority of writers on international law and of adjudications of courts of justice, from the era of Justinian to the present day. . . . View this matter as we may, it at last resolves itself into the simple question—does the law of nations make it the duty of Great Britain to refuse a refuge in her domains for fugitives from this country, whether white or black, free or slave? It would require great hardihood to maintain the affirmative as to whites; but the color of the fugitive can make no possible difference. It will scarcely be pretended that the presumption of our municipal law, that blacks are slaves, is to be made a rule of law of nations.

Benjamin had begun his argument using the laws of nature, a classic Abolitionist rationale, and urging the court to make a decision regarding race. He continued insisting that the law of nations shall determine the case:

> It is obvious that the only criterion by which they can be governed is that which is insisted on by the American government, viz.: if the blacks reach there under the control of the whites as their slaves, so consider them; but if the blacks reach there uncontrolled by any master and apparently released from any restraint on the part of the whites, to consider them as free. These are the principles on which by the law of nations Great Britain has the right to regulate her principles.

But Benjamin's boldest argument was that the risk of mutiny was inherent in the slaveowner's decision to pack the slaves so tightly into the ship as to incite a mutiny and that the crew brought the loss on themselves by their cruelty. This passage of his legal brief was reprinted in pamphlets by abolitionists and circulated all over the country:

> What is a slave? He is a human being. He has feeling and passion and intellect. His heart, like the heart of the white man, swells with love, burns with jealousy, aches with sorrow, pines under restraint and discomfort, boils with revenge and ever cherishes the desire for liberty. His passions and feelings in some respects may not be as fervid and as delicate as those of the white, nor

> his intellect as acute; but passions and feelings he has, and in some respects, they are more violent and consequently more dangerous, from the very circumstances that his mind is comparatively weak and unenlightened. Considering the character of the slave, and the peculiar passions which, generated by nature, are strengthened and stimulated by his condition, he is prone to revolt in the near future of things, and ever ready to conquer his liberty where a probable chance presents itself.

Benjamin concluded by asking, "Will this court be disposed to recognize one standard of humanity for the white man and another for the Negro?" The Louisiana Supreme Court said no and ruled for Benjamin's clients against the slaveowners. The case became a *cause célèbre,* argued about in Congress and ultimately the object of international arbitration.[24]

Many writers have quoted from the brief in Benjamin's defense as an indication of his true feelings about slavery. But it must be pointed out that he was making the case for a client and he received a substantial fee from the insurance company for winning the case. Advocates of his era often looked for the most persuasive parts of an argument and in drafting their briefs overwrote the strong points to cover the weaker side of a case. Society did not question a lawyer's ethics for taking a case he disagreed with; a lawyer made the best possible case for his client, and society accepted that as part of the workings of the legal system. Moreover, there was not the communication system between courts and the bar that there is today, and briefs were rarely circulated widely. Benjamin was probably embarrassed by the use of his arguments in the pamphlets of the Abolitionists and certainly did not foresee such a use when he was writing his brief.

Still, this was passionate language for a Southerner with political ambition, because no one with such views could be elected to any office in the ante-bellum South. It is testimony to the acceptance of the practice of the legal system that Benjamin, after writing such a brief and in spite of its use by the Abolitionists, could be elected to public office at all.

Like many Southerners, Benjamin would be incensed over the harsh picture of plantation life that Harriet Beecher Stowe painted in *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1851, particularly when it was quoted in the Congress and was used as a basis for legislation. He once compiled some controversial figures from government reports to show that

slaves were well treated on plantations, and accused a Republican colleague of misleading the people.

"He has read in a novel the authentic fact that Mr. Legree whipped Uncle Tom to death," he would say later in a Senate debate, "and that is a thousand times more satisfactory than any such foolish thing as official documents." Then he attacked the entire criminal justice system, claiming that the Southern way of whipping was more humane than long jail terms.

> If a slave in the South broke open the cabin of another slave and stole his pretty treasure, he would be whipped and there the criminal procedure would end. But if the same event occurred in the North between white persons, the offender would be given a term of years in the penitentiary. If it occurred in philanthropic England, the man . . . I believe, formerly would have been hanged . . . but now he simply will be torn from wife, children, country, home and friends, manacled, and transported to a penal colony of Great Britain in the southern seas.[25]

Although he owned slaves, he vigorously opposed the use of the so-called federal ratio, under which five slaves would be counted as three white men in determining the basis of representation in Louisiana elections. Adopting such a plan would have increased the representation of slaveowners in the legislature.

In the Louisiana Constitutional Convention of 1845, he turned the logic of the slaveholders against their interests:

> Slaves were, by our laws, nothing but property. But, says the delegate from Lafourche . . . we should allow them to form a part of the basis of representation because they are productive labor and labor should be represented. If this argument holds good, then it might, with equal propriety, be argued that we should allow representations to oxen, horses, etc., which are equally productive labor."
>
> If property is to be represented at all, why not all property? Why not houses and land? . . . or if at all, why not make it a qualification for voting?

The convention was talking about counting slaves for purposes of representation, not letting them vote; Benjamin was arguing *against* the planters, and their slave interests who would have gained representation if slaves had been counted, thereby supporting his constituency of white nonslave owners in New Orleans, who would

have lost strength had the system of counting slaves been adopted.[26]

Benjamin then was capable of manipulating the slavery issue and serving the voters of New Orleans, who were the bulwark of his rising career, even as he changed from city lawyer to plantation owner from south Louisiana. He was building a formidable coalition as a downstate political personality with the support of the Slidell machine in New Orleans. In 1842 he was elected to his first public office as a Whig member of the Louisiana legislature, and his law office became the meeting place for the party executive committee. He became a Whig delegate to the Louisiana Constitutional Convention, where his tact, courtesy, and ability to find compromises impressed the political elders in all corners of the state. With the outbreak of the Mexican War in 1846, he turned his attention to national and international affairs. Because of his knowledge of Spanish, he was appointed by the Federal government as a California land commissioner to help settle land claims based on Spanish ownership one year after the territory was wrested from Mexico. As a Whig elector in 1848, he traveled to Washington for the inauguration of Zachary Taylor, meeting Cabinet members, Senators, and judges at state dinners and events. Benjamin Perley Poore, the Washington correspondent of the Boston *Journal,* who loved gossip, wrote in his *Reminiscences* in 1886 about "Benjamin, whose features disclosed his Jewish extraction," that "General Taylor had wished to have Mr. Benjamin in his cabinet, but scandalous reports concerning Mrs. Benjamin had reached Washington, and the General was informed that she would not be received in society. Mr. Benjamin then rented a house at Washington, furnished it handsomely, and entertained with lavish hospitality. His gentleman friends would eat his dinners, but they would not bring their wives or daughters to Mrs. Benjamin's evening parties and she, deeply mortified, went to Paris."[27] Poore's gossip about the Cabinet offer cannot be verified, and his sequence of events concerning Benjamin's move to Washington and Natalie's flight to Paris is confused, but it would not be the last time that Natalie's behavior would be reported in a public journal or a book.

Two of Benjamin's most noteworthy cases occurred after he was admitted to the Supreme Court in 1848. In the trials of the Cuban filibusters (an obsolete use of the word to describe Americans fomenting insurrections in Latin America in the nineteenth century), he assisted the United States district attorney in New Orleans in prosecuting a group of revolutionaries who sailed from New Orleans to Cuba to seek to overthrow the Spanish government and annex

the island to the United States. The U.S. Government had a difficult task in prosecuting those who had violated the neutrality laws, because the group included John A. Quitman, Governor of Mississippi. Feelings were running so high in New Orleans that when the mission failed and several of its leaders were killed, a mob destroyed the Spanish consulate and abused the Spanish flag.

Benjamin led the case against them by asserting before the jury that they had violated the tranquility of a relatively peaceful and satisfied population:

> Not a single movement has been made in Cuba; not a ripple disturbs the smooth current of the life of that people; not a single proof is given of their dissatisfaction with their lot;—these discontents exist only in the imaginations of our Cuban bondholders. The rich are busily engaged in rolling their sugar cane, gathering in their rich crops; the poor are eating tortillas, smoking cigars, swinging in hammocks, and sucking oranges. They do not appear to be at all troubled by their oppression or disturbed with their lot. Their independence is to be achieved for them by our enterprising young men who rejoice in the outlandish name of Filibuster.[28]

But hung juries resulted in mistrial four times, in spite of the clear evidence, and the government eventually dropped the charges out of frustration. The *Delta* said that Benjamin could not secure a verdict because of "the spirit of the age" and reported that the jury had received from the marshal the following bill of fare:

> *Soup:* oyster and turtle—plenty. *Roasts:* duck and beef—with individual vegetables and separate gravies. *Vegetables:* Irish potatoes, mashed; sweet potatoes, roasted; onions boiled. Tenderloin steak with mushrooms; venison steak with cranberry jelly. Custards, tarts, oranges, raisins, mince pies and bananas. *Liquors:* brandy, Madeira, hock, and whiskey. Dinner for twenty-four, Liquors for forty-eight.[29]

Benjamin was accused by Quitman of receiving a whopping $25,000 fee in secret from the Spanish government and was so incensed by the charge that he answered it publicly, writing in a rare letter to the newspapers on May 22, 1851:

> I observe . . . that Governor Quitman had asserted, in a public speech, that I had received from the Court of Spain a fee of $25,000 (!) for assisting in the Cuban prosecutions. The story is so ridiculous

that I should not have deemed it worth noticing, if coming from a less responsible source. Nor can I now think it possible that a gentleman of Governor Quitman's high position can really have said such a foolish thing. Your correspondent must have misunderstood him. Yet, as there is no limit to the credulity of some people, I beg to say that I have never been employed, directly or indirectly, by any other person than Mr. Hunton (District Attorney), acting under an order from Washington, which was shown to me when he employed me; that I was never promised,—have never received—nor do I expect, to receive, one cent of compensation for my services from any other source than from the government of the United States; and in order that everybody taking an interest in my private affairs may be fully informed on the subject, I will add that I have not yet received one cent of Compensation, even from our own government, and will feel much indebted to any kind gentleman that will take the trouble to procure for me the allowance of a reasonable fee from the authorities at Washington.[30]

The government eventually paid him a $5,000 fee for his work.

Benjamin's other noted case in New Orleans involved a legal battle that lasted four years to break the will of an eccentric millionaire named John McDonogh. McDonogh was a miserly bachelor who had never given money to charity. He had accumulated property holdings that newspapers in New Orleans reported as among the largest in the United States, more than $2 million in New Orleans alone, through a series of questionable business dealings that included brothels and "drunkeries." Though noted for being a skinflint during his lifetime, he left the bulk of this estate to the cities of New Orleans and Baltimore to establish schools for the poor, regardless of race and color. The heirs, living in various states, were represented by Benjamin, and the case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. While the case created a sensation in New Orleans, the argument for upholding the will met with a much more sympathetic hearing in the more distant atmosphere of the Supreme Court, and Benjamin and the heirs lost their appeal. A reporter for the Washington *Union*, who was sympathetic to the cities involved, heard Benjamin's argument and wrote:

Whoever was not in the Supreme Court this morning missed hearing one of the finest forensic speakers in the United States. In the case of the great McDonogh estate, Mr. Senator Benjamin

> made one of the most truly elegant and eloquent speeches that it was ever my good fortune to hear. His address is refined, his language pure, chaste and elegant; his learning and reading evidently great; his power of analysis and synthesis very great; his argument as logical as the nature of the case will admit; his rhetoric so enchanting as for the time to blind his hearers to the faults in his logic if any. . . . Mr. Benjamin contends that substantially the devise in the Will is not to the cities of New Orleans and Baltimore as beneficiaries, but only as trustees of others; and you can judge of his powers as a debater when I say that I think he carried conviction to most all if not all of his hearers, at least during the time he was speaking. So fascinating was his oratory that his hearers, at least one of them, lost sight of the fact that the City of New Orleans, to which the devise was made was not that spot of earth or physical entity known as, such city, but the community occupying the spot. . . . The man who has the power to render, for even a moment, such a question obscure, must be a finished debater.[31]

Benjamin lost the case but gained renown as an eloquent advocate and a skilled appeals attorney.

The white population of Louisiana exploded again in the decade of the 1840s, growing from 158,457 to 225,491, straining both its political and its economic structures. But the system of canals and railroads in the Northeast was beginning to cut into the supremacy of New Orleans as a port, since the Mississippi River was so much slower as a trade route. Benjamin with others in New Orleans picked up an old idea and propounded a visionary new strategy: to link New Orleans with the North and West by a new system of railroads. He became the chief spokesman for the boldest plan of all—not only to reinstate the previous plan to link to Jackson, Mississippi, and northward, but to build a new line from New Orleans through Mexico across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec to the Pacific Ocean. During the ten previous years, the idea had floundered as a pipedream, but Benjamin would give it life again.

"This straight line of railroad," he said to the Southwestern Railroad Convention in 1852, referring to the plans for the Great Northern Railroad through Jackson, "will stop at New Orleans, but it will not cease there as a line of travel. That line carries us straight across the Gulf of Mexico to the narrow neck of land which divides the

Pacific from the Atlantic, whereon Nature has bestowed every blessing of soil and climate, where she has even lowered the hills as if purposely to point the way for a railroad; then when we cross this Isthmus, this Isthmus of Tehuantepec—what have we before us? The Eastern World! Its commerce makes empires of the countries to which it flows, and when they are deprived of it they are as empty bags, useless, valueless. That commerce belongs to New Orleans."[32]

Such a plan required his planning and drafting state charters, guiding the plans through the state legislature and the Congress, arranging public and private financing, all with a high degree of local, national, and international political acumen. Benjamin became counsel to the Tehuantepec Company and headed the effort to organize the idea. He had to enlist the support of the U.S. government in the persons of Secretary of State Daniel Webster and President Millard Fillmore. He drafted a prospectus to incorporate and arrange financing, which he then implemented through visits to the Governor and the appropriate leaders in the Louisiana State Legislature. A provisional treaty was drawn up with the Mexican government, which, for political reasons, began to pull back out of concern for its self-interest in the details of the plan. Benjamin paid a personal visit to President Fillmore in Washington and then traveled up to Massachusetts to see Daniel Webster at his home. The *Delta* wrote a parody of the visit, which gave some insight into the Benjamin lobbying technique:

> Of course, it would be a breach of official etiquette to introduce the subject to Mr. Webster, in his secluded family mansion, so far away from his bureau, but what objection could there be to the accomplished New Orleans lawyer going there to take a dish of Daniel's farfamed chowder, and incidentally broaching the Tehauntepec subject to him, just while he was waiting for his chowder to cool? We don't see any. In fact, when a thing is well done, we should not be too hypercritical as to the manner of doing it.[33]

Webster threatened to withhold funds, but the Mexican government held firm. Win or lose with Mexico, Benjamin was accumulating powerful friends to help him run for the U.S. Senate and take the Tehuantepec plan into the world of international politics and finance.

At the 1852 Louisiana constitutional convention, Benjamin did a complete flip-flop on the issue of counting slaves for purposes of representation, giving still greater influence to the slave interests and, especially important to his political career, to the Whig planters

downstate. He saw the issue in terms of the future of the Whigs and personal opportunism, linked to the popular election of judges and the political necessity to maintain Whig influence over the courts.

One opposition paper attacked him, complaining that "the one hundred slaves of J. P. Benjamin of Plaquemines are made just as good as one hundred citizens."[34] The paper called it "The Negro-good-as-a-white-man Constitution," and another noted that he was just as eloquent on behalf of the provisions as he had been in opposition to them seven years earlier.

Solidly entrenched with various factions in the Louisiana legislature, Benjamin emerged in 1852 as the leading candidate for the U.S. Senate. Benjamin surprised his opposition by being elected by a large majority with the help of the state Democratic machine of John Slidell, which, as the *Delta* reported, helped put together a coalition of New Orleans commercial interests and "the country members who rather preferred a gentleman [who] was a sugar planter and had, therefore, a common interest and sympathy with them." It also pointed out that "Mr. Benjamin made good use" of the advantage "of being a prominent member of the legislature."[35] The newspaper complimented him with the observation that "he not only rendered himself very agreeable to the members of the legislature, but he manifested a zeal, industry and capacity in the preparation of business for the legislature—digesting and framing bills, and drawing up reports, etc.—which produced a most favorable impression as to his great practical talent and usefulness."

The fact that John Slidell managed Judah P. Benjamin's political ascendancy was not without its consequences. Slidell's political enemies were so mystified by his support of a Jew for election to the U.S. Senate that they accused Slidell of being a Jew himself. As additional evidence they could have pointed to the fact that Slidell's niece, the daughter of his sister, had married August Belmont of New York City, a well-known Jewish name in American finance. But Slidell was not Jewish. He was an Episcopalian, and family records indicate ceremonies in the Episcopal Church. But having been born, reared, and educated and having begun his career in New York City, he was much more cosmopolitan than the usual Louisiana political leader. Perhaps because of his perspective as a Northerner, he was able to sense that the state was ready to look beyond religious prejudice and judge its Senate candidates by ability and political preference. He certainly had to weigh Benjamin's religion in his political calculations, and it is to his credit that he was able to support wholeheartedly

a Jew for such high office and risk the future influence of his political machine on the outcome of such a consequential state election.[36]

The *Delta,* which had ridiculed Benjamin's candidacy earlier, summed up his career with uncharacteristic praise:

> Though not yet forty, he has reached the topmost round of the ladder of distinction as an advocate and counselor in this state. . . . He has a fine imagination, an exquisite taste, great power of discrimination, a keen, subtle logic, excellent memory, admirable talent of analysis. [While attending to a very heavy law practice] he had the time to look after one of the largest sugar plantations in the state, to pay a yearly visit to Paris, to see to the interest of the Great Tehuantepec enterprise, to fulfill all of the duties of an active partisan, of a public-spirited citizen, of a liberal gentleman, with a taste for elegance, the social pleasures and refinements of life.[37]

Philip Benjamin never visited his son in New Orleans or Bellechasse, but he did live to see him elected to the U.S. Senate. He died a few months later, on June 11, 1852, at the age of seventy-three. He had given up his small shop a few years before and had been living in an undistinguished neighborhood on the outskirts of Charleston. Philip Benjamin was buried in Charleston, far from his wife, Rebecca, who had died five years earlier in New Orleans and was buried in a family plot there.[38]

Soon after his father's death, there were other problems for Judah Benjamin. The flooding Mississippi reached the very steps of the mansion at Bellechasse, and the front yard was filled with cattle, deer, and wild animals from the swamps driven to the high ground to escape the waters. Benjamin's growing crop of sugar cane was destroyed, even the seeds, and he had no time to supervise the replanting and repair of the refining equipment on the spot. To add to his burdens, he had endorsed a note for a friend who could not pay it and had to assume a huge debt. Benjamin was not in financial despair, only financial trouble, forcing him to sell Bellechasse for a sum large enough to enable him to retire the debt, buy a fine house in Washington, and move Penny to an elegant home in a New Orleans suburb. His years as a slaveholding planter were ended.

Historians have recognized the Honorable Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana as the first acknowledged Jew elected to the U.S. Senate. There was an earlier election in Florida, however, of Senator David (Levy) Yulee, called the "Florida fire-eater" because of his passionate

pro-slavery oratory. Levy changed his name to Yulee and renounced Judaism, converted to Christianity after his marriage to the daughter of the Governor of Kentucky, and claimed he was not Jewish at all but descended from a Moroccan prince. Thus, because he acknowledged his Judaism, it can be said that Judah P. Benjamin took his seat in the halls of history as the first Jew in America's most influential legislative institution.

4

Jefferson Davis: *The Education of a Lonely Protestant*

The generation that emerged as the leadership of the South in the Civil War was shaped by the great ideas and events of the early nineteenth century, when America feverishly embarked upon the work of nation-building. The Louisiana Purchase of 1803 doubled the size of the country, extending its borders from the Mississippi River to the Rockies; Lewis and Clark returned from their expedition to the Pacific in 1806 with dreams of a nation extending "from sea to shining sea." The War of 1812 stabilized the course of America as an independent and free nation, involving still another generation in a war with Great Britain. The conquest of the West began in earnest, and the nation pulsed with new developments and inventions to enlarge its commerce and shrink its borders—the railroads, the telegraph, the steamboat. The Erie Canal was completed in 1825, and the first wagon train made its way along the Oregon Trail in 1832.

In Europe, Napoleon met his Waterloo in 1815, the same year General Andrew Jackson, unaware of the treaty ending the War of 1812, won the Battle of New Orleans. President James Monroe issued the Monroe Doctrine in 1823, warning European powers to stay out of the Western Hemisphere. Beethoven composed his Pasto-

ral Symphony in 1808 and his Ninth in 1823; Rossini wrote *The Barber of Seville* in 1816. Later in the century, Europeans as well as cultured Americans who traveled to Europe (as did Judah Benjamin) heard Chopin and Liszt play piano concertos, and new works by Franz Schubert. In England, Disraeli was born in 1804, and in Germany in 1815 Mayer Amschel Rothschild, founder of the Jewish banking dynasty, died in Frankfurt.

Eli Whitney's cotton gin (invented in 1792) increased cotton production in the South from several thousand pounds to a phenomenal 35 million pounds by 1800. In the next three decades, King Cotton made slavery immensely profitable in America while Britain abolished slavery throughout the Empire in 1833. John Adams and Thomas Jefferson died on July 4, 1826, both lingering through serious illness to reach the fiftieth anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Five years later, after a solar eclipse, which he took as a sign, Nat Turner heard voices saying "The last shall be first" and led a slave rebellion. Eighty-five whites and sixty slaves were killed before Turner was captured and hanged.

James Fenimore Cooper won international fame in 1826 with the publication of *The Last of the Mohicans,* popularizing the American Indian all over the world. In 1832, Chief Black Hawk, fighting against overwhelming odds in the Battle of Bad Axe, was captured and accompanied to prison by troops led by Lieutenant Jefferson Davis.

These events, ideas, and personalities shaped the legends of America and the dreams of young men growing to maturity in the nineteenth century. War would shape the lives of every American generation. For Southerners especially the struggle against European domination would give way to sectional conflicts in their homeland.

In 1808, three years before Judah P. Benjamin's birth in the West Indies, Jefferson Davis was born in Kentucky, the last of ten children and the fifth son.[1] His father, Samuel Emory Davis, was a yeoman farmer of Welsh peasant stock; his mother, Jane Cook Davis, was of Scotch–Irish descent. They worked their farm with fewer than a dozen slaves, and, as was customary among the lesser class in the rural South, Samuel worked alongside the slaves, picking cotton under the hot sun. The Davis roots did not touch a noble heritage: Neither parent could point to a family coat-of-arms. Like Andrew Jackson, they were what the South called "one-generation aristocrats."

As a reward for patriotic services in the Revolutionary War, eighteen-year-old Samuel Davis had received land in Georgia. However, he was an impetuous man and a restless spirit to whom prospects

always looked better elsewhere, so the family moved to Christian County in the new state of Kentucky. There, at the age of forty-five, Jane Davis bore her last child. They named him after the author of the Declaration of Independence *and* gave him the whimsical middle name Finis. The Davises' other sons all had Biblical names—Joseph, Benjamin, Samuel, and Isaac—and the girls' names strung out like lyrical verse: Anna, Lucinda, Amanda, Matilda, and Mary. They called him "Jeff" and a year after his birth, less than 100 miles away, Abraham Lincoln was born—also in a log cabin. But the Davis cabin had more polish. It was one of the first in rural Kentucky to boast glass windows, and people came from miles around to see it.

Before Jeff was two, the family had moved twice more—to Louisiana; and then, harassed quite enough by that state's deadly mosquitoes, 300 miles north to their permanent home in Mississippi. They lived 20 miles from the big river, on a farm between the rich delta and the poor soil of the pinelands. A man would not get rich there, but he could sweat out a fair living. They called their home "Rosemont," because Jane loved flowers and planted whole hedges of roses to separate the orchard from the garden. Samuel was fifty-six years old and ready to settle down, and it was clear that Jane wanted a home and a place they could count on.

Within a year, all the older sons but Isaac went off to fight in the War of 1812. Jeff slept at the foot of Anna's bed, and the fifteen-year-old girl cared for him. The other sisters nurtured him with love, warmth, and approval.[2]

Jeff grew into a handsome boy with golden hair, a quick mind, and a lighthearted disposition. As the baby of the Davis family, he received an abundance of attention and affection, and his natural charm attracted even more of it. Samuel was not a stern disciplinarian but expressed paternal disapproval by withdrawing into a distant coldness. He was, in Jeff's own words, "a man of wonderful physical activity" who loved riding horses into old age, a "silent, undemonstrative man of action." He was a hard worker in the fields who "talked little and never in general company," and developed the grave demeanor that hard work dictates. Jeff said at the end of his life that Samuel was "a man of deep feeling though he sought to repress the expression of it whenever practicable."[3]

Samuel was a Baptist and a religious man, though never much of a churchgoer. While he was not of the planter class, he was influential in the county and respected for his rock-ribbed integrity.

Thomas Jefferson's name gave Jefferson Davis some attachment

to a political heritage that set him apart from the other sons. This boy had an apparent talent, everyone in the family said, and it must be given the chance to blossom, not in the backwood schools of Mississippi, but in the best school to be found. Like Judah P. Benjamin in Charleston, he must be sent away from the South to an outstanding institution that the family knew.

At the age of eight, Samuel decided that he would send the boy back to Kentucky, to a Catholic school called the College of St. Thomas Aquinas near Bardstown, the headquarters of Catholicism in the state. Jane was deeply concerned, because the boy was too young to be sent off so far. Jeff's oldest brother, Joseph, now practicing law in Natchez, joined his father in the decision, mindful of the influence on the boy of his oversolicitous older sisters.

Jane was so heartbroken that Samuel would not tell her when the day of departure would be. Jeff left on his 800-mile journey with Joseph's friend, Major Thomas Hinds, without even a farewell kiss from his mother.

The trip had to be made on horseback with pack mules, because steamers had not yet appeared on the Mississippi. They traveled the wild but beautiful Natchez Trace, teeming with game, where travelers could meet occasional trappers and Choctaw Indians. At night, Major Hinds and the two slaves accompanying them took turns standing watch to protect the camp from panthers and bears.

The highlight of the trip, and an event that Davis would remember always, was a two-week visit to the Hermitage in Nashville, the home of General Andrew Jackson, under whom Major Hinds had fought at the battle of New Orleans. "Old Hickory" received them cordially in his home, and Davis would always recall how impressed he was with a man reputedly so fierce in battle yet so courteous and hospitable in his home.

In the last year of his life, at age eighty-one, Davis began to dictate his life story to his wife Varina, and she preserved the verbatim account in her biography of him. He sensed the end was near, so that the choices of anecdotes and ideas took on a surreal, reflective quality, as if he were sifting through photographs in his mind. His oral history ended after a few weeks, so that all he was able to complete was a disjointed description of his early years. The visit with Andrew Jackson loomed large in the account of his boyhood.[4]

"During that period I had the opportunity a boy has to observe a great man. . . . I have never forgotten the unaffected and well-bred courtesy which caused him to be remarked by court-trained

diplomats, when President of the United States, by reason of his very impressive bearing and manner."

Davis recalled Jackson's courtliness in ways uncharacteristic of the Jackson legend: "Notwithstanding the many reports that have been made of his profanity, I remember he always said grace at his table, and I never heard him utter an oath."

For recreation, young Jefferson Davis, the General's adopted son, and other children competed in pony riding and other games, but "he would not allow us to wrestle; for he said, to allow hands to be put on one another might lead to a fight. He was always very gentle and considerate. . . . In me, he inspired reverence and affection that has remained with me throughout my whole life."

Davis was the youngest boy at St. Thomas College and so small that old Father Angier put a little bed for the boy in his own room. Moreover, as the only Protestant in the school, he was cast into an unfamiliar world of new rituals that were part of the value system and upbringing of Catholic boys. But, in addition, he was suddenly taken from a female-dominated household in which he was the center of attention and expectation and placed in a totally male environment where he would have to prove his manhood every day, compete for recognition, and earn the affection and respect that were so abundant at home. Being so young and at a physical disadvantage, it was difficult for him to excel or even compete at games except by pure stubbornness and endurance.

As in all Catholic schools, there were a rigid schedule for every hour of the day and rituals he had never seen before: morning prayers with genuflections and boys crossing themselves, lessons to be recited, catechisms to be memorized, communions to attend, evening prayers and grace before and after meals, and bedtime with final prayers and lights out.

Several incidents stood out in Davis's memory all his life, one of them as laced with humiliation as Judah Benjamin's incident at Yale. One of the incidents involved the priest in whose room he slept. He told Varina:

> There was an organized revolt among the boys one day, and this priest was their special objective point. They persuaded me to promise to blow out the light which always burned in the room; so after everything was a quiet, I blew it out; then the insurgents poured in cabbages, squashes, biscuits, potatoes, and all kinds of missiles. As soon as the light could be lit, search was made for

> the culprits, but they were all sound asleep and I was the only wakeful one. The priests interrogated me severely, but I declared that I did not know much and would not tell that. The one who had especial care of me then took me to a little room in the highest story of the monastery and strapped me down to a kind of cot, which was arranged to facilitate the punishment of the boys; but the old man loved me dearly and hesitated before striking the first blow, the first I should have received since I had been with the monks. He pleaded with me, "If you tell me what you know, no matter how little, I will let you off." "Well," I said, "I know one thing, I know who blew out the light." The priest eagerly promised to let me off for that piece of information and I then said, "I blew it out." Of course I was let off, but with a long talk which moved me to tears and prevented me from cooperating with the boys again in their schemes of mischief.

Jefferson Davis told this story to Varina when he was eighty-one, so that it obviously represented more than just an amusing episode or prank. He confessed to less than he knew to protect the older boys with whom he had conspired to embarrass the priest to whom he was closest. For this eight-year-old boy, 800 miles from home, strapped down to a cot in a lonely room high in a monastery, protecting his friends from punishment, it was his earliest confrontation with absolute authority, with the threat of punishment tempered with mercy, and with the idea of honor. Whatever the lessons he learned, the memory of that incident endured into the last months of his life.

The school taught rigid concepts of right and wrong, the belief in divine inspiration, and the rewards of service and self-abnegation. It demanded respect for authority and taught a hierarchical system of the universe in which all men had a place and obedience to God's will was the first law of entry into heaven. He learned of sin, omnipotence, guilt, confession, and forgiveness.

Finally, unable to endure the unrelenting pressure for conformity "under the influences that surrounded me," Jeff asked to be converted to Catholicism. To his credit, Father Wilson, "the venerable head of the establishment whom I found in his room partaking of his frugal meal . . . received me kindly, handed me a biscuit and a bit of cheese, and told me that for the present I had better take some Catholic food."

This story reveals the early beginnings of a religious feeling that

led to a break with his parents and the only life he had known. His request probably reflected a prior emotional and psychological torment over the Catholicism all around him, for he also said: "I was the only Protestant boy remaining, and also the smallest boy in the school. . . . I had been sent too young to school, and far from home, without my mother's knowledge or consent."

One can sympathize with the confusion and guilt he must have suffered at school and wonder at a small boy's reaction to the gentle rejection by the monks, who would not take his request seriously. Had he done something even more wrong? What was expected in morning devotionals? Could he pray with his friends? Was he to believe in the rituals or protect himself from them? Was he a sinner if he wanted in his heart to immerse himself in the Catholicism all around him? Was he being excluded from the true faith because of his parents? And how tolerant were the other boys of his lonely status as a Protestant in an era when tolerance between faiths was not yet a national virtue? A Southern Jew like Judah P. Benjamin could empathize with such loneliness.

Not permitted to convert, yet given no instruction in his own faith, Jefferson Davis remained a hazy Protestant for more than four decades and did not join any church until he was past fifty. He was confirmed in the Episcopal Church on the eve of the Battle of Richmond, just before Varina and their children were sent out of the city, when he did not know whether he or the Confederacy would survive.

As unalike as they were, there were many similarities in the boyhoods of Jefferson Davis and Judah P. Benjamin, which would influence them individually and together in later years.

Both Judah and Jeff were raised in loving homes, strongly influenced by their mothers and sisters. Both their fathers were restless men who struggled for an economic stake in the South, and both fathers were disappointments to their families. Jeff was pushed by his father and older brother and sent from home at an early age to a Catholic school. Judah, too, was sent far from home to Connecticut, where he was the only Jew among upper-class Gentiles. Thus both were poor boys educated among the sons of the rich, and both had to acquire the manners of the well-born from the atmosphere around them.

Both schools required great discipline yet preached systems of belief and values to which neither boy was accustomed. It was a profound change for both of them.

Both schools put enormous pressure on their students to conform. Jeff wanted to convert to Catholicism. Judah married a Catholic. In that sense, both men had a familiarity with Catholicism as a religion. However, like their fathers, both spent most of their lives outside any congregations.

Being a Southern Jew at Yale and a Protestant at St. Thomas created analogous situations and responses. They shared the loneliness of the outsider, the ostracism, the social humiliation, the aching heart that longs to join, to belong, to be accepted. Jeff's punishment for mischief was private, though painful enough to recall. Judah's punishment at Yale was more humiliating because it was more public, so consequential, and we cannot know whether his Jewishness was a factor or whether he considered it a factor. At Yale he too put his religion aside and began to blend in with his surroundings.

While St. Thomas College left Jeff a legacy of religious confusion, it contributed positively to his intellectual development. The British-born Dominicans taught the students Latin and English grammar and emphasized the need to speak well, to enunciate and pronounce clearly. Davis learned to work hard, to be precise, and to prepare his lessons each day. And the school did not disturb his Mississippi social values. Though the friars took individual vows of poverty, the school itself was well-to-do and owned slaves to work on the large estates and care for the crops, the sheep, the cattle, and the flour mill. Here, too, slaves were an accepted part of the order of things.

After two years, Jane Davis could not bear the separation any longer and demanded that her boy be brought home. By now, the early steamboats were chugging the giant Ohio and Mississippi rivers, and little Jeff Davis, not yet ten years old, became one of the first Americans to ride the miraculous new invention and experience the adventure of the varied life of the river banks. The settlements were growing as trading centers for the new river queens, and he could feel the stirring changes wrought by them and absorb the sights of the roustabouts and the showboats, the furs and crops and blankets on the docks, the Indians selling fresh venison. As the steamboat drew closer to home, he could listen for the cries of the bald eagles and the blue cranes, hear the sounds of the steam whistle, the dark stories of river pirates and gamblers.

The boy had grown so tall that he pretended to be a stranger asking for directions, but Jane recognized him easily from her veranda as did Samuel from the fields. His father ran to him, abandoning his

austere manner momentarily to smother his son in repeated kisses. "He took me in his arms with more emotion than I had ever seen him exhibit," Davis recalled. "I remember wondering why my father should have kissed so big a boy."

Though he could comfort himself at age eighty-one with the thought that he was sent away without his mother's "knowledge or consent," she, of course, had known he was leaving and had not objected strenuously enough to prevent it. Samuel had sought to spare her the pain of parting, but that may have been a mistake. The absence of his mother from his leave-taking deprived him of solace as his loneliness at school grew and became a painful memory, we know from his autobiography, that remained with him all his life. He would always blame his father. Why else at age eighty-one—did he use the phrase "without my mother's knowledge or consent"—except to absolve his mother? His father's error in judgment and insensitivity to a boy's need shaped him and his attitudes in ways that no amount of rejoicing at his return could heal. Jane had been right: The boy had been too young and they would keep him close to home for the next five years.

The family sent young Jeff to a log cabin school near his home. Looking back on that time, he complained in his dictation to Varina of the ignorance of the teachers, who "used the oil of the birch as a lubricator for any want of intelligence." His impatience with their stupidity shows in his recollection that "after some time, a bright boy could repeat all the rules; but if you asked him to explain why, when he added up a column of figures, he set down the right and carried the left-hand figure, he could give the rule, but no reason for it. And I am not sure that, as a general thing, the teacher could have explained it to him."

When a new county academy opened in a nearby town, Jeff was fortunate to be taught by a "scholarly man," a well-educated Bostonian who remembered him in later years "favorably."

"He was a quiet, just man," Jefferson Davis explained to Varina, "and I am sure he taught me more in the time I was with him than I ever learned from anyone else . . . he was the first of a new class of teachers in our neighborhood, and was followed by classical scholars who raised the ability to teach." He added an apology for his other schools and their teachers. "The era of the dominies whose sole method of instruction was to whip the boy when he was ignorant has passed."

He assumed that his exaggerated sense of injustice, already formed

in the discipline at St. Thomas, would be more indulged at home, but there were new lessons to be learned. One day his teacher assigned him a piece to memorize that he regarded as excessively long. He protested, but the teacher refused to lessen the assignment and, when he failed to memorize it, threatened the boy with a whipping. Young Jeff simply picked up his books and went home. His father told him simply that he had the choice of going back to school or working in the cotton fields. After two days in the hot sun picking cotton with the slaves, he went back to school. One could not imagine Jeff reacting to the monks at St. Thomas in such a manner. Jefferson Davis at home with his sisters and his mother was simply more self-centered than in Kentucky in a strict Catholic boarding school.

Before the age of ten, Jefferson Davis had traveled overland through the compelling interior beauty of America and returned dramatically by steamboat down its greatest river. He had met Andrew Jackson and caught the wide-eyed spirit of the frontier; he had experienced its need for commerce, highways, and great men with a vision to shape its future. His name had singled him out from the rest of the family for the heroic tradition; a doting family had given him the self-centered confirmation that he was of special stock. The ambitions of his father and brother blessed him with a sense of destiny.

But there were costs as well. His youth had sown the seeds of a divided personality: His happy and free-spirited childhood nurtured by his loving mother and sisters contrasted with the loneliness and stern strictness imposed by the Dominican friars. The school instilled in an eight-year-old boy a strict Catholic love of ritual and authority that would attract him to West Point, a life of discipline, obedience to superiors, and honor. He had survived alone at the school and had learned to be independent. His lonely perseverance would eventually give him a personal code of honor, a belief in hard work, and confidence in his ability.[5]

In 1823, at the age of fifteen, he entered Transylvania College in Lexington, Kentucky, larger than Harvard and the most prestigious institution west of the Appalachians. Transylvania was called the "Athens of the West." Davis would learn to read omnivorously there and would receive an excellent liberal education. He was a freshman with boys who were younger yet ahead of him in their studies.

"My chief deficiency was in mathematics which had been very little taught at the Academy. The professor of mathematics, Mr. Jenkins, kindly agreed to give me private lessons, and I studied under

him for the balance of the session and through the vacation, so as to enable me to pass examination as a sophomore."

He participated in the debating society but, because of his discouraging experience at St. Thomas, chose not to compete in athletics. Transylvania attracted the sons of the aristocratic families in the South, some of whom brought slave valets. Thomas Jefferson had preferred it to Harvard because it had "more the flavor of the old cask" and its graduates seemed destined for leadership. (No fewer than six of Davis's contemporaries from Transylvania would join him and Judah Benjamin in the U.S. Senate.) He made up his deficiencies and graduated with honors.[6]

He did not see his family for two years, although his father, Samuel, wrote Jeff a long, sad letter confessing his failure to collect an inheritance from his grandfather that might have made the family "immensely rich." He ended with the advice: "Use every possible means to acquire useful knowledge as knowledge is power, the want of which has brought mischief and misery to your father in old age. That you may be happy and shine in society when your father is beyond the reach of harm is the ardent wish of his heart," and he signed it: "Adieu my Son Jefferson, your father Saml Davis."[7]

The distraught old man who had written from the depth of his soul in this last communication of his ambitions for the boy to "shine in society," had put "Son" in upper case and "father" in lower case.

A year later, Samuel lost his farm and the six slaves as a result of signing a note for his son-in-law. After a quarrel, he impetuously left in an open boat for his son Joseph's plantation, Hurricane, caught malaria, and died. Jefferson received the news at Lexington and wrote a letter home so oddly cold and stiff that Varina felt it necessary to apologize for it in her book. She called it "a quaint, pitiful letter from a bereaved boy. . . . The formal manner of the letter he retained as long as he lived."[8] The letter said: "DEAR SISTER: It is gratifying to hear from a friend, especially one from whom I had not heard from so long as yourself. . . . In my father I lost a parent ever dear to me, but rendered more so (if possible) by the disasters that attended his declining years."[9] It seemed as though Jeff never got over his resentment toward his father for having sent him away to school at so young an age.

Three days after the death of his father, Jefferson Davis accepted an appointment to the U.S. Military Academy, arranged by his brother Joseph through political friends in Mississippi. After all, patriotism and military service had been a family tradition: His father had served

four years in the army during the American Revolution, and three of his brothers had fought in the War of 1812. Military traditions ran deep among Southerners, and the constant threat of a slave rebellion had given even the local militia some status born of necessity. Jeff had been set on going to law school like his oldest brother, but Joseph, who had inherited his father's hopes for the boy, persuaded him to try the Academy. Jeff did not even go home to visit the family before he left Lexington for West Point, and he would not come home again for six years. He was putting the cotton fields of Mississippi behind him.

Jefferson Davis's formative years had been shaped by dramatic and frequent changes of milieu, discipline, and values. His character became rigid and rock-ribbed; his family and his experiences in school had shaped a personality embodying extremes: idealism, honor, patriotism; extreme stubbornness, self-importance, and pride.

If honor was the center of the aristocratic tradition he acquired in Kentucky, then he would become the most honorable of Southerners. If toughness was a lesson to be drawn from the violence that marked the Mississippi frontier, he would learn at West Point that unyielding righteousness could dominate men of less certitude. And if loyalty was the measure of the civilized man who devoted his life to the military tradition, then he would be as loyal to family, friends, and superiors as any man who ever lived—and would expect the same from those who served him.

5

Melancholy War Hero

My oldest brother, who then occupied to me much the relation of a parent," Jefferson Davis told Varina for his autobiography, "notified me that he had received the news of my appointment as a cadet in the United States Military Academy; and fearing the consequences of being graduated at the early age of seventeen, he insisted that I should proceed at once to West Point. Of course, I disliked to go down from the head class of one institution to the lowest of another, but I yielded."[1]

Because Davis was entering late in the term, he had to take a special entrance examination in front of the staff. He almost flunked it. A family friend on the staff saved him from embarrassment by asking beforehand, according to Davis's own account, whether he had learned arithmetic. "To which I had to answer in the negative. . . . He was quite alarmed, and went off and got me an arithmetic, telling me to study as much as I could of fractions and proportion." Fortunately, Davis was asked only one or two questions, and the professor of mathematics was satisfied, "probably thinking that I knew a great deal more than I did."[2]

Cadet Davis arrived at West Point in 1824 a green Mississipian with an apparently good bearing and an eagerness to learn. He joined the generation of soldiers that would later fight in the Civil War—among them Albert Sydney Johnston and Joseph E. Johnston, who became generals in the Confederacy, and Robert E. Lee, who ranked second in scholarship and went through four years without a demerit.

Jefferson Davis accumulated no such record. His biographers report a brief period of rebelliousness in which he received demerits for having long hair at inspection, failing to keep his room in order, spitting on the floor, absence from reveille and from classes, making noise during study hours, firing his musket from the window of his room, disobeying orders, cooking in his room after 8 P.M., using "spiritous liquors," absence from evening parade, and "foul clothes not in clothes bag."[3] It was as if the carefree spirit of his childhood, which had been cut short and bottled up by St. Thomas, erupted once again at West Point.

In his first year, Davis was arrested for patronizing Benny Haven's Tavern and, according to the report, exhibited "extreme embarrassment bordering on weakness" attributable to the consumption of alcohol. He was court-martialed and sentenced to dismissal from the Academy, but the sentence was suspended because of what interestingly was termed his previous good record. He was again arrested, on Christmas Eve, 1826, for attending an eggnog party given against regulations by Southerners, seventy of whom were later involved in a riot against their officers, and of whom nineteen were expelled. Fortunately, Davis missed the altercation—probably only because he had been ordered to his room and had fallen asleep. Nevertheless, he was put under arrest and confined to his quarters for six weeks. He graduated in 1828 with less than an average record, twenty-third out of thirty-two in his class.[4] Had he been less lucky, like Judah P. Benjamin, Davis's boyish pranks might have gotten him expelled from West Point and changed his life. But no such stain followed him, as it did Benjamin: He was commissioned a second lieutenant and ultimately sent to the frontier.

Unhappy from the beginning yet stoic, Lieutenant Davis resolved to see if he could find a home in the army. In 1972, a letter was discovered in Paris, Kentucky, which Davis wrote to his sister after his graduation from West Point. Dated June 3, 1829, the letter was written from his first military post, a frontier garrison established to prevent a war with the Indians. In it he confessed that West Point had made him "a different creature from that which nature had designed me to be." His officers, he said, were "men of light habits both of thinking and acting." He now intended to pursue a course of study, especially of law books, since, should he leave the service, he would prefer the practice of law to any other profession.[5] Yet, straight-backed and mindful of duty, he did not resign from the army for another six years.

The rest of the story was Confederate legend—how the young lieutenant wooed and won Sarah Knox Taylor, the beautiful, blue-eyed daughter of Colonel Zachary Taylor, who was Davis's commanding officer during the Black Hawk War. For two years her father forbade their marriage because he had vowed that his daughter would never marry a military man. Davis considered threatening a duel but finally decided to resign his commission and return as a planter to Mississippi in order to win Taylor's approval and be with the love of his life. At last Taylor acquiesced. But then, just three months after the wedding, malaria in the lower bayou took her from him. For eight years thereafter, Davis brooded alone, a melancholy shadow, leading almost a hermit's life on his brother's plantation, Hurricane. He never visited neighbors or received callers but devoted his time to reading and farming. He was a recluse, letting time heal the deep wound of his lost love.

The light had gone out of his life, and his exaggerated sense of honor and propriety would not let him look at another woman. Davis entered an eight-year period of overwhelming grief that stands as a mysterious chapter in his life. Davis's ascetic existence surely helped mold the solitary and austere personality that emerged from that emotional exile. The mischievous young officer who loved practical jokes turned into the kind of man his father had been: terse, difficult, and dour, a distant figure lost in his own thoughts.

After Sarah Knox Taylor's death, Davis grew closer to his older brother, Joseph, already one of the wealthiest men in Mississippi. Joseph owned a Delta kingdom of 11,000 acres he called Davis Bend, part of which he sold to friends, keeping 5,000 acres of the richest land on the river for himself. From that land, he gave Jeff 800 acres and ten slaves on land so fertile, as Varina later described it, "that golden rod grows large enough for a strong walking-stick."[6] By 1860, Joseph owned more than three hundred slaves, one of only nine men in Mississippi with so large a number.

Under Joseph's influence, Jefferson Davis came to be fired with all the ambition for politics that the older brother possessed for money and property. Joseph was patient with his younger brother's grief and rode with him about the land seeking to engage him in the dreams of a plantation empire. When Joseph saw his brother's fascination with the huge library built as a replica of a Greek Doric temple, he took it as a sign of recovery. Immersed in the writings of Madison, Jefferson, and Locke, Davis was preparing himself for public service in the Southern tradition. He would make up for the

poor educational experience of his early years and his lack of achievement at West Point. But the scholastic isolation had to come to an end, and Joseph conceived a second solution, which went right to the nub of things.

Joseph had been watching Varina Ann Howell grow up in Southern Mississippi with all the right social graces and family history required for his younger brother. The Davis family had money, land, and slaves; what Joseph wanted now for the family was blue blood and status, and Varina would bring both. Her father was a Natchez lawyer and the son of the eight-term Governor of New Jersey; her mother was the daughter of a Virginia aristocrat. Since Joseph had been best man at her father's wedding, Varina was brought up to call the elder Davis "Uncle Joe," and he observed her intellectual growth with the pride of a member of his own family.

"By jove, she's as beautiful as Venus," Joseph exclaimed to brother Jefferson. It was not altogether true. Although she carried herself well and combed her dark hair tightly into a plait to emphasize her features, she was attractive but unexceptional. Her eyes were her most notable feature—dark and intelligent, contrasting with her creamy white skin. While Joseph exaggerated her beauty, he was right about her other qualities: "As well as good looks, she has a mind that will fit her for any sphere that the man to whom she is married will feel proud to reach."

From the age of four until she was sixteen and went off to Philadelphia to school, Varina had been tutored by a Mississippi Supreme Court Justice named George Winchester. He had come to Natchez from Salem, Massachusetts, a graduate of Harvard and a classical scholar. He never married and took the little girl like a daughter into his world, teaching her Latin classics, introducing her to English literature, and schooling her in the Whig politics of Natchez, where so many prominent Northerners settled. The Whigs of Natchez were the "nice people" who despised the common folks who supported Andrew Jackson, held the "hillbillies" and the "dirt eaters" in contempt, and looked down on the rough-and-ready Democrats in the lowlands, where the Davises lived. Judge Winchester was one of the overpowering influences in Varina's life; he shaped her character and her mind. Oddly, a portrait of him reveals a strong resemblance to Jefferson Davis. In conversation with Judah Benjamin in later life, she called the Judge by her childhood name for him, "Great-Heart."

Joseph invited seventeen-year-old Varina Howell to Hurricane for the Christmas holidays of 1844, and Judge Winchester accompa-

nied her on the riverboat *Magnolia* up the Mississippi. She wrote her first impression of the tall horseman, now thirty-five, in a letter to her mother:

> I do not know whether Mr. Jefferson Davis is young or old. He looks both at times; but I believe he is old, for from what I hear, he is only two years older than you are. He impresses me as a remarkable kind of man, but of uncertain temper, and has a way of taking for granted that everybody agrees with him when he expresses an opinion, which offends me; yet he is most agreeable and has a particularly sweet voice and a winning manner of asserting himself. The fact is, he is the kind of person I should expect to rescue me from a mad dog at any risk, but to insist upon a stoical indifference to the fright afterward. I do not think I shall ever like him as I do his brother Joe. Would you believe it, he is refined and cultivated, and yet he is a Democrat![7]

From Varina's description, their first extended time together sounded like a storybook romance over the two weeks of the Christmas holidays. They rode about the plantation together, Jeff on his white Arabian and Varina on a bay galloping beside him in a plumed hat and dark blue riding costume. Varina played the piano while Jeff sang his favorite Scottish ballads; they sat reading together by a log fire, played charades, and took long walks through the gardens. Davis even took her to meet some of his slaves, especially Jim Pemberton, who had once nursed Jeff back to health after a serious illness out West and now ran his plantation. "Uncle Joe," as delighted as a mother hen, shooed away all who might interfere with the couple and, whenever he came upon them, found a reason to take his leave.

Varina's mother's objections—the eighteen-year difference in their ages, Davis being a widower, the political differences between the families, Varina's own inexperience—postponed the wedding for more than fourteen months.

His first love letter to Varina was written in an awkward prose that matched the stiffness of his personality. "Ephemeral passion," he wrote, "or accidental preference, is withered by separation; sincere affection is sufficient for its own support, by absence it is not cast down, neither is it heightened, the latter will, however, often seem to be the effect because in losing that which is essential to our happiness we are brought most actively to realize its value."[8]

Finally Judge Winchester spoke up strongly for the match, and Varina made up her mind. On February 26, 1845, they were married

in her home on a bluff near Natchez, in a house surrounded by a tangle of hyacinths and a forest of magnolia, oak, and pine trees. Below the bluff was a magnificent view of the riverboats on the Mississippi.

Since the lives of Jefferson Davis and Judah P. Benjamin were intimately bound up in the fatal years of the Civil War and the fate of the Confederacy, it is useful to compare aspects of their early lives as well. Davis was just three years older, and it is important to understand that both men were proceeding in their chosen careers at approximately the same time.

Jefferson Davis's young years have all the elements of a romantic Southern adventure story. With tales of the American Revolution and the War of 1812 all about him, young Jefferson Davis was reared in a military tradition of the Old South that treasured the virtues of love of country, self-sacrifice, and courage. It was natural, then, for his hero to be Andrew Jackson, who a decade after they met would be President. He carried the name Jefferson with a sense of his own destiny. Jackson and Thomas Jefferson were strong male figures, idealized and heroic, role models for his own career and substitutes for a disappointing father.

The Benjamins, on the other hand, were the classic newcomers in the Southern story, overlooked characters on the periphery of Southern history, who arrived in 1813 as new immigrants to Charleston. They were Jews who were excluded from military duty in Europe and in whom patriotism and the sense of participation in American history would require time to take root. Judah P. Benjamin was named after his paternal grandfather, his path less certain, his heroes garnered from books he read rather than from the people he met, but a young man also estranged from his father. Jefferson Davis, shaped by the heroic tradition of the plantation South, could dream of future armies he would command and even the presidency of his country. Like so many children of immigrants, Judah P. Benjamin was raised as a survivor, a Jewish immigrant moving from country to country, with wealth and status as his goal and political power available to him only if he could shed, in the eyes of the Gentiles, the burden of his Jewishness.

Jeff was a lean and athletic boy whose competitive instincts were challenged by his age and size at St. Thomas. Any boy who could ride a pony for 800 miles must have developed the fortitude of a potential cavalryman. Judah was older when he left home, but small for his

age, and was dark-eyed and olive-skinned in the race-conscious South. Judah was not admired for his appearance; it was only after listening to him that others began to respect him and be drawn to him. Judah was a city boy, raised in the crowded streets of Charleston, in a market place where the farmers brought their produce and the ships their goods and where traders came to bargain, to cheat, and to gamble. Jeff was a farm boy, raised with a sense of the changing seasons, where physical labor rather than book learning was ingrained and rewarded, where he worked with the slaves alongside his father, and where men trapped and slaughtered animals when the first frost covered the fields. He was a witness to nature's beauties and its cruelties.

Contrast Jeff the adventurer with Judah the intellect. Jeff grew up in a world of physical challenge, an out-of-doors boy who traveled the length of the Mississippi River twice before he was ten years old. His values were shaped by the Deep South, where the ideal of manhood was a military career and a plantation. Judah was raised in a tradition of ideas, under the tutelage of a father who debated beliefs and who could challenge the accepted standard of an entire community. Judah Benjamin's playground in Charleston was the world of commerce, where shrewdness and a quick wit determined profit and a man was measured by the size of his fortune.

Judah's education was superior to Jeff's, for such were the advantages of the Charleston schools, the Fayetteville Academy, and Yale. Jeff complained that methods in his schooling were primitive: "to prescribe the lesson and whip any boy who did not know it." Judah excelled academically, and in every class was at the top, confirming his intelligence and abilities. Jeff struggled with books and was an average student. It is no wonder that Jeff was attracted to the pragmatic career of the military, where he would assume that his other qualities—daring, courage, and leadership—would be better appreciated and would work to his advantage. West Point beckoned him as naturally as the courtrooms of New Orleans called to Judah Benjamin.

After West Point, Davis's rise to prominence and wealth was not wholly earned but was facilitated by his older brother. Joseph was a powerful figure in the Delta, and his plantation gave young Jefferson Davis roots and reputation, a respected name, solidity, and a financial underpinning for a political career.

Judah P. Benjamin, in contrast, had to make his way alone, step by step, without important family connections, beset by religious

prejudice, as a brilliant lawyer who by contacts and alliances could accumulate a personal fortune. But his marriage into the St. Martin family gave him an early rung on the ladder, awarding him the status in New Orleans that Joseph provided Jeff in Mississippi.

For Davis, recognition and status were part of the natural order of things. He would lead and others would follow. For Benjamin, the fruit seller's son, every ounce of recognition and status represented a special triumph. His secret was his ability to cultivate others, to prove himself through the law as a faithful servant of the interests of the powerful. For Davis, the military man educated in a Catholic hierarchy, men were to be ordered and were duty-bound to obey. For Benjamin, men were to be persuaded, cajoled, manipulated by self-interest and negotiation, or convinced by sanctions in the law. Jefferson Davis revered loyalty; Judah P. Benjamin was used to serving others loyally and, as a lawyer, profiting from that service.

Fate seemed to be shaping two men whose destinies—in character, personality, and events—would bind them to each other for the stormy years awaiting them.

From the beginning, Jefferson Davis had not hidden his past feelings from his second bride. On their honeymoon he had insisted that they visit Sarah Knox Taylor's grave at Locust Grove Cemetery in Bayou Sara, Louisiana, where Jeff's sister was living in the house where his first bride had died.

Earlier, on his way to Natchez for the wedding with Varina, Davis had had a chance meeting with General Zachary Taylor, a fellow passenger on the riverboat. That encounter had unlocked painful memories for him. Though they had not spoken in ten years, the father of the woman he had loved had shaken his hand warmly in a common bond of sorrow.

A few months after the honeymoon, Davis was out on the hustings campaigning for a seat in the U.S. Congress. He had come out of his plantation retreat and the seclusion of his eight years of mourning with great vigor. In November 1845 he was elected to Congress. Thus, the new bride who had envisioned her life as a plantation wife had to pack for Washington and prepare herself for a far different existence.

Davis seemed a man miscast by history from the beginning, ambivalent about his choices from an early point. Southern custom drew him into the military and back to plantation life, which absorbed him totally. His attraction to politics flowed more from duty and

the expectations of the times for planters in the Delta than from personal inclination. He was not happy even as a Congressman who had no executive responsibility, who had only the power of persuasion and his vote. Varina was not happy either. She wrote: "Then I began to know the bitterness of being a politician's wife and that it meant long absences, pecuniary depletion from ruinous absenteeism, illness from exposure, misconceptions, defamation of character, everything which darkens the sunlight and contracts the happy sphere of the home."[9]

That life, too, was short-lived; the upright Mississippian from West Point soon heard a new call to duty. The Mexican War broke out over control of the Rio Grande River, and in June 1846, without first consulting his wife, Davis simply announced to Varina that he had volunteered for the army. He returned to the West, fighting once again under the command of his former father-in-law. The West Point generation that would lead the armies in the Civil War were all fighting together in the Mexican War: Colonel Jefferson Davis, Colonel Robert E. Lee, Captain George B. McClellan, and Lieutenant Ulysses S. Grant. It was at the Battle of Buena Vista that Davis won lasting military fame, devising his famous V-formation that Varina always said "conquered one-half of Mexico and made General Zachary Taylor President of these United States."[10] Davis had to be helped off his horse after leading a charge, his leg bloody and swollen, pieces of brass spur driven into the wound and imbedded there so that his boot filled with blood.

His return to Mississippi with his regiment stirred the nation, and his home state lionized its returning hero. A steamboat was chartered to take the regiment up the Mississippi, stopping to greet cheering crowds at every town along the way. Varina met the boat at Natchez and remembered it in detail:

> [T]welve young ladies, holding a garland many yards long, met the regiment at the Bluff and crowned the officers with a wreath. Their banners were also wreathed with bowers . . . speeches by townspeople . . . then, a procession; after which Mr. Davis—who was on crutches—came out in a barouche, nearly hidden with flowers to take me to the steamboat. The journey was one long ovation.[11]

The reception confirmed in his memory the triumph of one of the important moments in his life and left him intoxicated with his

image as a brilliant military strategist. It left another lasting memory as well, as Varina wrote:

> Mr. Davis suffered intensely from his wound, as indeed he did for five years, and was unable to dispense with two crutches for two years. The bone exfoliated, and pieces that had been shattered worked out or were extracted by a surgeon, causing dreadful nervous disturbance, not to speak of the physical anguish. Even after the foot was apparently well, for eight or ten years, the slightest misstep gave him pain.[12]

The Davis reputation for rectitude and high-minded adherence to duty began to develop from the stories his men told about serving under him in Mexico. When his men, encamped near a farm, plundered a field of corn "like a drove of mules," Colonel Davis lectured them on private rights and paid the owner for the crop. Though the churches in Mexico were filled with gold vessels and statuary studded with diamonds, rubies, and pearls, Varina proudly reported, the First Mississippi regiment, "from the Colonel down to the last private, returned home without one article belonging to a citizen of Mexico."[13]

When the President of the United States offered Davis a promotion to Brigadier General, he turned it down on the grounds that the Constitution provided that only the states could make such appointments in volunteer regiments. His refusal was vintage Davis: high principle, a reverence for states rights and the Constitution above all, a self-abnegation all the more honorable since personal gain would have resulted from acceptance.

In August 1847, within two months of Davis's return home as the toast of the Delta and the hero of Buena Vista, Governor Albert G. Brown appointed him to fill out the term of a U.S. Senator who had died suddenly. The Mississippi legislature subsequently confirmed the popularity of the choice by electing him unanimously to a full six-year term. In December 1847 Jefferson Davis hobbled on crutches into the chambers of the United States Senate to join such men as Clay of Kentucky, Calhoun of South Carolina, Webster of Massachusetts, and Douglas of Illinois in their great debates.

Judah P. Benjamin would join Davis in the Senate six years later but by a more conventional route characterized less by destiny than by mere determination and political shrewdness. Benjamin had learned politics, not battle.

Jefferson Davis's youthful life as a hunter, a horseman, and a planter commanding a community of slaves drew him back to the frontier world of the military, even in his late thirties, seeking glory on a field of flashing sabers and bravery. Only after the success of Buena Vista did he rationalize public office. It was as if Andrew Jackson had inspired his life: politics only after heroism, service only after sacrifice.

Judah P. Benjamin spent his early career in drawing rooms and offices, in courtrooms and carriages, where he would learn to observe more of human nature in conflict, to watch others and plan his moves sequentially, to be cautious of the opposition, to understand the other party's motives, to learn the intricacies of compromise and the virtue of settlement. He thrived in a world where resolution of differences overshadowed principle and obstinacy could result in an expensive trial for his clients, risking the loss of everything on a judge's idiosyncrasies.

Jefferson Davis's election was a testimony to personal popularity, not the result of the usual deal-making and accommodation of various political interests. Judah P. Benjamin arrived in the Senate in 1853, the product of the political machinery of Louisiana, a man of considerable political and legal acumen as well as oratorical ability. Davis had such a rigid code of honor and was so devoted to the Southern slave interests that he could not desert the Democratic party in the presidential election of 1848 even to support his former father-in-law, Zachary Taylor. Having been appointed to the Senate to the cheers of the populace, he understood little of the process of politics. Benjamin, on the other hand, was the quintessential politician who built bridges to opposing interests, negotiated differences, and won the respect of opponents whom he would need in future fights.

In Washington, Varina had to learn to live with the shadow of Sarah Knox Taylor, as President Zachary Taylor's political and military prominence kept the Taylor presence in her life. After Buena Vista, old "Zeke" had grudgingly said, "My daughter was a better judge of men than I was." The General's rise to the presidency in 1848 was a constant reminder to Varina of what Davis's life might have been had his first wife lived, and she must have imagined that her husband was flooded by those same speculations. Even their home, Brierfield, had been drawn up and built to Sarah Knox Taylor's wishes. It was to have been their paradise. She must have felt deprived of a corner of Jeff's soul and somehow unsure of her ground. Her

husband had tasted the deep ecstasy of youth and first love, then had had it snatched from him. She advised another young bride of a widower after the war "not to be content with anything less than the whole of a man's heart."

Although Varina reported that Jefferson Davis grew "pale and emaciated" from the damage done to his nervous system by the war wounds, he regained his energy and entered the work of the Senate with enthusiasm as the emerging spokesman for Southern interests. The gold rush to California in 1848 raised the question of the admission of California into the Union, and Davis opposed the Compromise of 1850 that Senator Henry Clay of Kentucky hammered out to balance Southern slave and Northern interests. It admitted California as a free state, organized Utah and New Mexico as territories without mentioning slavery, provided for a tougher fugitive slave law, abolished the slave trade in Washington, D.C., and assumed the Texas national debt. Davis's arguments were couched, as they often would be, in Constitutional terms: Since slaves were property under the Constitution, they should therefore be protected as property when transferred into the Federal territories. Congress had no right to discriminate between different kinds of property in the territories, he claimed, and since his position had been endorsed by the Mississippi Governor and legislature, he assumed the people of the State of Mississippi supported him.

Davis did not share John C. Calhoun's view that slavery was a permanent condition; from his own plantation experience he argued that it was an "institution for the preparation of that race for civil liberty and social enjoyment." He summoned the scriptures to declare that its origin was in the "divine decree—the curse upon the graceless son of Noah." He advised the North to "leave natural causes to their full effect, and when the time shall arrive at which emancipation is proper, those most interested will be most anxious to effect it."

In 1851 Davis resigned his Senate seat to run for governor and to defend his opposition to the Compromise of 1850. He faced a bitter and slashing attack from his great rival in Mississippi, Henry Foote, who as a Senator had vacillated and then had supported the Compromise. Davis had misread the voters in the South, who reversed their opposition almost overnight out of relief that the slavery controversy had finally been settled. Because of prosperity, wealthy planters called the Compromise the "Businessman's Peace." Before the election, Alabama and Georgia had accepted it. Bad luck had been stalking

Davis. In the heat of the campaign, pneumonia confined him to his room for three weeks, enfeebling his defense of his position, and he was defeated by fewer than a thousand votes.

Events had overtaken Jefferson Davis and sent him back to Brierfield and the life of the plantation gentry.

Clement Eaton, in his 1977 biography of Jefferson Davis, wrote a chapter entitled "Slavery on the Davis Plantation" in which he detailed the paternalistic treatment of slaves over the twenty years of Davis family ownership of Brierfield.[14] By 1860, the manuscript slave schedules in Mississippi recorded that the Jefferson Davis plantation had 113 slaves, 67 female and 56 male. They dwelt in twenty-eight cabins, averaging about four to the cabin. According to Eaton, neighboring plantations had as many as seven slaves in a cabin, and the Davis quarters were more spacious.

According to Janet Sharp Hermann in *The Pursuit of a Dream,* Joseph Davis met the British industrialist and utopian Robert Owen on a stagecoach in the 1820s and was much impressed with Owen's ideas about cooperation and encouragement as superior to harsh rule for increasing the productiveness of workers. He decided to try those notions on his plantation, and Jeff followed the example of his brother at Brierfield.[15]

"The cottages were well-built," Hermann wrote, "with plaster walls and large fireplaces and they contained two large rooms and two shed rooms behind them," a decided improvement over ordinary slave cabins, which usually had one room. "The Davis cottages had front and back galleries, often shaded by fruit trees, and were near a large cistern house from which pure water was readily available." Each cabin had a henhouse in back, from which eggs and chickens were plentiful, and cornmeal was provided for feed.[16]

The Davis plantations provided feasts at wakes, at Christmas, and at other holidays and provided gifts of "astonishing variety," according to Varina, for weddings and births, such as "candy, negro shoes, field implements, new saddles and bridles, fancy plaid linsey or calico dresses for the negro women who needed consolation for a death in their families, guns and ammunition for hunting, pocket knives, nails and screws." She described a slave wake at Brierfield at which mourners received "a large quantity of flour, several pounds of sugar, the same quantity of coffee, a ham . . . and a half dozen or a dozen bottles of claret." For the death of babies they expected less, she reported, but for weddings much more, and a wedding dress.[17]

Not only were the slaves on the Davis plantations physically better off than other slaves, but the Davis brothers also set up a form of self-government unique for its times. Every Sunday, in a Hall of Justice, slave juries heard testimony about misconduct in trials over which one of the Davis brothers presided, allowing the extraordinary procedure of permitting a slave to testify in his own defense.

"No matter who told him anything about his Negroes," Varina wrote, her husband said " 'I will ask him to give me an account of it.' The servant was always heard in his self-defense. Mr. Davis said 'How can I know whether he was misunderstood, or meant well and awkwardly expressed himself?' "[18] Corporal punishment was not permitted, and the Davis brothers often reduced the severity of sentences. A Mississippi historian reported that only one other plantation owner in Mississippi gave his slaves a trial to ascertain guilt or innocence.

The slave juries also heard complaints from overseers, who could not punish anyone without court permission. Consequently, as one former slave pointed out, "the overseers had only partial power," and many left out of dissatisfaction. When Davis departed for Washington, he wrote in his book of instructions for his black overseer and trusted slave, Jim Pemberton, who served from 1835 to his death in 1850, that it was the overseer's duty to provide the slaves with coffee, sugar, molasses, and salt, and no flogging of slaves would be permitted.

Davis cared for the old (as evidenced by the number of old slaves who lived on the plantation), the sick, and the handicapped; employed a dentist to come from Vicksburg periodically for the slaves; and once sent a sick fieldhand to a celebrated doctor in New Orleans because she was "a good girl in every sense of the word." He studied medicine and with Joseph set up a slave hospital with steam-powered machinery for hydrotherapy. Varina made clothes for the slaves with her own hands. Though Davis claimed a Biblical basis for slavery, he did not emphasize religious training on the plantation, because he and Varina were not religious. The plantation was "exceptional in respect to having literate slaves," Eaton wrote, and Davis "was such a mild master that the neighboring planters said that his slaves were spoiled."

Joseph wanted to encourage self-advancement and initiative, so he and his brother allowed slaves to keep all profits beyond their value as fieldhands. Slaves sold chickens, eggs, home-grown vegetables, and wood to the steamboats plying the river and traded with

each other. One slave, Ben Montgomery, managed a profitable store, trading with slaves, whites, and the steamboat captains bringing goods to the plantation or taking cotton back to the markets. Montgomery studied engineering, surveying, mechanics, and architecture in the family library; invented a more efficient steamboat propeller; and designed buildings for the property. After the war, Ben Montgomery led the slaves who remained at Brierfield in a cooperative experiment supported by the Freedmen's Bureau. According to Janet Hermann, Joseph wrote after the war that "he had wanted to free his slaves for more than twenty years but could think of no adequate way of guaranteeing their welfare." Jefferson Davis did not share his brother's ambivalence about slavery, but the plantation he ran was a model for its time.

In defending slavery in the Senate, he could "sincerely present the most favorable side." It was a view he would share with Senator Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana.

Both Benjamin and Davis were exemplary slaveowners—paternalistic masters who profited from the slave system yet did not abuse their slaves. Davis was not one of the "fire-eaters"; in the context of the times he was a more moderate figure among the Southern spokesmen. Benjamin's history was more complex; as a lawyer he accepted cases that set him both against and for the interests of slaveowners. He never argued that Negroes were of a lower order or that slavery was foreordained by God. He could in a legal brief criticize the harsher aspects of slavery and even speak eloquently against the abuse of slaves; but politically he was pragmatic and was a supporter of slavery in his rise to prominence and in his service in the Senate.

Benjamin came to plantation ownership late in life, taking a rare step for a Jew in the South, far from his roots. He was the first in his family to own a plantation or to deal with large numbers of slaves.

For Jefferson Davis, his brother Joseph was a role model and much more. Joseph was twenty-four years older and the strong guiding, almost paternal influence in his younger brother's life. Jefferson Davis thought of him as a mentor and deeply respected his profession of the law and the fact that he had run for office three times and had helped shape the Constitution of the State of Mississippi. But Joseph could also be overbearing, a quality that Varina resented.

"He, like his brother Jefferson," Varina observed, "could not com-

prehend anyone differing from him in political policy after hearing the reasons on which his opinion was based, and was prone to suspect insincerity on the part of the dissenter." Varina had produced a telling insight, meant to describe the oldest brother she did not like, but revealing the same quality in her own husband.

While respecting the lineage of the Howells of Natchez, Joseph took deep exception to their Whig politics and looked down on them for their lack of land and possessions. Varina, reared as a city girl, in return considered Joseph rather coarse and uncultured, a man who lacked the gentlemanly and refined qualities of mind of the younger brother. Joseph acted as if he owned everything on his property, but nobody could get away with treating Varina Howell as just another hireling! When Davis was away in the Mexican War, Varina began to supervise the slaves in building a larger house at Brierfield; Joseph insisted that it have two kitchens, to accommodate a widowed sister with a large brood of children, whom Joseph expected to occupy half the house. Varina drew the line: The house would have one kitchen, thank you, and if Joseph invited his sister to live on the plantation, she and her children would have to reside at Hurricane with Joseph, not at Brierfield, where she would be building a family.

When her fourth child was born in May 1859, Varina wanted to name it in honor of her father, but her husband insisted that the child be named Joseph. She wrote her mother: "I cried myself sick" over the insistence that they name their son after "a man whose very name was only suggestive to me of injustice and unkindness from my youth up to middle age." As fate willed it, the boy looked like Joseph—small build, gray eyes, large nose, and black hair—but she prayed that he would grow out of it.

The resentment spilled over into questions about the ownership of Brierfield. Joseph refused to give them a written deed for the property, though it was clearly understood that he had given the land to his brother orally when the young officer returned from the Black Hawk wars to marry Sarah Knox Taylor. Varina suspected that Joseph's motive was to exclude her from any ownership claims or to torment her with a reminder that it was Sarah Knox Taylor's union with Jefferson Davis that he had blessed with the promise of Brierfield, not Varina's. Indeed, Joseph's grandchildren coveted the property as their own, as if it were just another corner of their grandfather's huge plantation, and they seized it back from the ex-slave Ben Montgomery after the Civil War. Davis's high-minded code

of honor dictated that such a personal question could not be raised with the patriarch of the Davis family. The tensions boiled over, leading to painful litigation with the Davis relatives many years later.

Varina was sensitive regarding the childless first seven years of her marriage. Her letters reveal that she felt less than a complete woman. She wrote her mother in despair after only six months of marriage that "we both regret to be condemned to live in single blessedness." Women in the South were obligated to bear children in the first year, and society pitied the barren wife. They spent four years in Washington without children when Jeff was in the U.S. Senate the first time. Varina must have blamed both herself and, in weaker moments, the ghost of Sarah Knox Taylor. Varina's mother had gone through eleven pregnancies, and though she too was impatient for a grandchild, she supported Varina with the faith that God in time surely would smile on them.

Their first child, Samuel Emory, was born at one of the happiest times in her life, during that short period of fifteen months in 1852–53 back at Brierfield after Jeff's loss of the governorship of Mississippi to Henry Foote.

Varina described the reaction of the slaves at Brierfield who sensed her relief at long last to mother a child.

> When our first child was born, every negro on the plantation, great and small, came up with little gifts of eggs and chickens and a speech of thanks for the birth of a "little massa to take care of we, and be good to we," from the year-old, open-mouthed, glossy little tot, with an egg in his fist, to the old women with a squawking hen, or a dozen large yams in their aprons. The men looked lovingly on at a distance, but the women each took a kiss. One lifted up the little rosy finger and said "De Lord, honey, you ain't never gwine work—your negroes gwine do all dat for you."[19]

Varina proudly took her firstborn home to her mother and sisters, beaming with satisfaction that she at last was a mother but sad that she would never be able to show off her son to Judge Winchester, her "Great-Heart," who had died the year before.

Varina and Jefferson Davis spent that spring riding horses over the Brierfield plantation, cultivating roses and shrubs, grooming horses, sewing, and painting the plantation house they had missed so much. She romanticized the calm between political storms that

would toss them in turbulence for the rest of their lives. The spring of 1852 did not mean war, but aromas of wild crabapple and plum blossom, of lotus blossoms floating in the ponds like splashes of sunlight.

"I was a plantation wife," she later remembered warmly, spinning cloth and cooking, while he supervised the plowing, sowing, and reaping of the cotton crop. It was one of the few times she had her husband all to herself without politics or official duty to interfere with their time together.

There were elements of tragedy in the personal lives of both Jefferson Davis and Judah P. Benjamin. Those aspects of their emotional histories and their relationships to women and children would eventually bring them together.

Jefferson Davis and Judah Benjamin were both in love with ghosts—Davis with the memory of a first romance in his youth, Benjamin with the smoldering Creole temptress he first encountered over English lessons in New Orleans. Davis's love was taken by death, Benjamin's by time and events. Davis had found another who cared for him deeply, while Benjamin endured an unhappy marriage long ago shattered, held together only by his wealth and a willingness to accept separation and loneliness.

For Davis, both Sarah Knox and Varina were proper mates, fitting for a man of means and destiny. Natalie was appropriate in station but not in character, leaving a great, desolate hole in Benjamin's life.

Yet one cannot imagine a man like Judah P. Benjamin, a man of gregarious nature, who relished the world around him, retiring to a plantation for eight years to brood over a lost love. Episodes of such extreme reaction as Davis's withdrawal after Sarah Knox Taylor's death, indicating deep depression, raise profound questions about his psychological state during that period. It was an unnatural bereavement, a paralyzing grief for too great a period of time.

Moreover, to travel with his new wife Varina, eighteen years old and on her honeymoon, to the grave of his former wife has a callousness about it. She was nineteen years younger than he, less experienced, eager to please her new husband. One wonders what words were exchanged, what emotions expressed and unexpressed, what memories carried forward by both bride and groom. For a man as considerate of women as Jefferson Davis was said to be, there is a strange and puzzling melancholy to his life, punctuated by his unwill-

ingness to let go of his old love, even on his honeymoon, as if he had to show Varina that he was not giving all of himself to her.

Both Jefferson Davis and Judah Benjamin were childless in their marriages for an unusual length of time. It was not the custom of the times to do so. In the world of an ambitious planter-politician in the Delta, the seven childless years are even more at conflict with a way of life in which large families were expected than in New Orleans, where Benjamin was childless for ten years. That Varina in later life bore him six children testifies to her health and capacity to bear children; her letters to her mother testify to her eagerness from the start to have children. One cannot help but wonder if the years of brooding and the visit to the first wife's grave on the honeymoon were linked psychologically to the seven childless years of marriage. It is as if Davis had lost his way for a decade and a half, unsettled and disturbed, and sought a cure in building a plantation home and in politics. By reattaching himself to people, land, events, and issues, he began to recover his former vitality, his vigorous personality. His marriage to Varina signaled the beginning of his recovery, a return simultaneously to politics, the military, and the adventure in his previous life even as the shadows of his past remained.

Judah P. Benjamin, too, worked feverishly at his law books and at his Bellechasse, building it into a model sugar plantation. The names of their plantations were symbolic of their contrasting attitudes toward life: Brierfield was rugged and difficult; Bellechasse was peaceful, lovely, and French. Both Benjamin and Davis were consumed with their plantations and developed illness from overwork, but Benjamin drew strength from his absorptions, whereas Davis was debilitated by them. In contrast to Davis's isolation, Benjamin's answer to Natalie's desertion to Paris was a return to New Orleans and reinvolvement in its social and political life.

Perhaps Benjamin had a greater capacity for pretense. He pretended all his life that there was no strain in having a wife and daughter in Paris whom he saw one month a year. He seemed to take personal setbacks with equanimity. Davis's wounds penetrated more deeply and took years to heal. He was less flexible than Benjamin, more brittle. Even his return to Zachary Taylor's command for the Mexican War in 1846 seemed to Varina a rash act of escapism. She argued against it and "cried myself stupid" trying to persuade him not to leave Congress to pursue again a military career for which he professed a dislike. Perhaps it represented for him a return to the old and familiar psychological terrain, of fifteen years earlier,

when he had met and won the General's beautiful daughter. He was repeating a previous step, as if he were starting life all over again.

Jefferson Davis and Judah Benjamin were not the best of husbands. Davis took long absences from Varina, rejoined the army without consulting her, and seemed to want to keep the past alive in his new marriage. Both men were addicted to their work and became fathers late in their marriages, and both were absorbed in their careers, with few friends or other interests.

Neither man was from the gentry, as one would expect the future leaders of the Confederacy to be. Davis was from yeoman stock and worked on a small farm as a boy. Like Benjamin, he was already a young adult when he came to know plantation life through his brother Joseph. Thus, at the center of the Southern leadership that would meet in Washington in 1852 were two outsiders, struggling for respectability, fighting to preserve a way of life they had attained but to which they were not born.

6

Washington: *Senate Duel*

More than 80,000 people—one of the largest crowds in the capital's history—poured into Washington for the inauguration of Franklin Pierce on March 4, 1853. Spectators lined Pennsylvania Avenue in the mush of melting snow, hoping for a glimpse of the new President. Inside the Capitol at noon, a dozen senators were sworn in, among them Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana, Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, and Sam Houston of Texas. A new generation of men was assuming leadership, fiery orators of deep principles to replace the great compromisers who had died in the previous three years—Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, and John Calhoun.

Varina and Jefferson Davis attended the inauguration at the insistence of President-elect Pierce, who had hinted in his letter of invitation that he wanted to confer about a possible Cabinet position for Davis.[1] Davis had spoken on Pierce's behalf during the summer and fall campaign of 1852, because Pierce, though a former New Hampshire governor and senator, expressed pro-slavery views and had been nominated by the Democratic Party on the forty-ninth ballot with Southern support. Davis, a military hero and West Point graduate with political experience, was an obvious choice as Secretary of War, and he reluctantly accepted. He was one of two Southerners in the Pierce Cabinet.

Davis and his wife moved into a twenty-three-room mansion in

Washington. Varina invited her younger brother and sister to live there and pursue an education. The house was rented from Edward Everett, a former U.S. senator from Massachusetts and president of Harvard University (who ten years later would deliver the two-hour main address that preceded Abraham Lincoln's remarks at Gettysburg).

Judah P. Benjamin lived with two other Southern senators in a private home in a fashionable neighborhood near the Treasury, where many Southerners seemed to congregate out of a compatibility of political views and a mutual love of the social scene. Soon after the inauguration, Senator Benjamin received an invitation to attend a dinner at the White House. There he sat with Secretary of War Jefferson Davis and Varina—whose impressions of him are preserved in a long letter Varina wrote in 1898 to London *Times* correspondent Francis Lawley:

> I first met him at dinner at President Pierce's house, and well remember a distinct consciousness of disappointment. His type was decidely Hebrew; he had not a marked line in his face which was boyish in the extreme and was rendered more so by soft black curls about his temples and forehead; he was short and inclined to be fleshy, and had rather the air of a witty bon vivant than that of a great Senator. He seemed to prefer the light society topics rather than to impress upon his audience any grave utterance. He appeared to be, in fact, only an elegant young man of the world, and a past master in the art of witty repartee.

While physically she found him "decidedly Hebrew," she was struck by the sound of his voice and the elegance of his language:

> However, it would be difficult to convey to you the impression his voice made upon me; it seemed a silver thread woven amidst the warp and woof of sounds which filled the drawing room; it was low, full and soft; yet the timbre of it penetrated every ear like a silver trumpet. From the first sentence he uttered, whatever he said, attracted and chained the attention of his audience.

At their first meeting there was some tension between Benjamin and Davis. It continued through many years in Washington:

> Mr. Benjamin and Mr. Davis were too much alike, in many respects, to be at first very good friends. They had the same tireless mental energy, the same quick perception, the same nervously excitable

> tempers. They were both quick at repartee and whatever they knew was as ready for reference in the heat of debate as it had been when they first acquired it. They were both ambitious men, and led their party.

"Too much alike"—particularly in competitive aspiration: They were taking the measure of each other, both leaders of the Southern bloc, even at that early point. Neither man had been conditioned by his history to trust easily, each was supremely self-confident, each was respectful but wary.

"Sometime," Varina continued in her letter to Lawley, "when they did not agree on a measure, hot words in glacial, polite phrases passed between them, and they had up to the year of secession little social intercourse; an occasional invitation to dinner was accepted and exchanged, and nothing more."

Still, she came to like Benjamin immensely, finding his charm irresistible. She recalled a dinner table disagreement over a small social point in which she playfully remarked, "If I let you set one stone, you will build a cathedral before I knew it"; to which Benjamin laughed and replied, "If it should prove to be the shrine of truth, you will worship there with me, I am sure."[2]

Judah P. Benjamin's reputation as an orator grew to towering heights over the next few tumultuous years. The South was looking for a spokesman, and the Southern press printed his eloquent speeches with relish.

Soon after his election to the Senate, his career almost took another extraordinary turn. In the fall of 1852, the outgoing President, Millard Fillmore, offered him a seat on the U.S. Supreme Court. It was a seat that had been promised to a Southerner who could represent the Fifth Circuit (consisting of Alabama and Louisiana) held by the late Justice John McKinley. The Democrats in the Senate were not going to approve the nominations of a lame-duck Whig President and rejected three candidates that Fillmore put forward. On February 15, 1853, the New York *Times* reported that "if the President nominates Benjamin, the Democrats are determined to confirm him." It predicted that "Mr. Benjamin, the new Senator, if nominated would properly be confirmed." Fillmore was turning to the leading lawyer in the Senate in the probability that he would be confirmed, since the Senate could not reject one of its own members from the deep South, albeit newly elected. Benjamin turned down the offer, preferring the give-and-take of the Senate and looking forward possibly

to representing clients before the Supreme Court.[3] It would require another sixty years before the first Jew would sit on the nation's highest court. Fillmore, probably on Benjamin's recommendation, actually nominated two of Benjamin's New Orleans law partners, E. A. Bradford (who would join the firm in a month) and William Micou (already his partner), but neither was confirmed, as the Senate awaited the inauguration of Franklin Pierce. Benjamin would be the ranking member of a law firm of which three partners had been considered for the nation's highest court. If Benjamin preferred the challenge of the political arena, history would not disappoint him.

After Davis was named Secretary of War, his son, Sam, born in 1852, became a favorite of Mrs. Franklin Pierce, who insisted that Varina bring him often to the White House. But in June 1854 the child suddenly came down with yellow fever, and the dread disease claimed a second love from Jefferson Davis's life.

Varina later wrote about the impact of their only son's death on her husband. "For months afterward," she wrote, "he walked around the house half the night, and worked fiercely all day. A child's cry in the street well nigh drove him mad."[4]

Davis was a well-organized Secretary of War, so scrupulous in his duties that he would not even let Varina use his official stationery for a thank-you note. Mrs. Clement Clay, the wife of the Alabama senator and a friend of Varina, wrote that Davis had a reputation as an honest watchdog of such determination that "it would be impossible to cheat the government out of a brass button." He increased the army's strength from 10,745 to 15,752; reorganized the system of forts across the plains; introduced improved muskets and rifles; developed an advanced system of infantry tactics; substituted iron for wood in gun carriages; began the use of the steel ball, which improved the accuracy of guns; and promoted experiments in breech-loading rifles for faster firing and the use of heavy guns in coastal defenses. He commanded the Corps of Engineers and began the surveys for a railroad route to the West to contribute to a political and economic alliance between the South and the West. Interestingly, he opposed the creation of a military academy in the South on the grounds that it was proper for West Point to develop "a national point of view in the young men from different states that attended it." William Lee, a clerk under him, said, "He was one of the best Secretaries of War that ever served."[5]

President Pierce perhaps saw in Davis what others did not: that

he possessed an extraordinary capacity for military management and skilled administration. He had made his reputation as a fighting officer, and nothing, not even his plantation career, had prepared him for managing such a large enterprise as the United States Army. Yet, he was a military visionary with a determined interest in shaping the future of the army, whether it concerned weaponry or tactics, and he would seek out the best men to help him.

Davis's admiration for Southern Jews may have had its origins in his interaction with an extraordinary Jewish army officer at West Point and later when Davis served as Secretary of War.

Several years before Davis arrived at West Point, Alfred Mordecai had graduated first in his class at the military academy as an engineer and ordnance expert. Born in North Carolina of German Jewish parents, he was one of the first Jews to graduate from the U.S. Military Academy and was of such rare talent that he was brought back to West Point as a teacher from 1823 through 1825. He taught Cadet Jefferson Davis, who arrived in September of 1824. Mordecai had an illustrious forty-year military career; he was involved in testing, developing, and analyzing the weapons, ammunition, ballistics, and metallurgy of new weapons and reorganizing the production of durable, uniform, and efficient tools of war.[6]

As Secretary of War, Davis tapped Major Mordecai, who had drafted the first U.S. Army *Ordnance Manual* in 1841, to serve on a military commission, all three of whose members had placed first or second in their West Point classes (one of them was the future Union General George McClellan). The commission was ordered to spend six months in Europe observing the Crimean War and studying weapons, method of organization, supply systems, and the command structure of the armies of Britain, France, Austria, and Russia. It was a mission of the utmost importance, in Davis's view, and he asked for detailed reports to help shape the future of the American military. The series of reports was considered so important that the Congress authorized the printing of 20,000 copies of some of the reports, which ultimately influenced the type of weaponry used by the armies of the North and the South. After Mordecai's return from Europe, Secretary Davis kept him as an aide, even while Mordecai sought a more active post.

At the beginning of the Civil War, Davis offered Mordecai the position of Chief of Ordnance for the Confederacy. At the same time, political figures in North Carolina asked Mordecai to become general of the state armies. His North Carolina family pleaded with

him to return, and after a long period of deliberation, he decided to resign from the army altogether, to avoid the agonizing choice, and live as a civilian teacher of mathematics in Philadelphia. Mordecai was one of thirty Southern officers in the U.S. Army to take that step, unable to fight for the North against their families or for the South against their flag. Had he accepted, both the Chief of Ordnance and the Secretary of War to the Confederacy would have been Southern Jews.[7]

Varina wrote of him in her *Memoir* that "Major Mordecai was a Hebrew, and one could readily understand, after seeing him, how the race had furnished the highest type of manhood; his mind was versatile, at times even playful, but his habits of thought were of the most serious problems . . . his moral nature was as well disciplined as his mental. . . . He was an 'Israelite without guile.' "[8]

One of the ideas that Davis asked Mordecai and the Commissioners to investigate was "the use of camels for transportation, and their adaptation to cold and mountainous countries," and Davis eventually commissioned a camel corps in the American West.[9] He had been struck by the loss of horses and mules on the wagon trains west to California in the 1850s. So Davis persuaded President Pierce to appropriate thirty thousand dollars to buy and train thirty-three camels a year for two years and the men to use them. They were purchased in Egypt and landed in Indianola, Texas, an exotic moment in history. They were a disaster and a total embarrassment to Varina, who bore the brunt of the teasing from which her husband's office protected him. The animals were afraid to wade streams, for when had a camel seen rushing water? They would wander off to feed on bushes and shrubs and spit at their army riders. The packs would slip off their backs, because their equipment was designed for mules. Horses whinnied all night if the camels were stabled anywhere near them. Finally, they were auctioned off to Mexicans, circuses, or just turned loose by disgusted soldiers to be eaten in the desert by jackals and wolves. The episode remained a well-known comic incident in Davis's otherwise illustrious career.

The Secretary of War extended his interests beyond military affairs; his influence over a weak president grew so strong that a Mississippi newspaper called him "the de facto president" and "the great Mogul." Davis persuaded Pierce to support the Kansas–Nebraska bill in 1854, which broke up the Compromise of 1850, allowing slavery in the territories. The political reaction swept across the country, opening wounds most of the nation thought had been healed and deepening

divisions between North and South. It created the Republican Party, summoned Abraham Lincoln back to political life, and started a bloody civil war in Kansas.

In New Orleans the Whigs deserted the Republicans for a know-nothing alternative, and Judah P. Benjamin transferred his allegiance to the Democratic Party and continued to lead the arguments for states rights, claiming he had only "changed name, not principle."

He attacked the know-nothing Whigs for expelling the Louisiana delegation because it was largely Catholic, saying their anti-Catholicism had revealed "hideous features . . . in all their naked deformity." The Whigs, he said, were "held together not by the ties of a common belief in certain principles and measures of public policy, but simply by their preference of themselves as the right kind of men for office holders." Benjamin continued:

> Although the Democratic party is not yet so thoroughly disorganized as the Whig party, it requires no political sagacity to perceive that it cannot maintain itself as a national party. . . . Impressed with these views of public affairs, I shall hold aloof from the present state canvass. I will not even join the attempt to revive the organization of the Whig party. Its ashes alone remain, and the Phoenix is equally a fable in political as in natural history. I shall await the fast approaching time when not only Louisiana but the entire South, animated by a single spirit, shall struggle for its dearest rights, and in defense of that Constitution which is their most precious heritage.[10]

The Washington *Union* called his conversion speech one of the most powerful ever delivered on any subject. "He ought to have been a Democrat long ago," it editorialized, and the *Courier* echoed the phrase.[11] He and John Slidell became leaders of the "Buchaneers," a group that took over the Democratic National Convention in 1856 to nominate James Buchanan for President, and in the election defeated the "Black Republicans" to maintain a "sacred balance," as Buchanan put it, between North and South.

Just before his term as Secretary of War was to end in 1857, Davis decided to run again for his Senate seat in Mississippi. He refused to leave Washington to campaign, stating to a friend that it was a matter of personal honor that he not violate the trust of his Cabinet post. It was an example of his exaggerated pride prevailing over practicalities, which was misinterpreted as arrogance. He carried the Mississippi state legislature by only one vote, the closest election

of his career. He had won two elections without electioneering and had drawn from the results false lessons for the future. The gritty reality of politics would be beneath his dignity, wheeling and dealing with local politicians violated his principles, and he had mistakenly concluded that, in politics, high-minded personal honor would carry the day over his opponents.

Davis had already established his reputation as a defender of the South in his earlier Senate term and in his forays into politics as a Cabinet member. But by 1859 the debates were becoming fiercer, with less room for compromise. Still, he broke with the "fire eaters" in his own state by opposing the revival of the slave trade. Other Southerners, including Benjamin, voted with him, but there was only a particle of idealism involved in Davis's case. The influx of additional slaves would have reduced the value of the slaves of the largest planters, and Davis believed that Mississippi had as many slaves as it needed.

Davis's speeches in the Senate were legalistic, not inspiring, yet competent and respected. States rights was his battle cry, and he never budged from the strictest construction of the Constitution, which gave the states absolute authority over their own affairs. He even opposed the Morrill Land Grant Act to establish agricultural colleges on the grounds that the Southern states needed no federal aid. As for the long-term solution to the problem of slavery, he believed that "the slave must be made fit for his freedom by education and discipline and thus made unfit for slavery."[12]

While he had always been a sectionalist, he harbored ambitions of running for President of the United States. Indicative of his national perspective, he advocated a transcontinental railroad to develop the West, but even that idea could be defended at home as providing a new market for Southern products.

Judah P. Benjamin, on the other hand, believed that there were constitutional problems in building a transcontinental railroad without the consent of the states, and other Southerners opposed it as a device to strengthen the political power of the North. But Davis's answer was to construct the railroad before the territories became states. While he was narrow on interpreting the Constitution as to states rights, Davis was always expansionist in foreign policy, advocating the extension of Texas to the Rio Grande and the acquisition of Cuba, as well as the building of the railroad to the West.

Although he was a sectionalist, he was not yet a secessionist eager to found a separate Southern republic. He wished to live in peace

and union with the North in a nation extending to the Pacific, but his obsession was to establish the Constitution as a federal compact of states, with limited powers for the Federal government. The union he envisaged included the right to own slaves. Slavery itself was no longer subjected to rational debate; he masked it in doctrinaire legalism.

Various observers noted his poor health during the 1850s. Varina wrote that he entered the Senate in 1850 "pale and emaciated from the nervous pain"[13] and that in 1854 "he had escaped his usual attacks of fever this fall for the first time since he has been in public life."[14] In the campaign for governor in 1851, he was confined to his home for three weeks with pneumonia; at the same time, Varina reported that his eyes were so weakened that he could not read or write and had to wear goggles when he came out of his darkened room.[15] In defending a trip to the North before the Mississippi legislature in 1858, he said he had been ordered by doctors to seek a cooler climate and to escape from tensions and described himself as wasted by "protracted, violent disease."[16] According to one writer, "his brow [was] furrowed and his hair frosted by the passage of time."[17] He was so seriously ill during the winter of 1857–58 that he appeared in the Senate infrequently, "emaciated and head bandaged, leaning on a cane."

Benjamin commented on Davis's poor health in a letter to a friend in New Orleans in 1858, indicating the serious state of his condition: "Poor Jeff Davis is very ill; his recovery is quite doubtful. He has lost his left eye by an ulcer which has been formed in it, and I fear it may affect sympathetically the other. He will certainly be unable to attend to any business this session."[18]

In 1860 the editor of the Cincinnati *Commercial* described Davis at fifty-one as "haggard looking," prematurely gray, with hands that were "thin, bloodless, bony, and nerveless."[19]

During the Pierce administration, while Davis was restrained from daily partisan politics by his role in the Cabinet, Judah Benjamin emerged as the most eloquent Southern spokesman in the Senate. He debated Senator William Seward of New York, the only man for whom he ever showed an intense dislike in public, and Senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts, both leading Abolitionists, with barbed wit and ardent defenses of states rights, which the editors across the South relished in their newspapers.

The Constitution, he claimed, was a "compact" among equals. "Take away this league of love," he argued, his voice fervent with

sincerity, "convert it into a bond of distrust; of suspicion, or of hate; and the entire fabric which is held together by that cement will crumble to the earth, and rest scattered in dishonest fragments upon the ground."

He used every orator's tactic to point out the inconsistency in the Abolitionist position. For example, he proposed that the Kansas–Nebraska question be submitted to the Supreme Court and argued that it was "strange, strange, sir," that the South, the section of the Union with a reputation of being "so excited, so passionate, so violent," was ready to submit the question to the court but that "the calm, cold, quiet, calculating North, always obeying the law, always subservient to the behest of the Constitution, whenever this question of slavery arises—and this alone—appeals to Sharpe's rifles instead of courts of justice."[20] Benjamin's position was not without a calculation of its own. The proslavery Dred Scott decision the next year, which held that Congress could not outlaw slavery in any territory under its jurisdiction, proved that the South had a majority on the Court, as Northerners had suspected.

Judah Benjamin's style in the Senate was to combine his official role with the use of social occasions for political purposes, especially to keep the lines of communication open to his opponents. In that way he functioned as a constructive senator, the kind who sought compromise and the common ground, who worked hard, even during his private hours in Washington, at maintaining the Senate's historic role as a deliberative body.

"Mr. Benjamin was exceedingly hospitable," Varina Davis wrote of him, "and had such perfect self-control that he felt able to bring the extreme men of each party together at his table; indeed he even hoped at one time to bridge the river of bitterness which flowed wide and brimming over between the North and South by bringing representative men of both sections together. If any man could have succeeded in doing this, his sweet disposition, rigid mastery of his temper, and thoroughbred manner would have eminently qualified him for success; but unfortunately the men of the North did not want to compromise any manner of dispute."[21]

Varina wrote admiringly about that quality of Benjamin because it was so much in contrast with the manner of her husband, who was stoical, distant, and so principled that even at dinner parties "there was an unspoken feeling of avoidance between the political men of both sections."[22] Jefferson Davis possibly saw Benjamin's efforts at compromise as a weakness or equivocation over what he regarded as rock-hard issues of principle.

Though she never revealed it toward Benjamin, Varina shared the stereotypical thinking about Jews that characterized Southerners of her era. When she described Major Alfred Mordecai as an "Israelite without guile,"[23] there is no reason to doubt that, following a prevailing view of the times, she considered Major Mordecai an exception to the general rule. Benjamin, the master of political negotiation and shrewd interplay with his opponents, may have conformed to the stereotype, but Varina was capable of appreciating his qualities.

A number of stories have been told that are illustrative of Benjamin's attitude toward Judaism in his Senate years. One of the most often-quoted is from Isaac Mayer Wise, the famous American rabbi, who wrote in his *Reminiscences* (1874) about a visit to Washington, which he dated as occurring in 1850, when he participated in a religious discussion with Daniel Webster, Lieutenant Matthew F. Maurer, later a well-known inventor and oceanographer, and Judah Benjamin. Wise writes that Webster turned to Benjamin and said, "Mr. Senator, my friend is of your race. I would have said coreligionist, but I do not know how much or how little you believe; and in truth, we four are all coreligionists, since we are all Unitarians. . . . Benjamin protested likewise, since in his opinion Judaism and Christianity were entirely different."

Wise continued that Benjamin was so intrigued with the discussion that he invited all three men to dinner for further conversation that night. Wise described the discussion of the others and closed by writing, "Benjamin alone was not satisfied. He had a confused notion of orthodox Portuguese Judaism; and although he rarely heard anything about it, and was never guided by it, he yet insisted that he had no coreligionists beside the Jews. The conversation was most interesting to me; only I felt very sorry that Benjamin could not cite one Jewish source, while Webster was thoroughly versed in the Bible, and had a full knowledge of history."[24]

Bertram Korn, a scholar of American Jewish history, challenged the story on the grounds that it could not have taken place in 1850, because Benjamin did not take office as a Senator until 1853, and Webster had died the year before. Wise might easily have been mistaken about the date and the participants other than Benjamin; it is doubtful, however, that he would have been mistaken in the substance of the conversation with America's first Jewish U.S. Senator. The story is important, because it is one of the few recorded instances of Benjamin's acknowledgment of his Jewishness, and it comes from

the published memoir of one of the most distinguished rabbis of the day.

Historians cite another minor incident as evidence of a Jewish consciousness on Benjamin's part. Gershom Kursheedt, the leader of the New Orleans Jewish community, wrote on March 20, 1848, to his friend Isaac Leeser, publisher of the *Occident,* one of the most important Jewish publications of the times: "Before I forget it let me state on Friday last Mr. J. P. Benjamin handed me $5.50 for you." He enclosed the payment, which he suggested was for Benjamin's subscription to the *Occident.* Leeser had sent free copies five years earlier to a list of distinguished Jews in hopes they would later subscribe. While Korn dismisses the incident as a tardy payment of a one-time renewal, he pointed out that it did confirm that Leeser identified Benjamin as a Jew in 1843 and that Benjamin knew Kursheedt as a trusted agent of Leeser. It also is evidence that Benjamin received the *Occident,* possibly for a long period of time, and presumably read it and thought well enough of it to renew his subscription.[25]

In 1854, discrimination against Jews in an American treaty with Switzerland aroused Jewish public opinion across the country. Swiss cantons (the equivalent of counties in America) would not allow Jews to take up residence within their borders, and the Swiss government insisted in the treaty that each canton be permitted to determine whether non-Christian American citizens should be exempted from such restrictions. Benjamin has been criticized by Jewish scholars for not speaking immediately on the subject of the treaty, but Senator Lewis Cass (later Secretary of State) spoke eloquently against the treaty. In Benjamin's behalf, other scholars have suggested that perhaps Benjamin thought it better and more effective that the stage be left to supportive non-Jews. He was not silent on the subject of the rights of Jewish Americans abroad. According to the *Congressional Globe,* "Mr. Benjamin presented . . . a petition of citizens of the United States, professing the Jewish religion, praying that measures may be taken to secure to American citizens of every religious creed, residing or traveling abroad, their civil and religious rights; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations."[26]

While a member of the Senate, Benjamin appeared in a number of cases before the U.S. Supreme Court. He was not alone in such activity; the Supreme Court was located in a room in the Capitol and customarily heard from senators. He would learn that even the lofty office of U.S. Senator did not protect him from religious preju-

dice. Once, after he had made a particularly brilliant pleading, a Supreme Court Justice said to the opposing lawyer as the lawyer passed on his way to the podium to counter Benjamin: "You had better look to your laurels, for that little Jew from New Orleans has stated your case out of court."[27]

Benjamin not only argued before the Supreme Court in behalf of clients while in the Senate but also made many business trips as a lawyer to California, Ecuador, the Galapagos Islands, and Mexico. The Mexican trip in 1857 was to revive once again the Tehuantepec railroad across the Isthmus by influencing the Mexican government through his friendship with President Buchanan and Secretary of State Cass. He went with several associates, and the *True Delta* reported: "We all know how . . . little Benjamin ran from one saloon to another in Mexico, pulling out from his breeches pocket in each, the well-thumbed autograph of the Sage of Wheatland [Buchanan] which, like Mahomet's signet, the little babbler fancied would be gazed upon and obeyed by his astounded acquaintance in the halls of Montezuma."[28]

Benjamin succeeded in securing from President Juarez a right of transit for sixty years plus an option for an additional twenty-five years, as well as 500,000 acres of right of way on the banks of rivers. In Washington, he even arranged for the Postmaster General to deliver California mail via the Tehuantepec route for one year and set up a trip to England to purchase the iron to begin laying tracks.

Benjamin must have counted on the project to be resurrected after the Civil War. In the National Archives in Washington are the contents of a black box belonging to Benjamin that had been confiscated by Union troops. The box contained twenty-nine bonds of the Tehuantepec Company at $1,000 each; certificates of company stock in his name for $94,100; and a record showing he was to receive $45,000 in bonds as a commission upon the issuance of $900,000 in bonds for the new company.[29] It was a project combining private gain and public good, and he would have profited greatly in both ways had it been built, but the Northern senators would never have supported, at that point in history, a project of such benefit to the South. The war and other events undermined the project permanently. For twenty years, Tehuantepec had remained his personal mirage that always seemed just beyond his grasp. Though he worked on it all through his public career, it would never be realized.

One of Benjamin's most important cases was *United States* v. *Castillero,* involving the title to the New Almaden silver mine in California, at that time one of the richest silver mines in the world. Castillero was a Mexican officer who had received his title from the Governor of Mexico in 1845, but once California became a state, the U.S. government sought to declare his claim invalid and, in a sense, confiscate his property. The case went to the U.S. Supreme Court eventually and was the most important of many mining cases involving valuable metals and mineral rights stemming from statehood.[30]

Castillero's case was different from those of other Mexican nationals who lost property because he had leased his mine to wealthy English mining interests, which were extracting millions of dollars of silver a year and therefore had sufficient money to battle the claim. The litigation went on for ten years, with Benjamin and four other lawyers representing Castillero and therefore the English company.

Benjamin spent four months in San Francisco in the fall of 1860, and his opening argument lasted four days. He charged the government with "spoliation and oppression" and with violation of its treaties. "There is no treaty of the Government of the United States pledging the faith of a great nation in favor of one single quartz-miner in the State of California; but there is a published treaty pledging in the faith of a great nation in favor of a Mexican mineowner, whose Government ceded this territory to the United States; ceding to us nought but what it held itself. We acquired from Mexico nothing but what Mexico owned, and she did not own this mine when she ceded this territory to the United States. It belonged to one of her citizens. She did not claim it—did not pretend it was hers. Whence then the right of the Government of the United States?"[31]

The case did not reach the U.S. Supreme Court until 1863, and even though he was then a high official in the Confederacy in the midst of a war, the counsels for the company filed his brief with the court. With three judges dissenting, Benjamin's clients lost their case. Benjamin reportedly received $25,000, one of the largest fees paid for legal services in this country up to that time.

Benjamin's visit to California became the source of another debate concerning his attitude toward his Jewishness. Herbert Ezekiel, the Richmond historian, reported in his book *The History of the Jews of Richmond from 1769 to 1917* that "there are those who seem to delight in claiming that Benjamin was not a Jew, because he took no part in communal affairs. . . . No less an authority than the late Dr. Isaac M. Wise told the writer that Benjamin delivered

an address in the synagogue in San Francisco on Yom Kippur, 1860."[32]

Wise's oral recollection has been contested by Bertram Korn, who analyzed it in detail in a 1949 article for the American Jewish Historical Society publication.[33] Korn said that Wise had never been in San Francisco and relied on the only Jewish newspaper there, *The Gleaner,* for all of his information about San Francisco. *The Gleaner* did not report such a speech, Korn wrote, and most assuredly would have done so had it occurred. What *The Gleaner* did report, as Korn quoted it at length, was a speech by Benjamin at a local academy, and Korn suggests that Wise's memory was playing tricks on him. The paper reported that Benjamin "next referred in a very happy manner to the injustice in the distribution of offices and asked why the citizens of his religious tenets were not favored by those who have it in their power to bestow offices of emolument and trust. In a very pathetic manner he asked, 'Would the great Washington have excluded a citizen from holding a federal appointment because of his religion?' "

Korn claimed that the author of the article in *The Gleaner* confused that speech with one that Benjamin delivered in the Church of the Advent in San Francisco, where Benjamin and his co-counsel in the *Castillero* case did appear at a fundraising event to win the favor of the pastor, who was the son of the judge in *Castillero.* A letter in the National Archives, probably from one of the government lawyers in the case, reports with some sarcasm mixed with admiration that the lectures put "some two or three thousand dollars into the fingers of the Judge's son. When you consider that Benjamin is a Jew, his labors in behalf of a Christian church display a spirit of toleration pretty nearly unexampled."

Korn sums up by saying, "Isn't it ironic that the only instance in which Benjamin was supposed to have spoken in a synagogue turns out to be one of the many occasions when he spoke in, or for, the benefit of a church?"[34]

However, Korn's statements rest on assumptions about the sources of Wise's information that may or may not have been correct. What may be more indicative about the incident is that Wise, who was one of America's most celebrated rabbis and a contemporary of Benjamin, did not think such a report was as incredible as later historians considered it to be and was confident enough of its possible veracity to repeat it to one of the principal Southern Jewish historians of the time.

Benjamin also traveled for a client to Ecuador and the Galapagos

Islands to check on guano deposits, which would have provided cheaper fertilizer for Southern agriculture. Had it succeeded, newspapers wrote, he would have made $200,000, but the reports of large deposits turned out to be false.[35] Contacts in Europe were refreshed during his annual trips to Paris to visit Natalie and Ninette, and from time to time, European clients engaged Benjamin. It is estimated that he made $40,000 to $50,000 a year as a lawyer during the 1850s, an extraordinary sum for that time.[36]

After Buchanan's election, Benjamin sought through John Slidell the ambassadorship to France in order to be near his family, according to the *True Delta*. The paper also reported that Slidell was trying to obtain the ambassadorship to Spain for the husband of his niece, August Belmont, the New York lawyer who represented the Rothschild family. "Both gentlemen are of the Hebrew faith," the *True Delta* noted, "as is, I believe, Senator Slidell himself."[37] When Belmont turned down the offer to Spain, Slidell pushed Benjamin, who received a letter from Buchanan on August 31, 1858:

> I write for the purpose of tendering you the appointment of Minister of Spain and expressing a strong desire that you may accept it. I feel satisfied that the Country will unite with me in opinion that this is an appointment eminently fit to be made. Indeed I am not acquainted with any gentleman who possesses superior, if equal, qualifications to yourself for this important mission. Such being the case I think your Country has a right to benefit of your services.

Buchanan then added, "I told your friend Slidell yesterday that he might inform you I had determined to offer you the Spanish mission and his letter may probably reach you before this can arrive."[38]

He then sought to reassure Benjamin that he was not being relegated to political oblivion: "Repeating my ardent wish that you may accept the mission and assuring you that I shall do all in my power to make it agreeable to yourself, useful to your Country and promotive to your own fame." The offer was made public and was applauded by the Jewish press, sensing the irony of his returning to the land from which his ancestors were expelled. But it was ultimately rejected by Benjamin, who had second thoughts and decided to remain in the Senate.

Benjamin's Jewishness was never far from the minds of his Senate opponents. Once, during the debate on the extension of slavery into Kansas, Senator Ben Wade of Ohio goaded Benjamin: "Why,

sir, when old Moses, under the immediate inspiration of God Almighty, enticed a whole nation of slaves, and ran away, not to Canada, but to old Canaan, I suppose that Pharaoh and all the chivalry of old Egypt denounced him as a most furious abolitionist . . . there were not those who loved Egypt better than they loved liberty. . . . They were not exactly Northern men with Southern principles; but they were Israelites with Egyptian principles."

There is some debate as to Benjamin's answer, and historians differ as to whether the remarks attributable to Benjamin were actually uttered by him, but the legend of his answer exists and should be recorded. "It is true that I am a Jew," he is reported to have said, "and when my ancestors were receiving their Ten Commandments from the immediate hand of Diety, amidst the thunderings and lightnings of Mount Sinai, the ancestors of my opponent were herding swine in the forests of Great Britain."[39]

Historians provide at least four different versions of when, where, and to whom that retort was made. Disraeli is also said to have made a similar one. The quote cannot be verified, but the statement remains a part of the legend of Judah P. Benjamin, even though it indicates an uncharacteristic acknowledgement in public of his Jewishness.

There are a number of physical descriptions of Benjamin during this period. From the photographs and paintings, one can see that he had inherited a full Mediterranean face from his Portuguese father—the large Sephardic forehead, a wide fleshy nose, thin lips, and bright, dark eyes. As Varina pointed out, there was an olive cast to his complexion, and his dark, curly hair completed the stereotyped portrait of the Jew among the Gentiles. Benjamin's features and coloring reminded him every day of his life that in the race-conscious South, others saw only the face of the Jew when they spoke to him.

He wore no moustache, and his beard was closely cropped. His optimistic and ebullient manner made him easily approachable by strangers. His ample cheeks, almost cherubic in their plumpness, seemed to tug the corners of his mouth upward into a permanent half-smile, giving him the amiable aura of a man at peace with himself and content in his life's work. The smile, which contrasted with the angry mood of almost everyone else in the U.S. Senate, became even more noticeable as the somber reality of war divided friends and families. It infuriated his enemies and gave solace to his friends. No matter how tense the situation, brutal the debate, or dark the

event, whether before juries or generals or kings, Judah P. Benjamin appeared serene and unflappable, his smile reflecting, to observers, almost a nonchalance over whatever issues confronted him.

Varina wrote of another side of him to Lawley that "notwithstanding Mr. Benjamin's sweet-tempered, considerate ways with mankind in general, he was a very high-spirited, sensitive man, and somewhat touchy in his intercourse with others. He fought at least one duel before he came into the Senate, and several times narrowly escaped repetition of the same catastrophe while serving there."[40]

What she neglected to mention was that her husband was possibly the near "catastrophe" to which she was referring. A dramatic moment in the personal histories of both men occurred in 1858 in the midst of a routine discussion over the purchase of breech-loading arms in an Army appropriation bill. Military supply and weapons was a subject about which Davis considered himself to be absolutely expert in the Senate, and he was rarely challenged. The *Congressional Globe* reported the discussion that was on the record, and other participants filled in the details:

Benjamin: I do not understand that the Secretary of War has asked for any part of this $100,000 here appropriated in the House bill, to purchase the breech-loading arms. If he has, I am very much mistaken.

Davis: Oh, I will state the very simple fact that he asks money to buy breech-loading guns. Whether it is in this $100,000 or out of the Treasury, I do not know.

Benjamin: It is easy for the Senator from Mississippi to give a sneering reply to what was certainly a very respectful inquiry.

Davis: I consider it is an attempt to misrepresent a very plain remark.

Benjamin: The Senator is mistaken and has no right to state any such things. His manner is not agreeable at all.

Davis: If the Senator finds it disagreeable, I hope he will keep it to himself.

Benjamin: When directed to me, I will not keep it to myself; I will repel it instanter.

Davis: You have got it, sir.

Benjamin: That is enough, sir.[41]

Benjamin then proceeded to complete his remarks on muskets while Davis's anger apparently subsided. Others reported that Davis

then hissed in a low voice that he had "no idea that he was to be met with the arguments of a paid attorney in the Senate chamber." Benjamin inquired if he had heard correctly the words "paid attorney," at which Davis glared at him and replied, "Yes, those were the very words."

Tom Bayard, the son of the Senator from Delaware, took notes on what followed:

> Benjamin peremptorily challenged Jefferson Davis for rude language in debate and brought the note to my father in the session to be copied and delivered. My father handed the note to Davis in the cloakroom of the Senate. He read it and at once tore it up and said "I will make this all right at once. I have been wholly wrong." He walked back to his desk in the Senate, and at the first opportunity, rose and made the most distinct withdrawal of what he had said, and regretted any offense most amply. No one in the Senate but my father knew what had called forth from Davis this apology; for Benjamin had sat down in silence when Davis made the rude interruption. But writing instantly at his desk, Benjamin called him to account by the note, which contained a direct challenge, without asking for a withdrawal or an explanation.[42]

Davis apologized in the well of the Senate, on the record, saying "I have been wholly wrong. . . . I cannot gainsay that my manner implied more than my heart meant." His behavior, he said, was "sometimes unfortunate, and is sometimes, as my best friends have told me, of a character which would naturally impress that I intended to be dogmatic and dictatorial."

Benjamin replied that he had been hurt by the tone of the remarks from one whom he respected and admired and that he would forget all between them "except the pleasant passage of the morning."

What is extraordinary about the incident is that it reflects totally uncharacteristic qualities in both men. Varina was mistaken when she wrote that Benjamin had previously been involved in a duel. Even for one who lived as a young man in so raucous a city as New Orleans, there is absolutely no record, not even the suggestion, of dueling in his earlier life. His challenge was hurled at the spur of the moment from an experienced Jewish lawyer-senator who had kept his cool demeanor under far greater provocation in courtrooms, in political clashes in Louisiana, and on the Senate floor. He was always, in similar situations, the master of the counterthrust in

debate, handling challenges deftly. In addition, the issue was so minor, even meaningless, that the exchange obviously represented something deeper than what was on the surface.

From Jefferson Davis, a contained and controlled military man, who had battled the most acid Yankee tongues in the Senate on far greater matters without a flicker of anger, the outburst was also unusual. And he was facing the inquiry not of an avowed enemy but of a colleague who shared his views on almost every matter of substance.

In her letter to Lawley, Varina described Benjamin in the incident in general terms, but the reader senses a defense of her husband between the lines:

> Each time he had an angry contest with any of his colleagues, someone was sure to say, "How can anyone get provoked with Mr. Benjamin; he is so gentle and courteous." In fact, the truth was that Mr. Benjamin's courtesy in argument was like the salute of the duelist to his antagonist whom he intends to kill if possible. He was master of the art of inductive reasoning, and when he had smilingly established his point, he dealt the coup de grace with a fierce joy which his antagonist fully appreciated and resented. I never knew him in those days to be very much in earnest without infuriating his antagonist beyond measure. Mr. Slidell, who loved him like a brother, once said to Mr. Davis, "When I do not agree with Benjamin I will not let him talk to me; he irritates me so by his debonair ways."[43]

Perhaps that irritation with Benjamin's manner pricked Davis's ordinary veneer of control so deeply that he could not contain himself. Davis had been called up short trying to finesse a budgetary item that was not listed in the War Department budget, and perhaps he was more angry at himself than at Benjamin. It is also possible that he could not fathom Benjamin's motive, and leaped upon the most unseemly prospect—that a possible client was involved—without any evidence except gossip. While it was unlike Davis ever to back down in an argument, he obviously realized his error and apologized immediately.

Benjamin, on the other hand, was stunned at the sneering response, all the more so since it came from a political friend. He had regularly raised questions of waste and economy in government. He probably considered the question to Davis to be a routine clarification, not an effort to embarrass a fellow-Southerner. Benjamin was deeply

sensitive to the charge of dishonesty: Suspicion of his representing a client's interest would undermine his reputation as a Senator. He could not let so serious a charge stand without correction, especially from someone as respected by other Southerners in the Senate as Davis. Benjamin chose the clearest possible way to challenge Davis, one that word of mouth would carry all over the Senate. Knowing Davis to be a man of impeccable honor who would recognize the error, Benjamin probably counted on the return of Davis's customary coolness under fire, in which case an apology would be forthcoming. Benjamin guessed right, and the cavalry man from Buena Vista did not take up the gauntlet of his rotund opponent, who had never served a day in the army. In the long run, Davis would respect a man who would not allow anyone to stain his character, especially one who adhered to a Southern standard as high as his own. Davis was large enough in spirit to withdraw an unconsidered insult and to do it publicly.

Political enemies in rival factions in Louisiana plotted against Benjamin in his reelection campaign in 1858, searching his voting record for weaknesses. The *True Delta* referred to him as a "subservient creature" of John Slidell and said that "we do not want a Senator to say ditto" whenever an issue or a vote arose. If no other candidate than Benjamin could be found, the paper urged, "then, in God's name, let Slidell himself be chosen, for he may just as well have two votes in his own person as to be able, on every occasion, to command the service accompaniment of his facile coadjutor."[44]

The heart of the *True Delta*'s claim and the most publicized issue against Benjamin was a charge of scandal linking him to Slidell concerning title to a tract of 20,000 acres in an area of several hundred thousand acres 50 miles north of New Orleans that belonged originally to the Houmas Indians.[45] The title to the land was vague, but it had been purchased in good faith by Slidell and business associates in 1835. Because of the vagueness of title, a large number of squatters had settled on the land, believing it to be wilderness, and speculators, taking advantage of that belief, had also sold land to other unsuspecting settlers.

Benjamin presided over the Committee on Private Land Claims in the Senate and managed to slip a provision into a pending bill in 1859 confirming Slidell's claim to 8,000 acres unless claimants to the title instituted suit within two years and proved a better claim. The Washington correspondent for the St. Louis *Republican* charged that "this section legislated into the pocket of Mr. Slidell a half million

dollars and turned out of their homes about five hundred families."[46] Settlers held a number of mass meetings, and rival politicians and newspapers began to refer to Slidell as "Houmas John." He defended himself with a speech on the Senate floor in which he said that he bought the land for $72,000 in 1835 and had offered it on the market at $40,000, and no buyers had bid on it. It had been assessed, he claimed, at $15,000, and his claim had been validated in 1848 by the Louisiana Supreme Court in earlier litigation in the case, in which Benjamin had been an attorney.[47]

The New York *Times* claimed that Benjamin received $10,000 for getting the provision through the Senate, but that was never verified. Settlers in Louisiana raised such public opposition through mass meetings and protests that the Senate suspended action on the bill pending an investigation, and the charges of scandal were projected into Benjamin's reelection campaign. Because of that, and because he was being opposed by an upstate member of Congress whose backers objected to having two Senators from New Orleans, it took Benjamin forty-two ballots to win reelection in the Louisiana legislature. The New Orleans *Picayune* called it "the most excited contest for Senator ever held in the state."

Butler and Meade both point out that there was room for differences of opinion in the Houmas case as to the validity of Slidell's claim. The issue was unfairly exaggerated for political motives, according to Butler; in fact, Benjamin's opponent, J. M. Sandidge, had done as much in the House of Representatives in behalf of the Houmas bill as Benjamin had done in the Senate.[48] Moreover, Benjamin had been one of the lawyers in the earlier cases surrounding the contested titles in the 1840s and knew the background of the claims well. The problem was the settlers, and a way had to be found to negotiate their interests in a fair way; Benjamin's solution put the burden of proof on the families to institute their claims against a valid title holder, Slidell, who had evidence of his payment. The fact that the title holder was John Slidell smacked of political self-interest and favoritism, though it was consistent with his earlier representation. Whatever the justice of the case, it was naive to think that such a Senate resolution would not be misunderstood and distorted so close to an election. So Benjamin's actions, however sincere and honest he claimed them to be, almost cost him his seat in the U.S. Senate.

The *Delta* congratulated the legislature on his reelection. "As a profound lawyer," it stated, "Mr. Benjamin has stood for years at the head of a bar that has no superior in the Union; as an orator,

his reputation is as wide as the country itself, while as a man, his life has been singularly pure."[49]

Contemporaries in the Congress rated him one of history's most talented statesmen. Representative J. L. M. Curry wrote that there was no better debater in the Senate, that "Benjamin was collected and self-possessed in debate . . . did not use notes . . . and had a memory like Macaulay's."[50] A noted Maryland lawyer, Reverdy Johnson, who had argued cases with him before the U.S. Supreme Court, said, "Benjamin had a power of argument rarely, if ever, surpassed."[51] In 1903, Senator George Vest of Missouri wrote that he had once asked Dennis Murphy, the official reporter of the Senate for nearly forty years, who, in his opinion, "was the ablest and best equipped Senator he had known during his service as a reporter. Murphy replied without hesitation 'Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana.' "[52]

All during his first six-year term, Benjamin had visited Natalie and Ninette annually in Paris. During the remainder of that time, they corresponded frequently, but only one sentence from a fragment of a letter from Natalie has survived his destructive hand. The sentence says simply, "Oh, talk not to me of economy, it is so fatiguing."

Enticing his wife back to Washington had been at the back of his mind from the beginning, and he must have painted pictures for her of the parties and balls at the White House and the diplomatic receptions. It was an emotional and social gamble on his part, but after his reelection to the Senate in 1858 she finally agreed to return. Benjamin went about preparing for her return with the fervor of a new bridegroom.

He spent tens of thousands of dollars decorating the Decatur house in Washington with the finest paintings, crystal, silver, and china in preparation for Natalie's homecoming. He notified the social hostesses and hired servants experienced in party-giving. Though Benjamin welcomed her with high anticipation, the gossip mill started grinding soon after she arrived. Her return to Washington turned into a nightmare. The Congressional ladies, after much clucking over the rumors about Natalie, decided to pay her a call on a reception day. The results are recorded in Virginia Clay-Clopton's gossip-laden memoir of the era entitled *A Belle of the Fifties:*

> Here, too, was run the American career of another much-talked-of lady, which, for meteoric brilliancy and brevity, perhaps outshines any other episode in the chronicles of social life in Washington.

The lady's husband was a statesman of prominence, celebrated for his scholarly tastes and the fineness of his mental qualities. The arrival of the lady, after a marked absence abroad, during which some curious gossip had reached American ears, was attended by great eclat; and not a little conjecture was current as to how she would be received. For her home-coming, however, the Stockton Mansion was fitted up in hitherto undreamed-of magnificence, works of art and of vertu, which were the envy of social connoisseurs, being imported to grace it, regardless of cost. So far, so good!

The report of these domiciliary wonders left no doubt but that entertaining on a large scale was being projected. The world was slow in declaring its intentions in its own behalf; for, notwithstanding her rumoured delinquencies, the lady's husband was high in the councils of the nation, and as such was a figure of dignity. Shortly after her arrival our "mess" held a conclave, in which we discussed the propriety of calling upon the new-comer, but a conclusion seeming impossible (opinions being so widely divergent), it was decided to submit the important question to our husbands.

This was done duly, and Senator Clay's counsel to me was coincided in generally.

"By all means, call," said he. "You have nothing to do with the lady's private life, and, as a mark of esteem to a statesman of her husband's prominence, it will be better to call."

Upon a certain day, therefore, it was agreed that we should pay a "mess" call, going in a body. We drove accordingly, in dignity and in state, and, truth to tell, in soberness and ceremony, to the mansion aforenamed. It was the lady's reception day. We entered the drawingroom with great circumspection, tempering our usually cordial manner with a fine prudence; we paid our devoirs to the hostess and retired. But now a curious retribution overtook us, social faint-hearts that we were; for, though we heard much gossip of the regality and originality of one or more dinners given to the several diplomatic corps (the lady especially affected the French Legation), I never heard of a gathering of Washingtonians at her home, nor of invitations extended to them, nor, indeed, anything more of her until two months had flown. Then, Arab-like, the lady rose in the night, "silently folded her tent and stole away" (to meet a handsome German officer, it was said), leaving our calls unanswered, save by the sending of her card, and her

silver and china and crystal, her paintings, and hangings, and furniture to be auctioned off to the highest bidder![53]

Varina wrote to Lawley: "His life in his family must have been gruesome, but he always spoke of himself as the happiest of men. His indulgence towards those connected with him was boundless. His wife was a Creole—not in your sense colored—but born and reared in the lower part of Louisiana—musical to her finger tips, with a divine voice—little education, and as my mother used to say, 'unassisted human nature.' "[54] Meade interviewed the daughter of Senator Yulee, who told him that "Mrs. Benjamin was very gay and very unhappy. My father and mother condemned her strongly because of the treatment of her husband. [Benjamin] idolized her and gave her everything she wanted. I do not think he knew what was going on. It came as a terrible shock to him."[55]

The rumors about Natalie's escapades were the talk at every concert, play, and party, and eventually the gossip reached her ears. She returned to Paris sometime in 1859, a few months after she arrived, never to set foot in America again. Defeated by his final effort to win her back, Benjamin decided to sell everything and move back to a more easily managed life.

He left the city during the auction of their fine furnishings and did not witness the crowds that came to the house.

> Everyone in Washington now thronged to see the beautiful things, and many purchased specimens from among them, among others Mrs. Davis. By a curious turn of fate, the majority of these treasures were acquired by Mrs. Senator Yulee, who was so devoutly religious that her piety caused her friends to speak of her as "the Madonna of the Wickliffe sisters!" The superb furniture of the whilom hostess was carried to "Homosassa," the romantic home of the Yulees in Florida where in later years it was reduced to ashes."[56]

Such was the fate of his finest acquisitions—the candlesticks of Sheffield plate, the handmade candelabra of French bronze, the eggshell teacups.

Natalie had almost wrecked his life in Washington; his actions reveal his relief at her return to Paris. At least he could go about his work without emotional stress and personal humiliation. He knew, after that, they would continue to see each other only once a year, which meant prolonged separation from sixteen-year-old Ninette.

Oddly, with everything, he trusted Natalie to raise Ninette properly

in Paris, with taste, intelligence, and good values. Natalie was able to manage her life without him around. The tensions between husband and wife arose only when they were together. Without her, he would be spared the humiliation of an unfaithful wife publicly affronting his friends and colleagues.

Election to the U.S. Senate had given Benjamin the chance to start over in a new and challenging environment and put the embarrassments of his early days in New Orleans behind him. In New Orleans, he had been a part of neither the Catholic nor the Jewish world, and Natalie's absence had left him noticeably alone in a city where her family was well known. In Washington, he would be on the top rung of the social ladder.

The public auction of his household goods was a very strange event for a member of the U.S. Senate. It was a public humiliation, saying to others that even with the finest of possessions, he could not keep her with him.

Yet, there was a positive aspect to the sale as well. It was a public way to renounce her, to cast her out of his life. It seemed indicative of a permanent separation, evidence for all to see that every trace of her would be removed and that his illusion of having a conventional marriage had been shattered. There was a finality to selling all of their prized possessions because they would not be needing them any more. It said to official Washington that she was gone and would not be back.

Of course, there was a financial dimension to it, but the auction also dissociated Benjamin in the eyes of officialdom from social frivolity, implying that the rugs, porcelain, and silver were Natalie's refinement, not an expression of his values. He, on the contrary, preferred a simpler life. More importantly, it signaled his acceptance that they would never again live together in America.

Leaving his Washington mansion was another form of starting over after a traumatic experience. It was Yale, Charleston, New Orleans, Bellechasse, and Washington all over again—recasting his life after a low point and changing his environment. He seemed to like radical change in his life.

Benjamin must not have had very high expectations of the intimate rewards of marriage. His, like his father's, had been a marriage of aspiration and of disappointment. His mother had been a strong, proud working woman, preoccupied much of the time with her shop and unavailable to his father or to him. In her eyes, his father

was weak and disappointing, and Rebecca did not spare Philip her feelings just because the children were present. Perhaps Benjamin had come to expect that the woman in his life would be absent most of the time, would neglect him, would be too busy to spend time with him, would be selfish and self-centered.

Perhaps, in his thoughts, he followed Natalie to Europe, already harboring the fantasy of retirement abroad where he could live a better life, far from conflicts, hatreds, and the clouds of his past. Natalie in Paris might have represented the golden door of eventual escape, the assurance that he could never lose everything, that there was a future for him beyond the turmoil of public life and the terrible war that, by 1859, many foresaw.

In Ninette he imagined the beauteous child of his fantasy, blessed with a cultural polish her mother never attained. She would belong to Paris, not New Orleans; she would be steeped in a civilization many centuries old, not the poor imitation of French manners on the Confederate frontier. She would not suffer, as the child of a Catholic and a Jew, the pains of her father. Ninette and Natalie would be building a haven for his advancing years, and the germ of that idea would grow as war descended upon him.

Events would not await Benjamin's efforts to sort out his personal life. In October 1859, John Brown and a small group of fanatics seized the arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia, and launched a slave insurrection. A garrison of Marines led by Robert E. Lee captured him, and Davis helped lead a Senate investigation committee, which stirred suspicions of Northern sympathy. In December Brown was tried and hanged. Tremors of fear and hysteria swept across the South, hardening the positions of its leadership against any compromise. Davis and Benjamin moved forcefully over the next few months to block the Democratic presidential nomination of Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, who had enunciated early in his Senate career and most forcefully during the Lincoln–Douglas debates the doctrine that the people of a territory could determine for themselves whether they would allow slavery or reject it. The South dubbed that "squatter sovereignty," and Benjamin delivered his most bitter speech in the Senate, complimenting Lincoln for adherence to principle while excoriating Douglas for breaking his word to the South: Under "the stress of local election," Benjamin exclaimed of Douglas, "his knees gave way; his whole person trembled. . . . He is a fallen star."[57] Douglas's doctrine so angered the Southern leadership that the Democratic

convention in April 1860 split apart, opening the way for the election to the presidency of the man Douglas had defeated for his Illinois Senate seat in 1858, Abraham Lincoln.

A month after the convention, Benjamin was still capable of a modicum of moderation, even if his colleagues were not. On May 24, 1860, Benjamin opposed Jefferson Davis and other leading Southern Senators and supported a bill to maintain with food, clothing, and shelter a group of 1,200 slaves in Key West captured from illegal slave ships and to enter into contracts to pay for their return to Africa. The United States government was "bound by treaty stipulations to aid in the suppression of the slave trade," he successfully argued in the Senate. "If that treaty binds us, it is our duty to carry it out in good faith," which meant providing the supplies the slaves needed.[58]

But time was running out. Although others would blame the outbreak of the Civil War on the lack of statesmanship of the Southern leadership, Benjamin believed that larger forces were at work. "You know how absurd is the fiction put forward by our enemies in the Northern states," Benjamin told Lawley the year before he died, "that the great Civil War which raged between 1861 and 1865 would never have taken place but for Jefferson Davis and myself. Such mighty convulsions, which amount indeed to revolutions, are never the work of individuals, but of divided nations."[59]

Abraham Lincoln's election on a platform of containing slavery was interpreted across the Deep South as utter intransigence and a challenge to the future of slavery. Davis cautioned his colleagues to delay secession, and Benjamin, in California to try a land case, wrote a letter "to repel the absurd and self-contradictory charge that we seek to dissolve the Union." Speaking in a San Francisco church on the day after Lincoln's election, he praised the Constitution and looked with a "glowing heart . . . at the majestic march of our Union, which, like the great river upon whose banks I dwell, still pursued its resistless course into the unknown ocean which lies beyond, swelling it as it advances, receiving its tributaries each distinct yet each uniting in forming one common reservoir of wealth and power, and each, I trust, to remain, so united."[60] He hoped for a better understanding of the Constitution. "Then and only then will the horrid sectional disputes, which now stun our ears with their discordant din, be hushed forever." As late as December 11, 1860, the New Orleans *Picayune* reported that Benjamin "opposes secession, except in the last resort."[61]

A majority of Southerners, especially in the cities, opposed secession, but the tide was turning. On December 20, South Carolina seceded. Davis wrote that "my associates considered me too slow and it was probably true that they were right in their belief that I was behind the opinion of the people of the state as to the propriety of a prompt secession."[62]

In Louisiana, the secession movement gathered irresistible momentum. "We cannot get any compromise," Benjamin wired from Washington.

Historians consider Benjamin's farewell to the U.S. Senate on New Year's Eve, 1860, one of the great speeches in American history. The gallery was packed to hear the most eloquent voice of the South. It was a moment both of tragedy and triumph as he pleaded with his colleagues against the war of brothers to come:

> And now, Senators, within a few weeks we part to meet as Senators in one common council chamber of the nation no more forever. We desire, we beseech you, let this parting be in peace . . . indulge in no vain delusion that duty or conscience, interest or honor, imposes upon you the necessity of invading our States or shedding the blood of our people. You have not possible justification for it.[63]

Varina wrote that "his voice rose over the vast audience distinct and clear . . . he held his audience spellbound for over an hour and so still were they that a whisper could have been heard."[64]

And history would record that he had warned them:

> What may be the fate of this horrible contest, no man can tell . . . but this much, I will say: the fortunes of war may be adverse to our arms, you may carry desolation into our peaceful land, and with torch and fire you may set our cities in flame . . . you may, under the protection of your advancing armies, give shelter to the furious fanatics who desire, and profess to desire, nothing more than to add all the horrors of a servile insurrection to the calamities of civil war; you may do all this—and more too, if more there be—but you never can subjugate us; you never can convert the free sons of the soil into vassals, paying tribute to your power; and you never, never can degrade them to the level of an inferior and servile race. Never! Never!

Benjamin stood between two desks, intentionally, not in the well of the Senate, but apart from the usual point of attention, to dramatize

his independence of the Senate rules and his farewell to its formalities. He was calm and controlled, one hand in his pocket, the other toying with a watchchain.

"You may set our cities in flame," he had stated. He quoted Thomas Jefferson, who had written the lines in the Declaration of Independence that Benjamin interpreted as defending the right of the people of the South "to alter or abolish and to institute a new government."

At the moment of his defiance, he let go of his watch chain as if to free the South of its bond to the North, turned to take his seat as if finished and then, rising again, turned directly to the audience and said again, "Never! Never!"

Not loudly, but simply; fist-pounding and rebel yells were not his style. An orator knows that an emotion-charged audience will add its own yeast to an eloquent statement of its principles.

There was an immediate rush of reaction to the speech from the Southern contingent and tumultuous applause from the galleries. Varina reported that "many ladies were in tears. The Vice President tried in vain to prevent the applause but could not control the multitude who were wild with enthusiasm."[65] There were even grudging compliments from the Northern press and a quote from a London correspondent that "it was better than our Benjamin could have done."[66]

Benjamin would meet Disraeli someday and be recognized by historians as his counterpart on the North American continent.

The enthusiasm in the South was matched by the venom in the North. The Boston *Transcript* of January 5, 1861, published an editorial under the heading "The Children of Israel" in which it attacked the support Benjamin and other Southern Jews gave to secession as indicative of the disloyalty of all American Jews.[67] Isaac Wise vehemently replied to the charge by pointing to support of the Republican party by thousands of Jews in the North. Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts, who would be elected Vice President of the United States in 1872, condemned Benjamin because "his bearing, his tone of voice, his words, all gave evidence . . . that his heart was in this foul and wicked plot to dismember the Union, to overthrow the government of his adopted country which gives equality of rights even to that race that stoned prophets and crucified the Redeemer of the world."[68]

Louisiana seceded from the Union on January 26, 1861, and on February 4 Benjamin and Slidell officially withdrew from their seats in the Senate.

He made another, this time short, farewell speech with his customary deft style and with the added theatrics of a pistol at his side. His peroration was quoted by schoolboys across the South for decades:

> And now to you, Mr. President, and to my brother Senators, on all sides of this Chamber, I bid a respectful farewell; with many of those from whom I have been radically separated in political sentiment, my personal relations have been kindly and have inspired me with a respect and esteem that I shall not willingly forget; with those around me from the Southern states, I part as men part from brothers on the eve of a temporary absence, with a cordial pressure of the hand and smiling assurance of sweet intercourse around the family hearth. But to you, noble and generous friends, who, born beneath other skies, possess hearts that beat in sympathy with ours . . . to you, who, on our behalf have bared your breast to the fierce beatings of the storm . . . in your devotion to constitutional liberty; to you, who have made our cause your cause and from many of whom I part forever . . . one priceless treasure is yours—the assurance that an entire people honor your names, and hold them in grateful and affectionate memory. . . .
>
> When, in after days, the story of the present shall be written; when history shall have passed her stern sentence on the erring men who have driven their unoffending brethren from the shelter of their common home . . . your children shall hear repeated the familiar tale . . . and they will glory in their lineage from men of spirit as generous and of patriotism as high hearted as ever illustrated or adorned the American Senate.[69]

"The Senate was hushed in stillness," wrote Senator Bragg of North Carolina, "so that every word in his soft but distinct utterance fell clearly upon the ears of his hearers." Bragg reported that both Benjamin and Slidell shed tears, and that he shook their hands, "too full to say a word."[70]

The admiration was not unanimous. Three weeks later, Senator Andrew Johnson told Charles Francis Adams of the distinguished Boston family, "There's another Jew—that miserable Benjamin! He looks on a country and a government as he would a suit of old clothes. He sold out the old one; and he would sell out the new if he could in so doing make two or three millions."[71]

Jefferson Davis did not resign from the Senate until January 21,

1861, after he received official notification that the State of Mississippi had seceded. He was so ill that he delayed his appearance and could hardly walk to the Senate chamber. It was a disappointing speech, uninspired and full of typical Davis legalisms. Only Varina thought his voice sounded like "a silver trumpet."[72] It was a phrase she would use again years later to describe Benjamin's voice the first time they met.

Judah P. Benjamin was part of the small band of moderates who had tried to hold the union together but were not able to compromise on slavery. They believed in a strong South in a decentralized Union, given the freedom to pursue its destiny all the way to the Pacific. Most had not wanted this war, and Benjamin must have wondered how history would view those, like himself, who were willing to play for time in hopes that compromise and statesmanship would find a way to settle the struggle without bloodshed.

2

"DARK PRINCE" OF THE CONFEDERACY

1861–1863

7

From Attorney General to Secretary of War: *The Unprepared Warrior*

Jefferson Davis returned to Brierfield during the calm before the storm, determined to join the military as general-in-chief of the army and to lead the South on the battlefield. But the convention of Southern states meeting at Montgomery, Alabama, searching for consensus and divided between other candidates, in four days unanimously elected the hero of Buena Vista as the first President of the Confederacy. Varina and he were in their rose garden when a messenger came with the news.

"I thought his genius was military, but that as a party manager, he would not succeed," she wrote with insight in her memoirs. "He did not know the arts of the politician and would not practice them if understood, and he did know those of war."[1] Varina had recognized the main factor in his favor at the Montgomery convention. Others aspired to the presidency, but he was a U.S. Senator with West Point and military service in his background, as well as a term as U.S. Secretary of War under Pierce. He was a natural choice.

He made twenty-five speeches along the route to Montgomery, where he was greeted by cheering crowds and an oratorical flourish by the great fire-eater, William L. Yancey, who proclaimed, "The man and the hour have met."

At his inauguration a happy crowd, dressed in finery and innocent of the travail to come, cheered him lustily. The band played a new song entitled "Dixie," composed by a Northern minstrel, and Davis made a short and ordinary speech. The next day he settled down to consultations on the selection of his Cabinet.

For political reasons, he made certain that each state had at least one Cabinet member. He wrote later, "Not even a single member of the cabinet bore to me the relation of a close personal friendship."[2] That included the Senator from Louisiana: "Mr. Benjamin of Louisiana had a very high reputation as a lawyer, and my acquaintance with him in the Senate had impressed me with the lucidity of his intellect, his systematic habits and capacity for labor. He was therefore invited to the post of Attorney General."[3]

That rather formal observation is virtually the only mention of Judah P. Benjamin in the two-volume Jefferson Davis work on the war entitled *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government.* (An order signed by Benjamin is quoted in the second volume.) As the only Louisianian in the first Cabinet, Benjamin was summoned to Montgomery, Alabama, in February 1861 for the swearing in of the provisional government, which would run for election the following November. (Today, on the Capitol steps in Montgomery, a six-pointed Star of David marks the spot where the President took the oath of office on February 18, 1861. No one knows how it got there—some just call it the mark that Judah P. Benjamin left on the Confederacy.)

Since it was a civilian office, the leadership in Montgomery considered the Attorney General's job of little consequence, but Benjamin did not let its nonmilitary definition deter him. He immediately plunged into the policy debates on all aspects of preparedness.

At the first Cabinet meeting, according to Secretary of War Leroy Walker, describing it after the war, "there was only one man there who had any sense and that man was Benjamin. Mr. Benjamin proposed that the Government purchase as much cotton as it could hold, at least 100,000 bales and ship it at once to England. With the proceeds of a part of it, he advised the immediate purchase of at least 150,000 stand of small arms, and guns and ammunitions. . . . The residue of the cotton was to be held as a basis for credit."[4] Benjamin lost that argument, because everyone at the meeting ridiculed the idea of a long war. Walker himself confessed that he had gone about the State of Alabama promising to "wipe up with my pocket handkerchief all the blood that would be shed." Davis and

the government met the challenge of the Northern blockade with a cotton embargo of their own, for they believed that "cotton was King" and that by imposing a "cotton famine" in Europe they would force Britain and France to recognize the Confederacy and come to its aid. Already aware of loyalty as the measure by which Davis would judge him, by April Benjamin also became a strong advocate of cotton diplomacy in his utterances to the foreign press.

Mrs. Clement Clay wrote of the talk of the interminable Cabinet meetings that "sometimes the Cabinet would depart surreptitiously, one at a time, and Mr. Davis while making things as plain as did the preacher the virtues of the baptismal, finds his demonstrations made to one weak, weary man, who has no vim to contend."[5]

If only one person stayed for the completion of a meeting, we can safely assume that it was Judah Benjamin. He loved details, complexity, and problem-solving. He made himself totally available as an administrator to the President, handling the hordes of office-seekers descending on the government and checking up on directives. He became the "greeter," seeing the people the President was too busy to meet and talking to the planters, Congressmen, newspaper reporters, and yeoman farmers who wanted to tell Mr. Davis their secret plan to win the war.

One visitor to Richmond, seeking a favor, described his role: "It appeared to be the custom of the attachés, when in doubt, to refer the stranger to Mr. Judah P. Benjamin, the 'Poo Bah' of the Confederate Government."[6]

As the spring proceeded, Davis and Lincoln both played for time in order to maneuver for support in the border states and in the slave states that were still wavering. North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and Arkansas watched and waited; Missouri, Kentucky, Delaware, and Maryland defeated secession resolutions and remained in the Union.

The Confederate Congress authorized the creation of an army of 100,000 men, creating an immediate shortage of arms, ammunition, uniforms, and other supplies. It would take more than enthusiasm and chivalry to wage war. The South had less than 10 percent of the manufacturing output of the North, less than one-third the bank capital, and less than half the railroad mileage. It had no navy and no capacity to build one. But volunteers were signing up and were accepted only if they brought with them their own knapsacks and rifles.

Mary Chesnut's diary criticized the "stay-at-home men . . . ab-

sorbed as before in plantation affairs, cotton picking, negro squabbles . . . like the old Jews while Noah was building the Ark."[7]

After several months of cat-and-mouse games with Lincoln culminated in the firing on Fort Sumter in mid-April, events seemed to follow an inexorable course. As Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers, the wavering slave states came off the fence into the Confederacy, opening the way by the first of June for the government to move to Richmond, away from the mosquitoes and cramped quarters of Montgomery. It would be a city more suited to Judah P. Benjamin's urbane tastes and personality.

The case for Richmond as the capital overcame the misgivings of Benjamin and others, who felt it was too close to Washington and endangered the government. Virginia was rich, influential, and historic, and Richmond had railroads, ports, warehouses, and the Tredegar Iron Works, the only facility in the Confederacy capable of manufacturing heavy arms. The most convincing argument rested in the aspiration and self-image of the President. If Jefferson Davis wanted to be an effective Commander-in-Chief, then he should be close to the fighting, and Virginia would be the first battlefield.

"All we want is to be left alone," Davis had said after Sumter. With scarcely enough men, money, materiel, manufacturing, and railroads, the South adopted a defensive strategy. It could win the war by not losing it. Its greatest asset was the enormous amount of territory the North would have to conquer. Surely, if the South were to win the early battles and endure, the North would tire and quit in discouragement.

Richmond turned itself into a vast staging area for maneuvers, a combination of marching regiments, constant parades, a picnic, and a party for the officers, with politicians and enlisted men pouring into the city. They arrived in all manner of dress, none more colorful than the Louisiana Zouaves recruited from the jails of New Orleans, dressed in red caps, bright blue coats, baggy red pants, white leggings, and black boots.

Benjamin traveled to Richmond with his brother-in-law, Jules St. Martin, now a young man in his late twenties and, though slight in stature, attractive to women, with a shock of black hair and the patrician Creole features of his sister Natalie. For Benjamin, Jules St. Martin was a link to the roots of his missing family, born to Natalie's parents soon after her marriage to Benjamin and raised almost as their son. Varina said that Benjamin was protective and spoke of his young brother-in-law as if he were a small boy. They

lived together at the Davenport house on Main Street throughout the war, and we can assume that Benjamin arranged for Jules's job as a clerk in the War Department. Varina wrote that

> . . . he had living with him a very well educated and elegant young brother-in-law, Jules St. Martin, whom he loved dearly. When he first spoke of Mr. St. Martin, whom we did not at the time know at all, I thought he must be a very charming boy of twelve or fifteen years old; and when the refined, accomplished young gentleman of perhaps thirty years old made his bow to me in Washington, I found difficulty in believing this was the "Jules, dear little fellow, who will be lonesome if I do not go home," with whose name all Mr. Benjamin's particular friends were intimate. When Mr. Benjamin came to Richmond, Mr. St. Martin came also, and the two set up a comfortable house, where they entertained their friends in as elegant a manner as blockaded bon vivants could do.[8]

Duncan Kenner, the Representative from Louisiana, also lived at the Davenport house, and he and Benjamin formed the nucleus at the gathering place and "mess" of the Louisiana delegation. Kenner was an influential and wealthy sugar planter from Ascension Parish who had run against Benjamin for the Whig nomination to the U.S. Senate in 1852. With John Slidell, Benjamin and Kenner had plotted and wrangled their way through the slippery shoals of Louisiana politics for more than twenty years and had become best of friends. They had a special intimacy that came with years of shared experience in legislative backrooms and at the card tables. Though Kenner was a large slaveowner, he had been educated in the Northeast and had traveled widely in the United States and Europe. He saw slavery as an economic necessity, not a moral or religious issue, and he had even found himself embarrassed by it on his frequent trips to England after slavery had been abolished there. Kenner was the only one in official Richmond with whom Benjamin could talk frankly about the war, knowing he would protect confidences. To Benjamin, trust was earned, and Louisianians were home-grown stalwarts who shared the struggles of his early career and had proved themselves steadfast in the fiercest storms. He also kept a guest room for visiting friends, like Colonel Richard Taylor, son of Zachary Taylor and Jefferson Davis's former brother-in-law, who had a plantation in Louisiana.

As late as April 16, 1861, Benjamin could write General Beauregard,

the "Great Creole" from New Orleans, a congratulatory note about Fort Sumter, saying, "I am a Louisianian—heart and soul."

It was becoming clear that Secretary of War Walker, a Southern gentleman from Alabama, was ill-fitted for his post, bogged down, disorganized, and ineffectual. Benjamin began to spend more time at the War Department. J. B. Jones wrote in his *Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capital* that "Mr. Benjamin is a frequent visitor at the department, and is very sociable; some intimations have been thrown out that he aspires to become, some day, Secretary of War. Mr. Benjamin, unquestionably, will have great influence with the President, for he has studied his character most carefully. He will be familiar not only with his 'likes' but especially with his 'dislikes.' "[9]

In mid-July, Union General McDowell moved 31,000 troops out of Washington toward Manassas in Virginia, and the South positioned an equal number on the banks of Bull Run to meet them. Richmond became electric with expectation.

On July 21, word came that the Battle of Bull Run had started, and a restless Jefferson Davis could not bear to sit in Richmond with the Confederate Congress. He boarded a train and went looking for the action; he commandeered horses after he had gone as far as he could by rail. Riding past the wounded toward the battlefield, he was convinced by their faces that they had lost. He comforted them with dramatic phrases about dying for the cause. Meanwhile he searched for the field headquarters of Generals Beauregard and Johnston.

Benjamin had been closeted with the Cabinet for hours in a small office in the War Department, impatient and pacing in the cigar smoke. It occurred to him that the Cabinet would surely hear first if the battle were a defeat, but if it were a victory, Varina would know before anyone else.

He left the room and hurried down the street to the Spotswood Hotel to get the exhilarating news from her. Benjamin returned to the Cabinet with as much speed as his dignity would allow, mounted a chair, and spread his arms to the crowd in the War Office.

He asked for their undivided attention and paused a moment to wring the drama out of the situation, "his eyes on fire," J. B. Jones said, "like Daniel Webster after taking a pint of brandy."[10] He spoke slowly, relishing the moment: "We have received the following wire from President Davis at Manassas." And then shifting to an official tone: "We have gained a glorious but dear-bought victory. Night

closed upon the enemy in full flight and closely pursued."[11] There was a shriek of exultation from the assembled crowd as the men hugged and whirled the women who had followed Benjamin over for the announcement. The reporters, who had scribbled Benjamin's official words, scrambled off to their newspapers to write and file the story.

"Joy ruled the hour," the diarist J. B. Jones continued. "The city seemed lifted up and everyone appeared to walk on air."[12] The South had routed the Yankees in the first battle of the war.

In the aftermath of the battle, all of Richmond was asking the same question: Why had the Confederates not pursued the Yankees all the way back to Washington and captured the Northern capital? The answer was that they did not have enough rations, materiel, and organization for hot pursuit. The press descended on the Davis government. Its target was the inept leadership in the War Department. Jefferson Davis considered himself the most competent Secretary of War in the Confederacy by virtue of his service under Pierce. What he needed was a dependable administrator to carry out his every order down to the last detail, a trusted confidant who would be absolutely loyal and a figure the public knew to be highly talented. Benjamin became acting Secretary of War in September and was confirmed by the Senate a month or so later.

Benjamin, as a Jew, would have to be more loyal to the Cause than anyone else—more outspoken in the Cabinet, more courageous, and willing to wage war with all the energy that total war demanded. And if he understood Jefferson Davis, loyalty to the President as the symbol of the Cause was the measure of a man's worth to the Confederacy. It was common knowledge that Davis wanted to be a general when the war began, not a political leader, and astute Cabinet members like Benjamin knew he would not tolerate men who sat with the Cabinet presuming to know of drawn swords and cavalry charges when they had never served a day in the army.

Benjamin brought his unquestioning loyalty with him to his appointment as the second Secretary of War and entered the office with his accustomed energy and thoroughness. After all, his predecessor, Leroy Walker of Alabama ("a slow coach," he was called, and "a profuse spitter"), had been an administrative disaster, and the sheer magnitude of the task of unscrambling affairs required a mastery of bureaucratic detail. Benjamin had an almost obsessive commitment to systematic paperwork, along with an encyclopedic memory for

detail. Besides, Benjamin was clearly trying to win the respect of the military and Davis with crisp answers, contrasting the new Secretary with the old. He sought to answer letters the day they arrived, to cut down on the length of replies, and generally to take administrative charge of the war.

"You certainly left me a bed of roses," Benjamin wrote in his farewell letter to Walker.[13] The scope of his responsibilities extended from Virginia to Texas and westward to Missouri and the Indian territory. He was in charge of coastal defense in states too afraid of invasion to lend troops to each other. He had to move supplies, scarce armaments, and information over sabotaged railroads, rutted dirt roads, and faulty telegraph wires. He had to mediate the demands of competing generals, handle outsized egos, and scrape together the means of war for the armies of Virginia as well as scattered garrisons across the South. Thousands of communiqués poured out of his office in six months, all of them written by hand, copied by clerks, and duly recorded in his letter book for history. He would turn prejudice to his favor and play on the Southerner's instinctive respect for the Jewish mind with a brilliant performance.

His strategy worked, and the press response was excellent, at first.

"No one comes from an interview with him," reported the New Orleans *Courier,* "who does not speak in terms of wonder and admiration at his quickness of perception and promptness of decision. He dispatches more business in one hour than most men could accomplish in a day."[14]

From the beginning, he saw the War Office's success as intimately related to foreign affairs:

"When it is considered that the government of the United States with all its accumulation of arms for half a century," Secretary Benjamin wrote the President, "and all its workshops and arsenals, public and private, and its untrammelled intercourse with foreign nations—has already been compelled to disband a number of cavalry regiments on account of the difficulty of arming them, and has been driven to the necessity of making purchases in Europe of very large quantities, and of saltpeter by thousands of tons, some faint idea may be formed of the difficulties against which this department has been and is now struggling in the effort to furnish arms and munitions for our troops. The difficulty is not in the want of legislation. Laws cannot suddenly convert farmers into gunsmiths. Our people are not artisans except to a very limited degree. In the very armory

here at Richmond, the production would be greatly increased if skilled labor could be procured. In the absence of home manufacturers, no recourse remains but importation, and with our commerce substantially restrained with foreign nations, the means of importation are limited."[15]

All of those factors, known only to a few, were coloring Davis's military and political decisions. Delay meant waiting for a Union invasion, but the public debate on the "defensive" war was symptomatic of the need for Southerners to attack and sweep ahead in gallant conquest. Davis was growing to trust Benjamin as an administrator and wanted to test him as a warrior. Perhaps Davis was wary because Benjamin was intelligent, analytical, and verbal, but also because he came from a Judaic culture that Davis did not understand, and therefore automatically suspected. Thus, Benjamin had determined to be absolutely and intensely loyal to the President. Davis began to return that loyalty with an unbreakable bond of trust.

"It was to me a curious spectacle," Varina wrote, "the steady approximation to a thorough friendliness of the President and his War Minister. It was a very gradual rapprochement, but all the more solid for that reason."[16]

In less than a month after his appointment as Secretary of War, Benjamin was quareling with General Beauregard.

When Beauregard, fresh from his heroics at Bull Run, decided to send a lieutenant to Richmond to recruit volunteers for adding a rocket battery to his command, Benjamin wrote him that it was "without warrant in law," but because his motive was good and it represented merely "a defect of judgment" he would "go unpunished."[17]

Beauregard exploded with an angry letter to President Davis. "I feel assured," he wrote, "I need not attract your attention to the unusual and offensive style adopted by the Secretary of the War Department. . . . I am quite willing, indeed, that you decide whose judgment has been most at fault—that of your general, who has simply done what was *essential* to provide men to handle the rockets as soon as ready for use, and thus materially increase his means of defence . . . ; or that functionary at his desk, who deems it a fit time to weave technical pleas of obstruction, to debate about the prerogative of his office and of your Excellency's and to write lectures on law while the enemy is mustering on our front, with at least three times our force in infantry and four times as much artillery." He continued his attack on Benjamin's legal background: "Coming

to see this, he will then, I am assured, understand that this is no time for the display of his capacity for irritation or his legal and Constitutional erudition. He will see such displays are now as much out of place as were a learned disquisition from an admiralty lawyer on the intricacies of the rules of flotsam and jetsam to the captain of a ship in distress."[18]

Davis defended Benjamin with a patronizing letter to Beauregard, making light of the matter. "Now, my dear sir," Davis replied, "let me entreat you to dismiss this small matter from your mind. In the hostile masses before you, you have a subject more worthy of your contemplation."[19]

But before the Davis letter could arrive, Benjamin, on October 17, 1861, fired off another message to Beauregard on an even more sensitive subject. Beauregard was the proponent of offensive war, and it was no secret, especially to the newspapers to which he openly complained, that he had wanted to attack Washington with full force after the victory at Bull Run. He also had argued to Davis and Benjamin in behalf of treating the armies of the Potomac (headed by Beauregard) and of the Shenandoah (headed by General Joseph Johnston) as two corps of one army, giving him the authority to select his own ordnance and other officers. If not, he wanted to be relieved from his "false position."

No West Point–trained Commander-in-Chief could allow such independence, and Benjamin, after consulting with Davis, wrote a strong letter in return, laced with sarcasm and what for Beauregard was even more irritating legal instruction:

> I have your letter . . . in which you state that if you are no longer in Command of an Army Corps, you request to be relieved forthwith from your present false position. . . . I beg to say in all kindness that it is not your position which is false but your idea of the organization of the Army as established by . . . Congress, and I feel confident you cannot have studied the legislation . . . you are *second* in command of the *whole* Army of the Potomac, and not *first* in command of *half* the army . . . if you will take the pains to read the sixth section of the "act to provide for the public defense" . . . you will see that the President has no authority to divide an army into two "corps d'armée," but only into brigades and divisions. Now your rank being superior to that of a Commander of a brigade or division, and there being no other component parts into which an army can be legally divided, you *necessar-*

> *ily* command the *whole* army; but having present with you an officer of equal grade but older commission who also commands the *whole* army, you become second in command.
>
> I have entered into these details because in conversation with the President since his return from your headquarters, he has informed me that he found the same error as to the organization of the army which you seem to entertain . . . generally prevalent. . . . I hope in a few days to communicate to you such general orders in relation to this whole subject, as will dissipate all possible conflict of authority, unite the army under one common head, and give to all its leaders appropriate and satisfactory positions.[20]

Beauregard was once again enraged and again dashed off a letter to Davis, pleading for the President, "as an educated soldier . . . to shield me from these ill-timed, unaccountable annoyances."[21]

But Davis understood that the issue of independence for each army general was a formula for chaos and that there were other forces at work as well. After Bull Run, the "Beauregard for President" movement had begun, and the man who fancied himself a Confederate Napoleon was ingratiating himself to the public with self-serving patriotic rhetoric at Davis's expense. This time, Davis was more direct, not even trying to placate his general.

"I do not feel competent," Davis wrote, "to instruct Mr. Benjamin in the matter of style; there are few whom the public would, probably, believe fit for the task . . . it cannot be peculiar to Mr. Benjamin to look at every exercise of official power in its legal aspect, and you surely did not intend to inform me that your army and yourself are outside the limits of the law. It is my duty to see that the laws are faithfully executed and I cannot recognize the pretension of anyone that their restraint is narrow for him."[22]

J. R. Jones reported in his diary on the political gossip in Richmond, which seemed always to find Benjamin in the middle, being criticized for carrying out the military policies of Jefferson Davis, for political reasons. "I understand," Jones wrote, "a dreadful quarrel is brewing between Mr. Benjamin and General Beauregard. . . . General B. being the only individual even hinted at as an opponent for Mr. Davis for President, the Secretary of War fights him on the vantage ground and likewise commends himself to the President."[23]

Looking back, Benjamin's troubles with Beauregard probably began with a naïvely obsequious note that Benjamin wrote as a Louisiana Senator after Fort Sumter. "My dear General," he had written, "In

the midst of the eclat of your glorious triumph, you will no doubt value but little the tribute of a poor civilian who knows nothing of war." It was the kind of letter a future Secretary of War might have wished he had never written.[24]

Benjamin's political troubles began to pile up as events turned against the South. When Savannah was threatened in November 1861, Governor Joe Brown of Georgia demanded the withdrawal of Georgia troops from the Virginia battle front to protect their home state from invasion. Secretary Benjamin called the request "suicidal," pointing out that general safety would not permit the scattering of "armies into fragments at the request of each Governor who may be alarmed for the safety of his people."[25]

Brown replied that if the Secretary could not spare him Georgia troops, would he let Georgia have the five thousand Confederate rifles that had just arrived in Savannah. Secretary Benjamin answered that he would do what he could, but "I beg you to remember that the other Governors are making just such demands as yourself. . . ."[26]

Collision with the governors was an inevitable result of having to balance competing demands, and Benjamin was criticized no matter what choices he made. If he was assertive, he was charged by the military with interference and second-guessing a local situation from the comfort of Richmond. If he was lenient, it suggested that he did not understand the needs of warfare and was not tough enough or was too legalistic for the job.

In a congressional investigation of the fall of New Orleans, letters were put in the record with the following exchange:

From Louisiana Governor Thomas O. Moore in New Orleans wrote to Benjamin:

"I, notwithstanding your advice to the contrary, seized the pork in the city, and telegraphed you (but have had no reply), and shall hold it unless requested by you to act otherwise, as I see no way to feed our troops without it, but hope you do, as your advice was to that effect. Write me fully on that point."

Reply from Benjamin the next day:

"I can conceive of no possible reason for seizing pork, and cannot approve it. There is an abundance of food in our country, and private rights ought not to be invaded, except in cases of necessity for public defence."

He had not yet learned that war often causes inequities and that the army came first, even at the expense of the civilian population (and old friends and family) in his home city.[27]

Events were bringing Judah P. Benjamin and Jefferson Davis closer together, and the President began to rely on his Secretary as an originator of ideas, as a sounding board for new policy, and for follow-through on current decisions.

Benjamin and Davis were working together twelve to fourteen hours a day, and the pace and pressure was beginning to show on the President's face, adding gray to his hair and chin whiskers.[28]

Davis suffered from neuralgia, the doctors called it, a kind of total seizure of nerves resulting in migraine headaches, nausea, and failing eyesight, which sometimes left him bedridden for weeks at a time. But he held himself ramrod straight when he walked, concealing whatever pain he had. His angular face was now severely drawn, and his lips were tightly compressed. His one good eye gave him the visage of an angry Cyclops, a "cruel wizard look."[29] This was not a man to be trifled with. He resented criticism, with a swiftness so deep in its passion that he saw debates over policy as personal vendettas against his honor. Jefferson Davis *was* the Confederacy, and to disagree with him was to dishonor the Cause and to undermine its very symbol.

Davis's lifelong worship of a code of personal honor was so exaggerated that it passed for aloofness and made others in his presence feel that he looked down on them as lesser mortals. To the common man, he was still the hero of Buena Vista, the man who once led the most famous cavalry charge of the Mexican War. But to close observers, his controlled, self-contained manner created an air of mystery about him. It was no wonder that Senator Clement Clay called him the "Sphinx of the Confederacy." Many considered him in 1860 "too austere, moody and metaphysical" to lead the Confederacy. Yet with Varina and Benjamin he could still laugh and show some of the charm beneath his stoic surface.

Davis seemed to have almost two personalities—one for social and domestic life and the other for official life. Expressing the first, he would joke and mimic, sing Indian songs from his frontier days, and spin webs of conversation so charming that women were entranced by him. In his public life, he was the personification of duty. On a particular issue he would exhaust all sources of information, study, and ponder his choices, but once he reached a conclusion, he would allow no further discussion. Though his enemies called him stubborn, he expected loyalty and support without grumbling or a hint of opposition. In war, political and military power merged: Davis was the supreme commander, and his responsibility and authority were absolute.

Varina wrote later that "Mr. Benjamin was always ready for work; sometimes, with half an hour's recess, he remained with the executive from ten in the morning until nine at night and together they traversed all the difficulties which encompassed our beleaguered land . . . both the President and the Secretary . . . worked like galley slaves, early and late. Mr. Davis came home fasting, a mere mass of throbbing nerves, perfectly exhausted; but Mr. Benjamin was always fresh and buoyant."[30]

Varina contrasted Benjamin's temperament with her husband's dark moods. "There was one striking peculiarity about [Benjamin's] temperament. No matter what disaster befell our arms, after he had done all in his power to prevent or rectify it, he was never depressed. No reverses tortured him exceedingly, as it did Mr. Davis, who though he was too reticient and self-controlled to betray his anguish, suffered like one in torment. Mr. Benjamin was serenely cheerful, played games and talked wittily as usual."[31]

While Varina wrote that paragraph in a letter about Benjamin, what is also interesting about it is the perspective it offers on the President. Benjamin only *seemed* to be less bothered by the reverses in the war; his role in social situations, at mealtimes with the Davis family, or at receptions was to join with Varina to take the President's mind off his troubles, not to intensify them. Perhaps he shared only with Varina the truth that the President's soul was being tortured each day and that the strain was also taking a physical toll as conditions worsened and the burdens grew more crushing.

The evidence has mounted for years that Davis was not the unfeeling and solitary helmsman of the Confederacy that has been portrayed. In 1978, a packet of letters from Davis was uncovered. They had been written between 1864 and 1882 and hidden for almost a hundred years in the bank vault of the First Tennessee Bank in Memphis. The thirty-five letters were written or sent by the President to his son-in-law, Joel Addison Hayes, who had been a teller in the bank where the letters were stored.[32]

The letters, which deal with both business and personal matters, belie history's view of Davis as cold, aloof, austere, and arrogant. He emerges as a warm and caring man, sensitive and dependent on the affections of his loved ones, tender and expressive. Most of the letters were in Davis's own handwriting, though some were dictated to Varina, and they radiate intimacy. He poured out his emotion for his daughter and his granddaughters, expecting the letters to be read to them:

> Your mother sends her love and wishes you and the other children were here to eat grapes that come in by the bushels and are very sweet. . . . Tell the baby that the sand is very clean on the beach and we have had a succession of high tides so that she might roll in the sand, or walk on the lawn, look at the lambs, hear the mockingbirds but feel never a mosquito. Her grandmother has some splendid red lilies that she might pull, too. With my tenderest love to my children and to you as one of them, and a message to the Baby from her grandmother, she must come soon."[33]

There are poignant moments in the letters, such as a request for a picture of Jeff, Jr., the last of his four sons, who died in the late 1870s. Only two of his six children outlived him.

"I recently received a letter from a brother member of Jefferson's in the Kappa Sigma fraternity. He writes very affectionately of my boy, and asks for the society, a picture of him. One of the last he had taken."[34]

Those losses echoed in other letters as well:

> We shall be greatly disappointed if we do not have you and Maggie and the baby with us at Christmas. You are all we have left to us save our child who is far away. . . . You have the precious baby now. . . . May time render her less necessary to you than our daughter is to us, when in the chances and changes of life it shall be your fate to be parted from her.[35]

None of the letters expressed anger, bitterness, or animosity toward the Union for defeating him. His son-in-law once sent him a clipping from a Detroit newspaper repeating a rumor that the South had desecrated the body of Colonel Ulrich Dahlgren, who had led a group of Northern raiders to the outskirts of Richmond. Davis refused to enter publicly into such a "misshapen controversy" but was obviously stung enough by the false charges to deny them to his family. "He was killed," he wrote, "but we warred not upon the dead."[36]

He confessed that he was unable to forget the suffering of the Confederate soldiers during the war and the hardships they faced after it had ended. To the Mississippi State legislature, which was considering a pension and a home for wounded and indigent soldiers, he wrote:

> The wish that something be done for Confederate soldiers has ever been nearest to my heart, but often, as the thought unbidden arose, it has met with the remembrance that arson, pillage and

> confiscation had impoverished our people, and that they had no other recourse than direct taxation to provide for their needy and disabled defenders. . . .
>
> They left their homes to defend the rights they inherited, and if they survived the War, hoped to return to those from whom they parted. . . . Brave Mississippi . . . may peace and plenty ever be throughout her borders is the prayer of one whose boyhood aspiration was, and whose desire in age is, for her honor and prosperity.[37]

He expressed a certain acceptance of death which made him even more eager for the love and warmth of his family and friends. He opened up to a Mrs. Merriwether that "only one who has been broken by the storms of Fate and who finds himself a waif on the current of life and drifting near to the sea of eternity, can feel the full force of a friendship which follows him still."[38]

The letters displayed a mood and a coloration missing from all the Davis biographies. Historians portray the President from a distance, the warrior general and career army man, mistrusting and thin-skinned, erect and egotistical, ordering his minions into battle over the advice of his generals, coldly arrogant and untouched by the human cost. One wonders how the Jefferson Davis of these recently discovered letters, whose soul seems so exposed and vulnerable, whose heart was so sensitive, could have stood the suffering, the pain, the awful pressures of the defeats and dwindling supplies, the starvation and deaths of the young and the tears of widows and families over the four terrible years of the Civil War. Behind the mask, what was the truth? How great was the tension between what seemed to be and what was, and how great was the cost of such a charade?

For all his talent and loyalty, Judah P. Benjamin did not fare much better as Secretary of War than did his predecessor, and it would be another year before the Confederates would again taste a significant victory. Disasters seemed to mount all at once and on all sides. Union armies freed western Virginia; Ulysses Grant campaigned in the West, driving all Southern armies out of Kentucky and western Tennessee; Union troops captured Fort Hatteras at the entrance to Pamlico Sound in North Carolina, threatening Roanoke Island. The only optimistic event of the fall was the odd spectacle of the *Trent* affair, which raised the tensions between Lincoln and the British Government.

Senator John Slidell, the newly named Confederate Ambassador to France, and James Mason, the tobacco-spitting Virginian whom Davis had named Ambassador to England, had taken the same ship to run the Union blockade to Nassau, St. Thomas, and finally Havana. They had picked up a British mail steamer, *Trent,* bound for England, thinking the risky part of the voyage behind them. But the next day a Union sloop shot across the bow to stop the *Trent,* even though it was flying the Union Jack. The two diplomats were seized and taken for safekeeping to Fort Warren in Massachusetts. That was just the kind of foreign policy blunder Davis and Benjamin had been praying for. England was outraged over the removal of passengers sailing under the protection of its flag, and 8,000 British troops boarded transports for Canada as the British Foreign Office demanded an apology from the former colonies.

Lincoln was in a corner, since no American President could apologize or even give in to British threats. Davis protested vigorously about the "piracy." After much breast-beating, cooler heads would take over in London and in Washington. The two Ambassadors were released after two months in custody, but for several months it was high tide in Dixie hearts.

Benjamin could be tough and judgmental when confronted with injustice. When five guns from the Tredegar Iron Works exploded, killing the men who were manning them, Benjamin wrote the harshest letter of his term to the director, Joseph R. Anderson: "It is bad enough that our brave defenders should expose their lives to the fire of the enemy under such odds as exist against us, but to furnish them with arms more dangerous to themselves than to the enemy, is utterly inexcusable."[39]

Anderson had the bearing of a West Point man, though he had left the military as a young man because he was "one of those who are not born to fortunes." A civil engineer, he had built his fortune on his talent for organization and finance and on the use of slave labor, which enabled him to compete with Northern ironmakers. Anderson wore the uniform of a brigadier general, though the army had asked him to run his manufacturing company rather than serve on the battlefields. He was a stern and haughty man, a disciplinarian who saw whatever job had to be done and mobilized the resources to do it.

Anderson was outraged and claimed sabotage, but a subsequent investigation showed that the guns had been badly designed. As a

result, the War Department set up a procedure to test all the Tredegar guns before allowing them into the field. Anderson retained his bitterness toward Benjamin throughout the war.

An internal threat could be as dangerous to the Confederacy as a direct attack of Union troops. There had been an insurrection in a remote mountain area of east Tennessee, Andrew Johnson's home, where opposition to the Confederacy took on the quality of a religious crusade. Bands of armed men had assembled to assist an unexpected Union advance through the Cumberland Gap, burning bridges and cutting off the strategic Virginia–Tennessee Railroad. Davis had ordered Benjamin to quash the insurrection with troops from Memphis and Pensacola, and now the Confederacy faced the issue of what to do with the captured loyalists, which included the "Fighting Parson" William G. Brownlow, a charismatic former Methodist minister who was editor of the Knoxville *Whig*.

Benjamin and Davis discussed the wire from the colonel in charge at Knoxville, who pointed out that to turn the collaborators over to the civilian courts would be a "mere farce," for they "really deserve the gallows . . . if consistent with the laws."

Davis and Benjamin argued the options. The laws of insurrection required that the perpetrators be tried by military court martial and hanged on the spot.

If the Confederacy took such a step, however, the President would be jeopardizing the lives of thousands of the Confederacy's sympathizers in the North, many of whom were imprisoned.

Yet those men, under arms, had blown up bridges. If the government were not harsh with them, the South could face insurrection throughout the region. Not only should they be hanged, but the President agreed that the general in charge should be ordered to dangle them from the burned bridges for a week.

Parson Brownlow had been away from home the night of the burnings, and his complicity was unclear. However, the parson had been arrested anyway with a few legislators because they were leaders and spokesmen. Since his guilt for the actual destruction was unproved, Benjamin worried that if Brownlow was jailed merely for being a troublemaker, he would become a martyr. Besides, Davis had been making complaints about "upright men . . . dragged to distant dungeons" in the North, so Benjamin and Davis decided on another course: to hold the parson for a few weeks and then release him to cross Union lines. Mercy on the Confederate side should be

matched by leniency in the North for Confederate prisoners. They could issue a statement about allowing their most dangerous enemy to go free rather than sully the honor of the Confederate Government by jailing an "upright man" in Knoxville. That would be a clear message to Lincoln to send the South back its own captured soldiers rather than keep them in Yankee prisons.

Benjamin had never been so tested by the President, and he quickly wrote the dispatch. "The insurrectionists not proved to be bridge burners are to be held as prisoners of war," he wrote; so much for the parson. He continued, "while the others identified as burners are to be tried summarily by drumhead court martial, and, if found guilty, executed on the spot by hanging." He then added to the order: "It would be well to leave their bodies hanging in the vicinity of the burned bridges."[40] For Benjamin, it was unlike any prior act of his career, or any other act thereafter, and it brought him face to face with the ugly reality of war: Hang those who actually did the deed but be less severe with the others.

Before carrying out the sentence, General W. H. Carroll telegraphed Benjamin for the President's approval. Benjamin replied with a wire that was an order, but carefully constructed to protect himself: "Execute the sentence of your court-martial on the bridge burners. The law does not require any approval by the President, but he entirely approves my order to hang every bridge-burner you can catch and convict."[41]

On April 30, 1864, Senator Andrew Johnson attacked Benjamin bitterly for this order. The New York *Tribune* reported that "the blood of these men, like Abel, cried aloud from the ground against the author of their death, and for succor to their wives and little ones. He read the order of Judah P. Benjamin, the Rebel Secretary of State, directing their execution, with directions that their bodies be left hanging near the burned bridges. He ventilated the conduct of this doubly-dyed traitor as a member of Congress, on the Crittendon and other propositions of Compromise, and showed him up to detestation of every honorable-minded man."[42]

When Parson Brownlow crossed the Union lines a few weeks later, he exulted: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men, except a few hell-born and hell-bound rebels in Knoxville."[43]

Brownlow, who would serve briefly as Governor of Tennessee in the Reconstruction era, had a long history of public anti-Semitism and virtually made a career of his outlandish attacks on Jews. In

February 1860, when the Congress for the first time invited a rabbi to open a House session with a prayer, Parson Brownlow commented that when "they called into their aid one of the murderers of Christ, their heads and minds were prepared for anything."[44]

One of his favorite targets was Judah Benjamin. If Benjamin throught that the Confederacy's leniency would soften Brownlow's voice, he was badly mistaken. After Brownlow was expelled, the parson asserted that he expected "no more mercy from Benjamin than was shown by his illustrious predecessors towards Jesus Christ." He claimed that Benjamin "threatened to hang [me] with or without evidence. My only wonder was that he did not threaten to crucify me."[45]

The Baltimore *Clipper* criticized Brownlow, but not in a way to give any comfort to Benjamin. "Parson Brownlow is not generally very choice in his language . . . but it is in extreme bad taste, and obnoxious to the censure [sic] of every right-minded man, thus to identify a great religious and national people with such a consummate rogue and hangman as this Benjamin."[46]

It is ironic that whereas his strengths overcame some of the President's weaknesses, Benjamin's own weaknesses as Secretary of War accentuated the President's most serious shortcomings. Benjamin had no military background and therefore no experience in the special problems of the military at war. Moreover, he had never tried to run a large bureaucracy but had always in politics served in the legislative arena. Thus he brought none of his own preconceptions to the task of implementation, no way to sift and weigh the President's demands and balance their reasonableness against the inertia of the military and governmental bureaucracies. Perhaps that was one reason Davis chose him. Davis had fought in the field and also had run the nation's Department of War under President Pierce. He wanted an expediter around him, not an experienced military man. He wanted a complete master of detail at his side at all times, someone to argue with other centers of power on his own behalf. In Judah Benjamin, he developed the perfect alter ego and technician, one whose experience never tempted him to substitute his own judgment for the President's.

Thus, Benjamin's inexperience fed the President's stubbornness, strengthening the President's view of himself as the supreme commander who knew better what to do from Richmond than did the generals in the field. Judah P. Benjamin was New Orleans, not West

Point—operating almost as a technocrat, not an equal. If the President ordered something done, Benjamin was not equipped to protect Davis from himself.

For Benjamin, seeking power and position was an early theme in life. He might reasonably have supposed that influential positions would provide a shield against anti-Semitism. The more he could become assimilated into the Christian world, the less his career would be limited by his Jewishness, and the farther he could advance. He wooed and won a non-Jewish wife from one of the wealthy families in New Orleans; he cultivated John Slidell, a powerful political friend; he joined the slaveholding aristocracy as the owner of a large plantation; he pursued wealth for the independence and the protection and access it would bring. When secession came, he faced a turning point at which any of the options he chose could have been successful. He could have accepted the ambassadorship to Spain offered by Buchanan; he could have gone to England then instead of five years later, and been a Confederate sympathizer there; he could have, like so many others from New Orleans, chosen the expatriate's life in Paris with his wife and daughter. It is fascinating that of his many options, he chose the one with the greatest risk—the Confederacy, a war that he knew would be drawn out and painful, the choice that placed triumph and disaster side by side.

Perhaps it was the gambler in him, the high-stakes card player who sought out the difficult games because the easy ones were not worth playing. A gambling man in politics constantly plays for ever increasing rewards. Judah P. Benjamin joined the Confederacy, where the risks were greater, but so was the chance of reward.

Once having joined the Cabinet, staying in it was his only option. He could not go to war, as others in the Senate and House had, because he had no history of military service or qualifications. His reputation in Richmond and Montgomery was that of an excellent lawyer—a talented administrator and adviser with a need to serve his "client," to lose himself in Jefferson Davis's shadow. But the key to his response to power in the Confederacy was in his Jewishness. His were the actions of a man surrounded by Christian distrust, who knew he was always a possible target of opprobrium, who lived in a storm of racism and smoldering violence. His solution was to be as unobjectionable as possible, to work hard, to do a thorough and competent job, and, above all, to serve Jefferson Davis.

Once Louisiana fell to the North, Benjamin lost the political source

of his power. Davis no longer needed to mollify or rally a wavering state. That Benjamin was a Louisianian did not matter as much politically later in the war as it had in the beginning. Now Benjamin, as a Jew in the Cabinet, was even more reliant on Davis as the source of his influence. His dependence, which Davis saw as loyalty, coupled with acknowledged brilliance, made Benjamin an ideal choice for an insecure Confederate President to place in positions of ever widening responsibilities.

8

The First Lady and the Secretary of State: *A Strategic Friendship*

The Secretary of War was not just another Cabinet officer but an intimate of the Davis family who spent considerable time at the Confederate White House. In fact, the routine of the President was such that the White House almost became Benjamin's second home in Richmond.

The Confederate White House was a graceful three-story mansion designed in the Federal style by an architect who had studied with Thomas Jefferson. Built between 1816 and 1818, the pale gray stucco caused many a wag to call it the "Gray House," but the plantation character of it—high ceilings and full-length windows opening onto a garden with fruit trees and flowers—reminded Varina of her childhood.

The eight tall columns, lined two-by-two across the front veranda, protected the porch yet were spaced so that one could sit there and look out into the gardens. The veranda extended around to the side of the house, where, because of the slope of the property, it stood 12 to 15 feet above the ground, providing a magnificent view of the James River and the Virginia valley. Its red roof seemed to crown the structure with a special country charm, as did the small white steeple on the top.

"Queen Varina" was what the press called the First Lady in a derisive reference to her style of entertainment and dress. It seemed that she could do nothing right. If she entertained at all, the press criticized her for frivolity; if she did not entertain enough, she would be accused of neglecting her duty as First Lady. She tried to find a compromise by holding an open house twice a month and giving a modest number of parties, thereby reducing the President's isolation from people in Richmond and bolstering his morale. She came to see the political wisdom of keeping an open White House, as time and time again she watched the informal lines of communication work to bypass the formal chains of command when junior officers in the army and lesser officials in the government could just walk up to the President or a Cabinet officer and talk. She felt it was good for them and for their wives to be involved with the leadership in an easy atmosphere of Southern hospitality, so that they could hear statements directly from the President rather than through the biased editorials of Edward A. Pollard and John M. Daniel at the Richmond *Examiner*.

Much has been written of the décor, furnishings, and customs of the Confederate White House; many have described in detail snatches of conversation, the many quotations, and letters of description. Even menus have been preserved for the historian. Judah Benjamin, particularly, stood out in the diaries of women, who wrote of his immense charm. A contemporary memoir said of him: "Hebrew in blood, English in tenacity of grasp and purpose, Mr. Benjamin was French in taste."[1] In war-torn Richmond, the moments of enjoyment and sporadic luxury glittered in the memories of those who mostly faced deprivation.

Varina reported that "intimate friends received verbal invitations" from Benjamin, who said, "Do come to dinner or tea; we succeeded in running the blockade this week."[2] Varina wrote that she and Benjamin always knew what "running the blockade" meant: preserved fruits, loaf sugar, some good tea, and real coffee, not the awful hot water strained through dried beans and peanuts that was ordinarily served as a substitute. Benjamin would often arrive at the White House with candies and small gifts for the Davis children, who played under the sycamores on Clay Street, collecting the pods off the ground from the honey shuck tree.

Today, the Confederate White House has been restored in loving detail with its worn marble stairs, silver doorknobs, mantelpieces, and some of the original furnishings.

The entry hall is a small room dominated on the left and right of the doorway by two life-size black statues of a female Comedy and Tragedy, draped in the Greek style and holding gas lanterns in their hands. They provide a paradoxical greeting for visitors. Comedy is the larger of the two, hulking and ominous but with a surprising dagger in her right hand almost hidden from view. Tragedy's left hand is outstretched, holding a tragic mask. Tragedy is made all the more eerie by the slight smile on her face, as if she were enjoying the painful expression on the face of the mask.

To the right of the entryway is a spiral staircase that leads upstairs to the President's office, the Davis's bedroom, and the children's nursery. One can imagine Varina making her way down the staircase to greet visitors.

Varina was tall and heavy-set, and she wore her black hair in a bun that emphasized her features; her ready smile added crinkles of approaching middle age to her dark, expressive eyes. Her moods and emotions were so symbiotic with those of her husband that she both hated his enemies and loved his friends with equal intensity, and her eyes did not allow her to disguise either emotion.

Varina Davis was no ordinary woman. She was brilliant, tart-tongued, well educated, and perceptive. Never mind that Southern purists questioned her loyalty because she was the granddaughter of Richard Howell, the Revolutionary Governor of New Jersey. It meant a life bred to politics, and Davis loyalists like Benjamin respected that breeding.

Although Varina had been raised a Southern woman whose principal role in life was to flatter the men around her, she had grown impatient with such demands at an early age. She understood Southern male vanity well enough and was not above using the cavalier tradition for her own purposes. But she had been raised with Yankee competence as well, almost as a son to her father, fired by ambition inappropriate for a Southern girl and a sense of destiny. She had made the transition from Southern belle to plantation manager with ease and relief, eagerly leaving behind the helplessness that other girls were instructed to display in order to catch a beau. Now her problem was a matter of masquerade. Men bristled when she argued with them and blustered into speechless fury when she turned their own arguments against them to win a point soundly. She delighted in those triumphs, although they generated barroom complaints that Jefferson Davis was being "totally dominated by that woman."[3]

Varina's tongue had gotten her in trouble many times, but she

was too confident to change her ways. At parties she was often found standing among the clusters of men listening to military talk and absorbing the information. She was wise enough not to speak out in such situations, for that would cross the bounds of propriety for Southern womanhood, but sometimes she could not resist a tart remark when some pompous brigadier suggested an outlandish tactic. Other women did not take well to her invasion of the male preserve. They talked of the war, too, but their special perspective was the home front—caring for the wounded in the hospitals and rolling bandages from tablecloths, sheets, and napkins, and, as some women confessed, even cutting up their fine linen underwear into 2-inch wedges for surgical compresses. Varina did her share of that kind of thing herself, mostly to set an example to others, but she did not enjoy it. She preferred to play a more lofty and ceremonial role. So she visited many hospitals instead of settling on just one, delivering supplies, bringing cakes and candies in a large basket, or just paying a call to thank everyone for their hard work and devotion. She aspired to become the President's personal emissary in the city of Richmond. Once, when a patient broke out with smallpox that threatened the other patients and nurses, she rushed back home and got the President to issue an immediate order quarantining him.

She was deeply frustrated by the war. As a woman she was relegated to the sidelines; she could not speak, and yet she saw the reality more starkly than her husband. In a letter to Lawley at the end of her life, she wrote: "The dear but desperate days of my Richmond life were the more painful to me as silence was necessary on my part, but from the first day of secession I felt like some poor creature circulating about a whirlpool, helpless and drawing every moment nearer to the vortex. My dear husband's noble faith in the final triumph of the right, I never shared. The paper blockade quietly permitted by foreign nations and acknowledged as binding seemed to me to close all avenues to the repair of the war's waste—I felt the birthright of our people was well worth the war, but knew from the first we had lost it."[4]

When Benjamin visited her, he often sat with Varina on a horsehair sofa around a marble-topped center table with a tea kettle wrapped in a quilted cozy and cups ready for serving. To an objective eye, the furniture in the White House is ordinary, in contrast with the grand style of the architecture. Varina was criticized by the aristocracy of Richmond in the early days because the furnishings did not compare with Lincoln's White House, a sure sign, they pointed out, of her frontier upbringing and lack of taste. Mrs. Chesnut, the Confeder-

ate diarist, said Mrs. Wigfall described her as "a coarse western woman."[5] The criticism stung her. Varina had a "Natchez chin," her husband always said, which reflected an upper-class Whig background. The fact was that the house had been purchased by the city of Richmond from a wealthy merchant but had been furnished economically. Varina had not brought her furniture with her from Mississippi, though she did bring her engraved silver and fine china. The President had insisted that they keep the house modest and not redecorate during the war, while the rest of Richmond was suffering. They had been dropped into this world like visitors from another country.

Richmond wives constantly scoffed over the fact that Varina was not the President's first choice for a wife. Since his first wife had been the daughter of a future President of the United States, Varina had to suffer the suggestion that another woman might have been a more suitable First Lady.

Davis had been thirty-seven and she eighteen when they were married in 1845, and the difference grew more apparent as the war continued and he seemed to age so quickly. But when the Davises and Benjamin were together, he seemed younger, for he abandoned some of the somber rigidity of the public man and removed the stolid mask of office.

In the dining room, when Benjamin visited, the round rosewood dining table with the birdseye maple inlay was set for only three places. Varina liked to use her prize-winning Sèvres china, the rose-patterned coffee cups in blue and gold, and her demitasse spoons with the engraved "D" on them.

She recorded in a letter that Benjamin liked McHenry sherry, anchovy toast, and beefsteak pie. She recalled that Benjamin broke through the crust, breathed in the aroma deeply, then, with the care of one of the great chefs of Paris, forked the morsels into his mouth with his eyes closed, savoring every nuance of the spices, saying, "I have only eaten it in this perfection on the Cunard steamers and I shall enjoy the memory of the scream of the sea birds, the lashing of the sea, and the blue above and the blue below."[6]

After she offered him some hot bread with flour from a noted mill in Virginia and watched him spread a walnut paste on it derived from a huge tree on the White House grounds, Benjamin sighed, "Ah, with bread made of Crenshaw's flour, spread with paste made of English walnuts and a glass of McHenry's sherry, a man's patriotism becomes rampant."

When Varina asked the secret to his happy disposition, his reply

was that "to every long Cabinet meeting, I carry a small cake which I eat when I feel fatigued." It was an early hint of Benjamin's lifelong bout with diabetes, which ultimately weakened his heart and took his life.

Varina wrote that Benjamin "was a gourmet after the most refined and absteminous model. He ate little but if that happened to be coarse and badly cooked, he really suffered. He loved 'lollipops' as he called candy, like a child; and he has often been heard to declare that absence of hors d'oeuvres depressed his vitality and mentality, though when he had them, he partook of them most sparingly."

Varina described Benjamin's feelings for Jules St. Martin, who often stayed at home to eat with the other members of the Louisiana delegation who boarded at the Main Street house:

> One day when there happened to be a prospect of our having some very good brains en papillotte and afterwards some mayonnaise, we invited Mr. Benjamin to dinner. He stopped midway in a criticism upon *Les Miserables* by Victor Hugo, which had just reached the Confederacy, and whispered to me, "I do not enjoy my dinner, but Jules would like these dishes—he is young and values such things." I begged him to let me send some of the dinner to his house—but he declined saying "The papillotes would fall flat, and the salad would fade; but if I might take him some cake and lollipops, I should feel very happy." He would not allow a servant to carry them, but took them in a parcel covered with a napkin and walked home, beaming with the hope of conferring pleasure upon his beloved Jules.

Varina invited Benjamin and Jules to dinner together and observed their interaction: "Jules, upon one occasion, feeling as many small men do, that his tiny proportion required more stateliness of address than if he had possessed height, protested upon Mr. Benjamin's testifying his tenderness to him by some caressing words by saying, 'You will make Mrs. Davis think that I am a child.' Mr. Benjamin looked apologetically at him, and said 'No man ever loved his child any better, but love like ours must be founded on respect, at least mine is for you;' and throughout their visit the gentle deference [he] manifested towards his wife's brother showed such a craving for affection, such unwillingness to offend that it almost brought tears to my eyes."[7]

There is a tragic undertone to this picture of Benjamin and Jules together. If he seemed excessive in his affection for Jules, it was because he was bereft and alone in Richmond, cut off from all other

members of his family. He came from a large family and even as a young man loved performing for them by reading novels, telling ghost stories, and making up games for his nieces. All the frustration of his loneliness became focused on Jules, as if the young man were still an adolescent and Benjamin both of his parents. But his caring, his thoughtfulness, his nurturing drew upon Benjamin's best instincts in a city beset by pain, fear, and bereavement.

Jules St. Martin, really his brother-in-law, was in effect Benjamin's surrogate son. Raising the boy as his own, Benjamin's attachment was deep and paternal. Without a son of his own, in a marriage that Varina characterized as "gruesome," he seemed to have created a fantasy son in Jules to give him an outlet for the softer side of his nature. It would not have been surprising if Natalie had exhorted him to keep her brother safe.

He arranged for Jules to have a safe slot at the War Department and made sure that he remained there all during the war. Even as Richmond was stripped of all its able-bodied men, Jules worked as a clerk, probably because of Benjamin's intervention and insistence. One might take that fact as a measure of Benjamin's lack of patriotism when faced with a conflict between obligations to family and duty to country. When it came down to cases, he could encourage others to sacrifice their sons but could not do so himself. He was in this case, as in so many others to come, a realist, not a romantic.

There is a more sympathetic interpretation: that Benjamin bent the rules in order to have some remnant of emotional life in Richmond. It required a rationalization of his own importance to judge that the emotional and mental balance of a key Cabinet member was more important than one more body in battle. And thus, Benjamin was willing to court another possible embarrassment, to be mocked by colleagues and by friends, or be thought less than honorable by the President and Varina. By publicly treating Jules as much younger than he actually was, he made a psychological leap: Jules was a boy and too young for the armies in Virginia.

Frustrated generals who would not attack the President publicly had a convenient target in his new Secretary of War. As the Union forces struck back into every corner of the Confederacy, criticism of Benjamin mounted. He was not a military man, and his orders, though flowing from constant meetings with the President, were treated as originating from him and resented in the field as interference and amateurism.

On January 1, 1862, a restless General T. J. Jackson, already known

as "Stonewall," celebrated the New Year by moving his troops in terrible weather into the western Virginia hills to challenge five thousand Federals assembled there. It took them two weeks to travel 35 miles in the sleet and snow. With news of their march preceding them, the Federals were gone when they arrived. He left General William W. Loring's division to hold the isolated little town of Romney and returned to his original position at Winchester, Virginia. Without food and proper clothing, Loring's men became desperate. Eleven officers and Loring himself petitioned the President and the Secretary of War to allow them to abandon their position on the grounds of hardship and strategic unimportance. Benjamin consulted Davis and General Joe Johnston, Jackson's commanding general, who feared that "Jackson had scattered his forces too far for safety." When intelligence arrived in Richmond of Union troop movements nearby, Benjamin telegraphed Jackson that "our news indicates that a movement is being made to cut off General Loring's command. Order him back to Winchester immediately."[8]

Jackson complied but shocked Benjamin with an additional paragraph in his letter. "With such interference in my command I cannot expect to be of much service in the field; and accordingly respectfully request to be ordered to report for duty to the superintendent of the Virginia Military Institute at Lexington. . . . Should this application not be granted, I respectfully request that the President will accept my resignation from the army."[9]

General Johnston wrote a conciliatory note; Governor Letcher of Virginia begged Jackson to withdraw his resignation as "a calamity to the country and the cause." State Comptroller Jonathan Bennett lashed out: "Mr. Benjamin, the Jew, is a most remarkable specimen of indiscretion, lack of judgment, and disregard of the courtesies." Jackson's name alone was "worth ten thousand men." A Richmond minister wrote that God would give Jackson victory above those who "put their trust in the strength of the flesh."[10]

Jackson reconsidered, but the generals could smell blood in the water. Johnston wrote that Benjamin was causing "great confusion and an approach to demoralization" by giving orders that should come "only from the commanding general."[11] Beauregard earlier had complained with contempt that Benjamin was a "functionary at his desk," who wrote him "lectures on law while the enemy is mustering in our front." Impressions of inexperienced decision-making were permeating the ranks through the newspaper reports of each flap. A Confederate soldier sensed the mood in the air and

wrote in his diary that Judah Benjamin knew as much about war as "an Arab knows of the Sermon on the Mount."[12]

Benjamin's past seemed to shadow him, especially when feelings ran high and the anti-Davis faction in the Confederate Congress or in the army was looking for a target to blame for the bad news from the battlefield. Thomas R. R. Cobb of Georgia, one of the most relentless Davis critics and the brother of Howell Cobb, the former Governor of Georgia whom many had wanted to be President of the Confederacy, wrote his wife on January 15, 1862: "Speaking of Jews, this little contemptible persecutor of Howell's and mine, Benjamin, Secty. of War is an eunuch. The poor fool to try and hide it, married. The woman told of course, but unfortunately in the meantime had a baby. They have never been divorced. When she went to Washington the women had a 'pow-wow' on the question of visiting her but as they had no proof of his condition were obliged to receive her. She now lives in Paris with a paramour. This is the 'on-dit' of the City."[13]

Such a charge by an avowed enemy of Davis, suggesting that Benjamin was not a proper man, reeks of malice and is appropriately suspect. But it does provoke some questions about the nature of Benjamin's relationships with women. His only marriage was a disappointment, and so far as we know there were no other intimate relationships with other women, despite his clearly gentlemanly and charming manner with many women as reported by observers. Whether, in more intimate matters, he was merely reticent or suffered a deeper unhappiness is impossible to know on the evidence available. Cobb's letter might explain why the ladies of Washington were driven to such an extreme action as to convene a meeting to discuss whether they would receive Natalie: There may have been a rumor current, possibly started by Natalie herself, that Benjamin could not father a child and that, therefore, Ninette was someone else's child. It is also a sad possibility that, as long as three years after Natalie had left her husband, Benjamin's fidelity to his unhappy marriage lent credence to such ugly gossip, or "on-dit," in worldly Richmond.

Chastened by his previous conflict with General Jackson, Benjamin wrote an exceedingly flattering letter appointing Jackson to the Shenandoah command:

"The choice of the Government has fallen on you—This choice has been dictated not only by a just appreciation of your qualities as a Commander, but by other weighty considerations—Your intimate knowledge of the country, of its population and resources rendered

you peculiarly fitted to assume this command—Nor is this all—The people of that District with one voice have made constant and urgent appeals to you, in whom they have confidence, should their defense be assigned."[14] But compliments would not shield him from events, especially when failures on the battlefield began to mount and the military needed a scapegoat.

The anger against Benjamin came to a head after the fall of Roanoke Island in early February 1862. Benjamin had been under intense pressure from General Henry Wise at Roanoke and Governor Clark of North Carolina to send many more men and arms to the garrison there. He had resisted for reasons that would not be known until twenty-five years after the war, and he accepted the public condemnation in silence to protect his country. Roanoke was sacrificed, because to have done otherwise would have revealed to the enemy just how desperate the South was.

In January 1862, Benjamin wrote a convincing letter of deception to General Wise in Norfolk:

> I have not yet seen your requisition for munitions, but think there can be no difficulty in sending you from here a moderate supply of fixed ammunition for field pieces; but our supply of cannon powder is *very* limited—at the first indication however of an attack on Roanoke Island a supply will be sent you—with the number of batteries now requiring supply we have a very small reserve that we can only part with to the point that may be actually attacked.[15]

Only the President, Varina, and Benjamin knew the truth—that he had sent no powder to General Wise at Roanoke because he had none to send; no cannon because the blockade was strangling the routes from Europe; no rifles or ammunition because the South did not have the skill or the iron to produce them fast enough. Rather than order an abandonment of the island, which could have revealed their dire situation, Davis ordered Benjamin to tell the 2,500 men garrisoned there to hold fast with the batteries they had, hoping that an island defense would be a sufficient equalizer. They never imagined that the Union could muster five-to-one odds: 13,000 assault troops put ashore in eighty gunboats at an undefended point down the 10-mile length of shoreline. The ensuing defeat introduced the Confederacy to a new "half-navy half-army" sea monster that could slither ashore breathing fire and devastation at any point on the Eastern Seaboard.[16]

At the dedication of the Robert E. Lee monument in Richmond twenty-five years after the war, Colonel Charles Marshall, an aide-de-camp on General Lee's staff, read part of a letter from Benjamin which revealed that President Davis had agreed to allow Benjamin to be publicly censured:

> I consulted the President whether it was best for the country that I should submit to unmerited censure or reveal to a Congressional Committee our poverty and my utter inability to supply the requisitions of General Wise, and thus run the risk that the fact should become known to some of the spies of the enemy, of whose activity we were well assured. It was thought best for the public service that I should suffer the blame in silence and a report of censure on me was accordingly made by the Committee of Congress.[17]

The criticism of Benjamin by the generals broke out in full cry among the Richmond population itself, since Roanoke was not a distant defeat in easily written off mountain terrain like eastern Kentucky and western Virginia; its loss threatened New Bern, North Carolina, and the train route directly to Richmond. General Henry Wise, the vituperative blusterer who knew politics better than warfare, had spent three days in Richmond arguing face-to-face with Benjamin, who could only listen with his irritating half-smile and tell his outpost commander that he would "part with" his small reserve of powder (of which there was none, in truth) at "the point of actual attack."

Wise lost his son, Captain Jennings Wise, in the battle, and his funeral at St. James Episcopal Church in Richmond brought thousands into the streets in the snow and slush to watch the cortège of one of the prize sons of Virginia, the captain of the elite Richmond Blues, killed at Roanoke, now being borne to the cemetery in a coffin draped with the flags of Virginia and the Confederacy, bearing the dead hero's cap and sword.[18] Benjamin could watch the procession from his window at the War Department, knowing that his presence could well have created an ugly incident to mar the ceremony. The Wise family never forgave Benjamin. One nephew, Jennings Wise, wrote that "my grandfather always charged Benjamin with his murder," and a grandson, John Wise, told Meade in an interview in 1936 that the "fat Jew sitting at his desk" was responsible.[19]

Captain Wise's brother, John Wise, wrote about Benjamin and Roanoke Island in a book entitled *The End of An Era*, published in

1899, which was so popular for its biting satire and blunt descriptions that it went through twenty-seven printings, selling 12,329 copies (a best seller of its time, with widespread readership in the South). He wrote that "Benjamin was an easy-spoken, cool, suave Jew, quiet and diplomatic in speech, never excited. It disturbed his nerves to have General Wise in his department." He described Benjamin as "oleaginous . . . his keg-like form and over-deferential manner suggestive of a shopkeeper. But his eye redeemed him and his speech was elegantly polished, even if his nose was hooked and his thick lips shone red amidst the curly black of his semitic beard." Benjamin, he continued, "had more brains and less heart than any other civic leader in the South. He was an English Jew and a lawyer of the first rank. He entered upon employment as attorney for a client. . . . If his client was in any case hanged . . . likely as not, he would be having a bottle of Madeira and a cigar at his club at the moment the hanging was taking place. . . . When a case was lost, he did not bemoan it; he found another. . . . The Confederacy and its collapse were no more to Judah P. Benjamin than last year's birds nest."[20]

A week later Benjamin met with the Congressional committee investigating the Roanoke Island disaster. Henry Foote had pressed the case brutally during several hours of questioning in which Benjamin time and again said, "I take personal responsibility for the decision at Roanoke."[21] By "personal," he was trying to protect Jefferson Davis from criticism for the loss.

Henry Foote, the archnemesis of the Davis administration, had been a journalist and a lawyer before the war, an orator of the fist-pounding and Bible-spouting variety who could hold a jury spellbound for hours in the Mississippi heat. He was a small, wiry man with a bantam's combativeness, piercing black eyes, and, since his youth, a bald head, which exaggerated a brow permanently creased with anger. He had gone far in the extremist atmosphere of Southern politics, where fire-eating and threats substituted for reasoned argument. He carried a loaded revolver onto the floor of Congress, loved dueling pistols, and once fired a shot at a Tennessee colleague who hit him over the head with an umbrella. He was nicknamed "hangman" for having once threatened to hang an antislavery senator "from the tallest tree" in Mississippi. In 1851 he defeated Jefferson Davis for Governor of Mississippi by 999 votes out of 50,000 cast in a bitter campaign. As the two U.S. Senators from Mississippi, they had previously traveled together to Washington and had lived in the same rooming house; however, they broke with each other in a

Christmas morning fist fight over political and personal issues. They hated each other with the bad blood that politicians reserve for brothers from their own soil. That hatred gushed out of Foote at anyone in the Davis administration, although he reserved his most stinging lash for the man he called "Judas Iscariot Benjamin," the "Jewish puppeteer" behind the "Davis tyranny" and the cause of the South's hardship. A political opportunist who loved running for any office wherever he lived, Foote had moved to Nashville, Tennessee, and soon thereafter was elected to represent his district in the Confederate House of Representatives.

Soon after the hearing, Foote announced his intention to introduce a motion of censure in the Congress. "Mr. Benjamin is an able politician, a finished lawyer, and a man of silvery tongue," he stated "but he is not fit to be Secretary of War; he is utterly incompetent. [He] should not be allowed to be the destroyer of our country."[22] Foote also declared that he intended to propose to amend the Constitution so that "no Jew will be allowed within twelve miles of the capital."[23] That way he would dispose of two problems at once: the extortioners who speculated on the misfortune of others and the treasonous member of Mr. Davis's Cabinet.

In cold sheets of rain whipped by gusts of Northern wind, Judah P. Benjamin joined the procession of Cabinet members, governors, Congressmen, and generals that marched from the old Virginia House of Delegates to a platform just beneath the statue of George Washington to listen to the first inaugural address of Jefferson Davis. On lower pedestals around the base of the statue later sculptures of other heroes were placed: Patrick Henry with his arms outstretched in a pose bespeaking liberty or death and Thomas Jefferson, brooding on the inalienable right of the people to change their governments and throw off the yoke of tyranny. All those metaphors were translated into Southern rhetoric. The father of the country had come from Virginia, so it seemed fitting for Jefferson Davis of Mississippi to be inaugurated in his shadow.

The President wore a black suit for the ceremony instead of his usual gray, and Varina thought to herself that he looked like "a willing victim going to his funeral pyre."[24] Four Negro footmen, also in black with white cotton gloves, accompanied the carriage at such a slow pace that when Varina leaned forward to ask the coachman what was wrong, he answered, "This, ma'am, is the only way we always does in Richmond at funerals and suchlike."[25]

The crowd stood drenched in the rain, creating, in Varina's words,

"a panorama of umbrellas,"[26] looking like an "immense mushroom bed,"[27] the rain splattering on them with such a drumbeat of sound that most people could not hear a word. Davis took the oath in dignity, and when he bowed to kiss the Book, a great cheer went up.

Benjamin sat with the Cabinet and listened to the President's somber speech, its tone underscored by the bad news from Roanoke Island and Tennessee.

"A million men," the President said to the crowd, straining to be heard over the rain, "are now standing in hostile array and waging war along a frontier of thousands of miles. Battles have been fought, sieges have been conducted, and although the contest is not ended and the tide for the moment is against us, the final result in our favor is not doubtful."[28]

His eyes were sunk deeper than ever in his sockets, and Varina wrote that he "stood pale and emaciated." His face was so drawn and gaunt that he took on the "mien of a fasting holy man" when he lifted his eyes and arms to heaven at the end of his speech.[29] "My hope," he said "is reverently fixed on Him whose favor is ever vouchsafed to the cause which is just. . . . To Thee, O God, I trustingly commit myself and prayerfully invoke Thy blessing on my country and its cause."[30]

The silence at the end of Davis's speech startled the audience. It was as if the city of Richmond were attending a church service with the people dispersing in an orderly fashion without applause, not in a spirit of rejoicing but in resolution and prayer. The President's speech was too sad and moralistic, but the President had insisted on such a somber tone. It revealed Davis's sanctimonious side, more the preacher at a graveside on inauguration day than the determined and fighting leader.

Varina had found him that morning on his knees praying and wanted to comfort him. But rather than rest up for the speech and the reception that evening, he had gone to the office before the ceremony to put in a couple of hours' work. Worried that he seemed unable to relax, she climbed into her carriage at the ceremony and returned home rather than see him struggle through the speech in the rain.

Benjamin might have felt that he and Varina were the only sane people in a world gone mad. They shared a dangerous knowledge that must never be revealed to anyone: that the President could go for days unable to function, brought down into deep depression by war news and bedridden with neuralgia, causing him throbbing headaches and stomach pains.

Diagnosis from this distance is hazardous, although the term "neuralgia" has had a long history. The 1801 dictionary defined it as "an affection of one or more nerves (esp. of the head or face), causing pain which is usually of an intermittent but frequently intense character." Medical histories in the nineteenth century used the term for a range of nervous disorders. It affected women differently from men. Men would suffer from the more debilitating forms of the malady that doctors today call "functional disorders." It usually had its onset after the age of forty and could be brought on by work pressures, tensions, and anxiety. In modern terms, according to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, "there is usually no evidence of change in the nerve tissue itself. The intense pain is usually described by patients as 'stabbing,' 'shooting,' or 'lightning-like.' . . . Areas around the nose and mouth become hypersensitive and, when touched, trigger an attack. Attacks are also touched off by talking, eating, drinking or exposure to cold." Its more serious and rarer form affected the pharynx, tonsils, back of the tongue, and middle ear, "often rendering the afflicted immobile and unable to speak." The cause was and is unknown, but "the pains may be excruciating beginning in the throat and radiating to the ears or down the side of the neck." Since there is no deterioration of the nerves or identifiable disease, the cause is characterized in the encyclopedia as "psychosomatic." Often the patient would just withdraw and remain quiet and bedridden until the symptoms subsided.[31]

Jefferson Davis also complained of "dyspepsia," a term for indigestion that nineteenth century sufferers used for all abdominal discomfort from chronic heartburn to more serious organic diseases. Early medical journals described dyspepsia as "various forms of disorder of the digestive organs, involving weakness, loss of appetite and depression of the spirits."[32] It could be associated with worry or fear (psychogenic indigestion) or with various types of food, such as coffee or spices. We now know that if it persists over a long period of time, it probably is an ulcer, and some doctors consider the term, in its historical usage when the condition is chronic, as synonymous with ulcers. Davis complained of stomach pains, and Varina reported instances of nausea and vomiting over the course of the war, all symptoms consistent with an ulcerative condition.

His physical problems were another theme in the letters uncovered in 1978 and in the personal bills for medical care that were also discovered in the Memphis bank vault.[33] The illnesses that plagued Davis during the war followed him the rest of his life. He complained in the letters of "suffering from rheumatism in my back and neuralgia

in my head," fears of yellow fever and scarlet fever, swollen limbs, coughs, nausea, colds, and continuing headaches.

Jefferson Davis suffered intensely from various illnesses over the course of his life. He had almost died from the same yellow fever that had taken his first bride and suffered almost annually from fevers in the plantation years. Varina revealed that his nervous system had been so affected by the wounds at Buena Vista that he had taken ten years to recover fully. He himself described his physical condition just before the war as wasted by "protracted, violent disease."[34] Varina reported of the persistence of illness during the war in her memoir—of his nerves "throbbing," his need for rest to ease the headaches, and his decisions to "fast" at critical times to prevent abdominal pains.[35] His newly found letters reveal that after the war his maladies continued, but since he lived to the age of eighty-one, one clear possibility is that they were ulcers, not a more serious organic disease, and that his problems were psychosomatic in origin and yet debilitating nonetheless.

Judah P. Benjamin was the opposite. He was well known for his pleasant disposition, his humor at dark times, and his capacity for long hours and exacting work. His diabetes did not become serious until the end of his life. Moreover, he was not distracted by personal or family responsibilities in Richmond. He could throw himself body and soul into the war, making himself totally available to the President and Varina in emergencies and becoming such a frequent visitor to the White House that he was almost a member of the family.

In health, outlook, and availability, he became the strong rock for Davis to lean on, the instrumentality for policy and detailed administration while the President was incapacitated, the extension of the President's frail hand and body.

Severe and chronic illness psychologically deprives a person of control, and in the case of Jefferson Davis it caused a reaction that made him even more assertive in those areas of his life over which he could exercise power—his working life especially. For a man raised with a strict code of honor, overcoming pain was an element of his military breeding. Part of his personality was to collapse and recover, then pull himself together in spite of his pain. The continuing pain was like having a secret. Benjamin's administrative skills then were part of the disguise, an essential instrument for the President's need to exercise continuing control.

It was the President's sporadic bouts with illness and overall poor health that projected Benjamin so powerfully into Confederate his-

tory. The presidency operated as a collaboration, not in the person of a single man, and flowed smoothly regardless of the President's incapacities. For long periods, and on subjects of varying levels of importance, Judah P. Benjamin acted in Davis's name, wrote speeches and dispatches for him, and presided over an occasional Cabinet meeting. Generally, Benjamin served as his alter ego, his "right hand," as Varina described the role.[36] As an intimate listener and energetic second-in-command, Benjamin also served as keeper of his uncertainties, instrument of action, sharer of the burden. Unlike the President, he bore no responsibility to issue public statements or inspire the populace, no need for eloquence or vaulting rhetoric; he had no need to make appearances, deal with political pressures, stroke the generals, or put up with the pettiness of the bureaucracy and the Congress in quite the same way as the President. He was free to absorb everything, to become the encyclopedia and the true eye, to know the unbiased truth even if he hesitated to voice it.

In a private letter after the war to his friend James Mason, who had requested information, Benjamin wrote, "I have hardly anything to which I can refer to refresh my memory, but I have . . . a bound copy of the President's messages to Congress, which you (who were in on our secrets) know to have been written by me, as the President was too pressed with other duties to command sufficient time for preparing them himself."[37]

Except for the reference in this letter, Benjamin was silent on his role in history. In the 1860s the President, especially if he was a man as proud as Jefferson Davis, was expected to draft his own speeches. It would have been an open invitation to intense criticism by political enemies to reveal otherwise.

Mary Chesnut's diary describes a number of the anti-Semitic reactions to Benjamin's relationship to the President. For example, she quotes from a conversation with a leader in the Confederacy who complained to her, "They say Benjamin wrote the President's message. Never. Jeff Davis writes his own messages. Besides, the blame of all our disasters is laid on God the Father in this message. If Benjamin had written it, the Jew would have accused Jesus Christ instead."[38]

Mary Boykin Chesnut's *A Diary from Dixie,* published in 1905, is the chatty, intelligent and often witty account of a good listener at the top of the social ladder, complete with reports, conversations, gossip, and pithy comments on the times written on a daily basis over the course of the war. The book has been dissected and reworked

by the historian C. Vann Woodward, who discovered that Chesnut sharpened and condensed her material until 1886. With the suppressed passages restored, it remains the most extraordinary firsthand record of the Civil War. The new version, entitled *Mary Chesnut's Civil War* and published in 1981, has fifteen references to "Jews," where the previous standard edition had none, and it is a great deal saltier than the edited version on the subject of Judah P. Benjamin.

"The mob calls him 'Mr. Davis's pet Jew'," she writes in the unexpurgated version, "a King Street Jew, cheap, very cheap, &c&c."[39] In another passage she reflects the ambiguity of Southern attitudes toward Jews: "Not one doubt is there in our bosoms that we are not the chosen people of God. And that He is fighting for us. Why not? We are no worse than Jews, past or present, nor Yankees."[40]

In many ways, Benjamin was not equipped for the role the President assigned him. His selection, as a nonmilitary man, to be Jefferson Davis's right hand reflected the President's insecurity. Davis wanted an implementer, someone who because of a lack of previous military training spoke only in the President's name and would be perceived as having no independent military point of view. Benjamin was a brilliant lawyer, to be sure, but inexperienced in military affairs; Jewish, and because of that doubly despised by the generals for what they felt were political rather than military decisions. Thus Benjamin was shackled by biblical antagonism and suffered the fate of the Sephardic court Jews from whom he was descended—they could serve but could not challenge. Being Jewish made him more vulnerable, but it also made him more loyal, more careful, eager for a less visible role. His only option was loyalty to the failing policies of the President. In that sense, he shares a greater responsibility for the tragic outcome than has previously been recognized.

Benjamin had watched Davis's growing impatience with Secretary of State Robert Hunter come to a climax after the inauguration. In an intense Cabinet discussion of military strategy, Hunter had ventured a lame opinion, and Davis had snapped at him: "Mr. Hunter, you are Secretary of State, and when information is wished of that department, it will be time for you to speak."[41] Hunter had been Virginia's favorite son candidate for President, and no one speaks to a Virginian that way. Hunter's resignation was on Davis's desk the next morning.

In the same period, the President received a note from the War

Department saying that, because of Roanoke Island, a lack-of-confidence resolution had been offered in Congress calling for Secretary Benjamin's dismissal. The President brushed it aside. He had the votes to block such a resolution in the Congressional committee, and in any case he had determined on a more novel way of solving his "Benjamin problem." He would appoint his loyal colleague Secretary of State.

Varina explained that "while many of their constituents objected to Mr. Benjamin's retaining the portfolio of War, because of reverses which no one could have averted, the President promoted him to the State Department with a personal and aggrieved sense of injustice done to the man who had now become his friend and right hand."[42]

Henry Foote had another explanation: Though Benjamin was a "fiendish character," he felt that "the Confederate Senate was persuaded to confirm him—mainly, as one may reasonably conjecture, because of its being known that Mr. Davis needed constantly the aid of a facile and polished writer in the preparation of his messages and other important political documents."[43]

Sallie Ann Brock Putnam, who in 1867 wrote a memoir about the war entitled *Richmond During The War,* described the deeper reactions to the new Secretary of State:

> Mr. Benjamin was not forgiven. His neglect seemed culpable, yet we had the mortification to behold his promotion to a position of higher grade, though at the time of less vital importance to us. This act on the part of the President, in defiance of public opinion, was considered as unwise, arbitrary, and a reckless risking of his reputation and popularity. . . . Although no complaints of want of efficiency as Secretary of State were made against Mr. Benjamin, he was ever afterwards unpopular in the Confederacy, and particularly in Virginia.[44]

Davis's reasons for promoting Benjamin were many. First of all, he needed Benjamin around him as an alter ego, speechwriter, and confidant. In addition, the time had come to move aggressively on the foreign affairs front with an appointee whom world leaders would know spoke for the President. The real question for the future was not strategy in the field but the materiel of war and the involvement of other countries in the struggle. They had to bring England and France into the war, open up a second front from the sea, break the blockade, and obtain some credit in Europe to buy arms. No

one in the South had the ability to handle something that complicated as well as Judah Benjamin.

Benjamin was the only one in his Cabinet who was a true internationalist, who had traveled extensively and handled international commercial negotiations, who knew both England and France intimately and spoke fluent French and Spanish, and who could handle the press and diplomats with skill. He had spent more time in Paris and London than in Richmond. His enemies, and they were, in truth, the President's enemies, would bray at the Benjamin appointment, but reasonable people would feel that he was the right man for the job.

On March 17, 1862, Davis reached out for his third handshake welcoming Judah P. Benjamin to a post in his Cabinet. The Richmond *Examiner* greeted the appointment with an editorial from John M. Daniel that stated: "The representation of the synagogue is not diminished; it remains full."[45]

Benjamin and the President knew that they faced enormous obstacles, including the U.S. Government, which had been manipulating European politics for a long time.

They would try to exploit the suspicion of the Yankees on the part of Lord Russell and Prime Minister Palmerston and the wish of the British to see America divided into two nations. The problem with Palmerston was that he introduced the first petition against the British slave trade in the 1820s and led the fight to abolish it in their possessions. So he would use slavery as his excuse not to enter the war. But the truth was that the English were so suspicious of the French, the Russians, and the Germans that they thought if they once again sent troops over to North America, Louis Napoleon's France or another country might attack them in Europe. The upper classes in England favored the South, and the lower classes were for the Union, but the Government was worried more about being stabbed in the back in Europe than about the war in America.

Napoleon III, one of the most cunning and conspiratorial men in Europe, was dubbed "Napoleon the Little" by countrymen who admired the towering presence of his famous uncle. However, Benjamin and Davis did not derogate him just because he was physically unimposing. True, the Emperor was squat, had a hesitant way of speaking, and, according to John Hay, walked sideways, like a "gouty crab."[46] But he had big ambitions for France and an imperial tradition to live up to.

Napoleon and his court loved intrigue and would rather be involved

in a conspiracy than dance at a royal ball. Empress Eugénie, Napoleon's wife, was more ambitious and cynical than the Emperor, for she wanted to see France control the throne in Mexico. She would be influenced by the Duke de Morny, the bastard son of Napoleon's mother, who was utterly corrupt and lived in outrageous extravagance. The duke was a gambler, an entrepreneur in sugar, and a leader in fashion and wit, but he needed money and he sold state secrets on the stock exchange to get it. Because gold from abroad slipped into his pockets, the Southern leaders knew enough not to put any there without promises of specific steps to enlist France on the South's behalf.

Intrigue was one reason why Jefferson Davis picked John Slidell as Ambassador to France. He must have assumed that if Slidell and Benjamin could master Louisiana politics together, the French court would be a familiar briar patch.

Napoleon wanted to help the South, because Confederate success would weaken the Monroe Doctrine, help him win Mexico, and reestablish the French in North America. On the other hand, Napoleon would not do anything militarily against the North unless the British joined in. Besides, some part of him wanted a strong, united America to keep England preoccupied. To him it was a standoff unless President Davis decided to lift the embargo on cotton to meet the needs of French manufacturing.

Davis knew that Benjamin had been right in the first Cabinet meeting and that his own judgment had been wrong. England had a year's supply of cotton to begin with and had opened up India as a new source, and Davis's embargo just played into the hands of Lincoln's blockade. The South had helped the North to cut the South off from Europe. Benjamin was instructed to use cotton in every way he could—promise it, dangle it, borrow on it, use bales like poker chips to separate France from England, do whatever he thought he could do to get the South credit to buy ships and powder and arms in Europe. He could even tell Napoleon that France and England could have it if they would come and get it.

The new Secretary of State only hoped that the blockade was not so strong now, since mere promises of cotton delivery to Europe would have no credibility. France could be bribed, but England would have to be won. Benjamin and Davis faced another antagonist in this chess game of international diplomacy: William H. Seward, Lincoln's brilliant Secretary of State, who had a smoldering hatred for Benjamin. Whatever Benjamin did, Seward would be trying to

stop him—with gold, with threats of war, with Northern wheat (which England also desperately needed), with as shrewd a grasp of the international exercise of power as existed in the world.

Davis had a final job of making arrangements for Benjamin at the War Department. The Tredegar plant had forged the sheets of armor for the *Merrimac,* and she was ready to sail to Hampton Roads to see what she could do. He had decided to rename his "floating battery" the *Virginia* for the occasion, and Secretary of the Navy Mallory said she was ready for a test run. If things went well with the ironclad, instead of raising the blockade, the South would sink it.

Davis named George W. Randolph, an ex-midshipman, to the War Department the same day Benjamin was appointed Secretary of State. Politically, Randolph was a brilliant choice to succeed Benjamin as Secretary of War: grandson of Thomas Jefferson, born at Monticello, a Richmond lawyer who had been a ranking officer in the prewar Richmond militia and was now serving with Magruder as an artillery commander, soon to be a brigadier. How he would fare between Davis and the generals was another question, but Congress would rejoice in the idea of replacing a Jew from Louisiana with an aristocrat from one of the first families of Virginia. At the same time, Davis announced his intention to bring General Robert E. Lee into the government and put him in charge of military operations under Davis's direction. Two Virginians would make Congress do handstands while at the same time it grumbled at Benjamin's move to Secretary of State.

9

Richmond: *The Stage for Intrigue*

The steady pressure on Richmond by Union General George McClellan in the spring of 1862, nine months after the Southern victory at Bull Run, had been an almost unbearable torment for the people of the city. At Alexandria, the North had assembled the largest invasion fleet in history—113 steamers, 188 schooners, and 88 barges carrying enough food, ammunition, wagons, cannons, horses, and beef cattle to support McClellan's army of 146,000 men. Slowly, ever so slowly, for more than eight months, like a gigantic tortoise, McClellan's army moved up the peninsula between the James and the York rivers. "What Are You Waiting for, Tardy George?" became one of the most popular songs in the North. But George was coming, inexorably, step by step, day by day, ever tightening the noose of Federal assertion around Richmond. Soon, the arc of danger was so close that the people of Richmond could see glowing in the hills the bright campfires of Union troops with twice the manpower of the defenders. It had been a strange few months of cat-and-mouse between a methodical Yankee and a cautious Southerner, as General Joe Johnston, the dapper, balding little gamecock of Jefferson Davis's generation at West Point, slowly withdrew the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia up the peninsula in front of McClellan, feinting right, then left, saving his troops for the defense of Richmond.

From the high ground around the city, Richmond was cradled in the mist and gray clouds of the spring of 1862, suspended momentarily in the almost mystical landscape, as if unconnected from the suffering in its war-strained streets. The city rested on the north side of a graceful bend in the James River, but the eye immediately was drawn up the slopes from the black river water to the Grecian-white Capitol building of the State of Virginia, designed by Thomas Jefferson to be located on a grassy hilltop in the very center of the city. To the left, the tall spire of St. Paul's Episcopal Church extended skyward, as if a sentinel of God had been ordered to protect the heart of the Confederate government. The Capitol on the hill looked like the Acropolis, rising majestically from the James River, with its A-shaped roof pointing upward like hands praying, cupping an invisible dome 20 feet inside the roof in its architectural palms.

There was a rhythm to this war that added irony to every season. In the harsh winters, both armies dug in, for they could not move on the frozen roads. So the city relaxed in the howling winds of winter, secure in the safety of the snow while both armies recuperated.

But when the earth absorbed the final traces of the cold and the wild flowers and apple trees blossomed, lifting the spirits of poets in celebration of new life, death awakened in the long-quiescent battlefields as the armies blue and gray began to crawl out of their tents and make their fierce cannons ready for thunder and destruction again.

Every morning, Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin walked the mile to his office from the Davenport House on West Main Street down to the imposing government building, where he would meet President Jefferson Davis for an early military briefing on the previous day's events. He walked past houses with black iron latticework, reminiscent of New Orleans. At the beginning of the war, his walk was a time for reflection in a civilized world of abundance—past stores and shops that sold antique clocks, pianos, rare books, and French wines. By 1862 darkness pervaded the shops, skeletons of prior activity, including the salon of the once much sought-after services of Ducquesne, the Paris hairdresser. The peeling paint, broken clapboards, and refugees sleeping in gardens or on porches invaded his subconscious with the realities of the war, the latest sad chapter in Richmond's proud history.

There was much history on Main Street. Thomas Jefferson had come over many times from Monticello to shop there; James Monroe's

Attorney General had lived in the colonial house with the three-story porch and an octagonal living room; and Jenny Lind, whom P. T. Barnum sent to Richmond, once bought a parasol on Main Street before a concert for which a scalper could sell a ticket for as much as $105.00. In Richmond's four-year struggle for survival, such memories were reassuring.

One can retrace Benjamin's steps in Richmond today. At Fifth Street, the walk descended sharply down a hill, from the calm residential heights of west Richmond to the tense world of warfare in the banking and government offices.

Richmond seemed the perfect setting for the South to greet spring with the ambivalent welcome the new season deserved. Wisps of clouds wafted across the metallic blue sky like whirls of gunsmoke, and the ground was damp with the melting chill of the early season.

In Confederate times a magnificent iron fence encircled the block around the Capitol—black spears based in granite, giving the grounds the impression of an inviolate sanctuary from whatever assaults were going on outside the magic ring. At the bottom of the hill sat the Bell Tower, which rang vigorously for fires and emergencies, as it did on Pawnee Sunday in the first months of the war, signaling a false alarm to warn of Federal gunboats on the river.

A hundred feet from the side entrance to the Capitol, on a broad expanse of flat ground on the crest of the hill, stood the high granite pedestal with the statue of George Washington on horseback. He was in full battle dress, his sword at his side, his arm raised and extended its full length, his fingers pointing ever southward to the future of the country. Southerners like Benjamin thought that General Washington, a Virginian and a slaveowner, was a proud symbol of the first American revolution, the predecessor to Jefferson Davis, not Abraham Lincoln. Thus the pointing statue of Washington was placed in the center of the seal of the Confederacy as a symbol of the South's defiant past.

In Benjamin's day, black freedmen and slaves crowded the streets, gathering in the center of town. Slaves and soldiers were in the hills, digging trenches, building embankments, and filling sandbags around the armaments, from sunup to sundown. The shovel brigades had earned Robert E. Lee the early nickname "King of Spades," but the swamplands east of the city would keep the first battle for Richmond a few miles from its gates.

In 1860 the city was 38 percent black, but by 1862, as the popula-

tion grew, it would reach over 50 percent at its peak. A preponderance of the slave population was male. This fact created, in the minds of the white population, a threatening side to Richmond slavery, a fear deeper than in any other city in the South. In most Southern cities, there was a surplus of slave women serving as house slaves, because the men were sold for work on the plantations in the surrounding countryside. But Richmond industries demanded large numbers of young male slaves, and defense of the many points of possible invasion required the importation of even larger numbers of pick-and-shovel slaves. In addition, thousands more blacks fled to Richmond as the Confederate armies retreated from the Virginia peninsula. With such an excess of black men over black women, sustaining slave families became much more difficult. To maintain order, the city tolerated brothels and gambling halls in the black sections of "Screamersville" and "Penitentiary Bottom" near the prison on the river. In addition, more and more of the leading white families sent their daughters and wives away from the dangers of the impending battle. With the steady arrival of new white recruits every day to supply Lee's army, and the constant stream of furloughed veterans, the city at times seemed to seethe with an undercurrent of racial conflict and fratricidal pressures made more intense by the absence of the ameliorating influence of women.[1]

Benjamin was not an early riser, preferring to work late, but he sought to arrive every morning so that he would already be in his office when the chimes of St. Paul's Church tolled the hour of nine o'clock.

He kept a large map of the United States on his wall and daily consulted the morning dispatches to shift the colored pins, reflecting troop movement and strength. Though he was responsible for foreign affairs, he knew that the decisions in Europe would be more influenced by the battlefield than by the machinations of ambassadors in the royal court of Napoleon III or the Confederate partisans among the upper classes in the British Parliament. Besides, since he was interviewed often by foreign journalists, having the war displayed on his wall allowed him to pepper his comments with precise details and the latest information.[2]

From his office window, Benjamin could see the ships out on the bend of the James River and beyond them the straight edges of the Kanawha Canal. The James River historically linked Richmond to the port of Norfolk, but the waterways, once providing easy access to Yankee shipping had turned into dangerous coiled snakes

poised to strike at the heartland. A superior United States Navy was strangling the South with Lincoln's "Anaconda"—a blockade of all Southern ports—and the fighting ships of Admiral Farragut were moving up the mouth of the Mississippi River, isolating New Orleans and then Natchez. Farragut's ships would ultimately join Ulysses S. Grant's army coming down from Tennessee to dominate the entire Mississippi Valley. The "Anaconda" was circling the Confederacy.

From the window he could also see the smoke billowing from the stacks of the Tredegar Iron Works, 5 acres of buildings that were the brute muscles of the Confederacy. Twelve hundred of the most broad-shouldered slaves sweated and groaned around the clock, many wasting away in the hellish heat of its molten rivers of glowing iron. It was a state within a state, with its own hospitals, administrative structure, rules, and slave quarters.

From the beginning, Richmond had been the focal point of Yankee strategy. It was the terminus of five railroads that arrived there from North and South. The city fathers had banned railroad tracks from the center of the city, filling the streets before the war with teamsters and slaves hauling tobacco to the sprawling warehouses, where it was placed in hogsheads and aged, and bringing in wheat, which was crushed and sifted into flour in the giant mills—as many as 400,000 barrels in 1860—and packed off to the North by way of the Potomac steamships in exchange for manufactured goods. Slaves were brought on those railroads from all over the South to work in the industries of Richmond, particularly in the open-hearth furnaces and the boilers in the bowels of the Tredegar Iron Works, which turned iron ore and coal from the mountain country of western Virginia into railroad tracks, engines, and, since secession, cannons and ammunition for the Confederate army. So the shiny bronze guns rumbled out of Tredegar bound for the conflict, while battered and scarred field pieces wobbled back on their way to the arsenal for refitting.[3] The most persuasive argument for moving the capital from the inland protection of Montgomery, Alabama to the exposed outer rim of Richmond had been the vital necessity of protecting the muscle and fiber of Tredegar, which employed more than 20 percent of the work force of Richmond. If Richmond fell, so would the Confederacy and that desperate fact permeated the city with a frantic quality all during the war.

Over the course of the war, war-worn horses drawing carriages loaded with wounded men plodded their sad way eastward through

the city toward Chimborazo Hospital, a reminder of the declining numbers of Confederate soldiers capable of fighting. Chimborazo Hospital was developed on the plateaus of the hills, a 175-acre complex of 150 one-story buildings, more than a hundred huge tents to serve men in convalescence, five large icehouses, a Russian bathhouse, a bakery and a brewery of its own, and two hundred cows and five hundred goats. The grease from the five great soup kitchens was mixed with lye to produce soap. In four years, more than 76,000 men would pass through Chimborazo, and thousands more through the sixty other hospitals in the city.

Hundreds of other acres to the north and west were devoted to the expanding cemeteries, which obeyed a strict hierarchy based on the status of the dead. Schockoe Hill Burying Ground in the northern part of the city since 1821 had been reserved for the middle- and upper-class white Protestants; Jews bought land adjacent to the area, reflecting their high social status in the city; lower-class whites and enlisted men were buried in Oakwood Cemetery; and nearby was a potter's field for paupers, strangers, and Yankees. In the 1840s, a group of prominent Richmonders had visited Boston and were so impressed with a rural cemetery they saw there that they established Hollywood Cemetery on a rolling hillside just west of the city. When the remains of Presidents James Monroe and John Tyler were reinterred there just a few years before, and tens of thousands of the dead filled up the other burial grounds, Hollywood emerged as the home of heroes, the rich, and any others with a claim to esteem. But by now, because of the scarcity of foodstuffs and inflation, an equality of meagerness joined together the classes of the city, and the capacity of whites to maintain this war alone diminished with every funeral.

A city of 38,000 in 1860 had by 1862 more than tripled with refugees, the wounded, slaves, and new recruits. As housing grew scarcer and rents rose to outlandish heights, more and more families slept and lived in single rooms, subsisting in winter on a diet of potatoes and imagination.

In May 1862, the beleaguered city waited daily for McClellan to attack, but the Federal commander was meticulously going over all the details of what he believed would be the last great battle of the war. He wanted to leave nothing to chance: superiority in armaments, men, and cavalry; a flow of reinforcements; naval units; intelligence and contingency plans for lines of retreat and counterattack;

and secret plans of surprise. Resting and gathering themselves for the assault were 128,864 men with 300 big guns, but for McClellan, with memories of Manassas haunting him, that was still not enough. He asked Lincoln for insurance—McDowell's force of 40,000 left in Washington for protection—so he was waiting, waiting for McDowell, the man who had commanded the Union troops at Bull Run, now seeking his redemption, to join McClellan at history's turning point for the capture of the capital of the Confederacy.

"Richmond must not be given up; it shall not be given up," Robert E. Lee announced in tears to the Cabinet.[4] He was only a military adviser to Davis, newly arrived in Richmond, and he developed a plan in stages: The first objective was to stop the Union troops and McDowell from enlarging the already massive concentration of forces facing Richmond. Lee would do that not by direct attack, since the South had neither the men nor the arms to spare from Richmond's defense, but by attacking two lesser generals in the Shenandoah Valley, hurting them badly enough for them to call for reinforcements, thereby alarming Lincoln by playing on his worst fears that a Washington left undefended would be occupied before Richmond could be captured. It was psychological warfare of the shrewdest sort. Lincoln would order McDowell to return back across the Potomac, and McClellan would be left waiting at the gates of Richmond with the ghosts of Manassas in his head. The instrument for implementing step one in the rescue of Richmond was none other than the taciturn, intense, fanatic legend of the Shenandoah Valley, General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson.

Already his eccentricities were renowned—his diet of raspberries and plain bread and milk, no pepper because it made his left leg ache, and the lemons, the ever-present lemons, saddlebags full of them, always sucking and chewing on them, dotting his black beard with yellow peelings. No dashing officer he, his coat was a threadbare, single-breasted relic of his service in the Mexican War; his cap was the same as those worn by the VMI cadets to whom he once taught mathematics, only with a broken visor; and his boots were a floppy size or so too big for him. At night he would stare for hours into the fire—brooding and lonely, like an ancient mystic. In battle, his lanky frame looked even more dramatic, because he rode a muscular, undersized mount the men derisively called "Fancy." Horse and rider made a curious sight in battle, but Jackson rode with intensity, and his eyes radiated in the charge and the gunsmoke with a glow so strong they called him Old Blue Light. Jackson's religious fervor

stirred him to believe he was a Southern Joshua, molding his 17,000 Shenandoah Valley troops, as he wrote his wife, into "an army of the living God as well as of its country."[5]

For eight months, Jackson had roamed the valley, memorizing every inch of it, calculating its distances in miles as well as in the minutes it took to move his men. And move them he did, fifty minutes every hour, then lie prone to rest, then up again to step out in cadence for 200 or 300 yards, breaking into route march, miles to cover in prescribed intervals. If any man faltered or straggled, he was a coward, wanting in patriotism, deficient in manliness. His men worshiped him, they cheered him while they marched, they fought for him, and they won the name they would be known by: Stonewall's Foot Cavalry.

Union forces chased Jackson all over the valley, but he sidestepped and parried, and when they charged, he had disappeared into air. They never knew where he was. When they thought him in front, he attacked from the rear. He was in the hills above them, then in the valley alongside, lunging and retreating, playing havoc with supply lines, capturing the enemy's food for his troops. He was an apparition, teasing and taunting. Lincoln, sworn to bag this legend, called him "the game" and sent McDowell with 38,000 men and 11,000 animals to do it. But Stonewall ended up behind the hunters, threatening the capital. In the end, after Lincoln ordered McDowell back across the Potomac, Stonewall, his mission accomplished, skipped back to Richmond to join Lee for the climactic battle of the spring.

The morning Richmond *Examiner* blared the headline "New Orleans Falls," and the leaders in the Southern capital read with shock about the fate of Judah P. Benjamin's home city. General Ben Butler's 18,000 Yankee troops arrived in New Orleans with Farragut on April 26, 1862 to find a sullen mob greeting them at the docks. An American flag had been torn down from the staff over the Mint, and when Butler found a man with a scrap of bunting in his buttonhole, he brought him before a drumhead court and hanged him publicly from a window of the building where the flag had flown.

The sight struck fear into the city's men, but the women of New Orleans continued to harass the troops, snubbing them on the streets and spitting at them. In the French Quarter, a woman poured a bucket of slop from an upper window right on Farragut's head, sending Butler into a rage.

"Hereafter," his general order said, "when any female shall, by word, gesture or movement, insult or show contempt for any officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation."[6] When a Yankee insults Southern womanhood, he touches the quick of Southern chivalry. From all over the South, at every dinner table and fancy ball in Richmond, the reaction to the order brought swift condemnation and stirring calls to arms.

"Men of the South!" Beauregard's Creole tongue retorted (and every male in Richmond reverberated with the sentiment). "Shall our mothers, our wives, our daughters and our sisters be thus outraged by the ruffianly soldiers of the North, to whom is given the right to treat, at their pleasure, the ladies of the South as harlots? Arouse, friends, and drive back from our soil those infamous invaders of our homes and disturbers of our family ties."[7]

Jefferson Davis answered with an order of his own. If "Beast" Butler or his men be captured, they should be treated as animals and executed. History has forgiven Butler his excesses, attributing much of the surviving account to exaggeration. But rumor at the time knew no restraint.

Stories of greedy confiscation continued to reach Richmond. When Butler uncovered a cache of 418 bronze plantation bells, contributed in response to Confederate pleas for more metal to build ironclads, he had them sent to Boston, where souvenir collectors among the wealthy paid $30,000 each to hear them ring in Yankee steeples.

Benjamin had a personal concern about New Orleans. His sisters Harriet and Penny and her daughter, Leah, were there among the marauders and plunderers loosed on the city.

His fears were not unfounded. Butler had a special penchant for attacking Jews. "The most active agents," he was quoted as saying, "and most effective supporters [of the Confederacy] have been the same quasi-foreign houses, mostly Jews . . . who all deserve at the hands of the Government what is due to the Jew Benjamin, Slidell, Mallory and Floyd."[8] He called Benjamin's brother-in-law in New Orleans "a Jew famed for a bargain" and wrote that those who traded in paper money "were principally Jews, and as Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of State, was a Jew, and his brother-in-law was a broker, I suppose there were some of the Jew brokers who would get true intelligence from Richmond."[9] He later referred in a report to the capture of "150 rebels, 90 mules, 60 contrabands [Negro slaves] and 5 Jews."[10] In Butler's value system, Jews were rated

lower than rebels, mules, and slaves; Lincoln thought the report was a joke when he read it. In another connection, Butler made reference to the "progenitor of the tribe of Benjamin, the Jewish Secretary of State."[11]

Butler set the tone for New Orleans, but even the sympathetic Northern press recoiled when an Associated Press writer in New Orleans urged that Jews in the South be "exterminated." Both the *Commercial* and *Daily Times* of Cincinnati denounced the story and called for an end to "Jew-baiting."[12]

An English visitor wrote: "Mr. Benjamin told me that his property had lately been confiscated in New Orleans, and that his two sisters had been turned, neck and crop, into the streets there with only one trunk, which they had been forced to carry themselves. Everyone was afraid to give them shelter, except an Englishwoman, who protected them until they got out of the city."[13]

We know something of Benjamin's outrage at Butler from a letter he wrote to Slidell in Paris:

> The press of the civilized world has already informed you of the nature of the tyranny exercised over that unfortunate city by the brutal commander who temporarily rules over it. The order inviting his beastly soldiery to treat the ladies of New Orleans as "women of the town pursuing their avocation" is not only authentic but has been tacitly approved by his government. . . . His thousand similar acts of atrocities . . . all combine in stamping upon him and upon the Government which sustains and supports him indelible infamy.[14]

The loss of New Orleans, the danger to his family, and the threat to Richmond raised many personal issues for Benjamin. As the battle of Richmond drew closer, he had to have asked himself a profound question: Should anything happen to him, where did he want to be buried? He could die in the battle; he could be assassinated by a Yankee sympathizer; he could be captured, tried for treason, and hanged.

New Orleans was gone. Richmond was not home. No Jewish congregation would accept an unconverted wife, thus ruling out the Hebrew cemetery. It is reasonable to assume that one of his nightmares had to be that if Richmond fell, the Yankees would leave him dangling from a rope as had been done to the bridge-burners at the Cumberland Gap.

Jules St. Martin, who had inherited from his father substantial business interests in New Orleans, accepted the news of the fall of New Orleans with Creole aplomb: " 'This must hit you hard,' someone said. 'I am ruined, voilà tout,' Jules replied (with a characteristic gesture of throwing care to the winds)."[15]

The horse-drawn funeral trains of Richmond daily wound along the rutted mud roads from Schockoe Hill, where the Hebrew cemetery stood, toward Hollywood cemetery. No stone had marked the grave of Henry Adler, the young Jewish private who was a member of the Richmond Blues at Roanoke Island, since Jewish custom required a one-year wait. The Hebrew cemetery stood on a slight rise, commonplace but adequate for its somber purpose.

Once through the gates of Hollywood, one entered the high ground and descended into the valley of the shadow of death. It was soundless, except for the bird songs in the distant trees.

The hills enveloped any mourner in an embrace of unsurpassed beauty. Tall pines reached to the sky, and the spreading shade of water oaks, giant magnolias, and weeping willows shielded the sculptured hillsides rich with the graves of the dead.

To accommodate the steep terrain, tombs were scooped out of the sides of the hills and mausoleums were constructed as though to inter the bodies in natural caves. Carved on the mausoleums were the names of the Virginia families buried there: Madison, Tyler, Wise, Brockenbrough. Today, one's eyes are drawn to the winged angels, crosses, and tall obelisks, and the constantly shifting perspective from the road make the markers seem as if they are moving in a giant, silent minuet. Behind the black elm is a large Madonna with head bowed.

Judah P. Benjamin was an outsider not only here but also at the Hebrew cemetery. His Southern Jewish soul had left him suspended, floating and unwelcomed in both worlds. He could not choose; he could not postpone choosing.

The military graves dotted a meadow like a regiment of tablets in formation. A small mounted cannon pointed toward a cluster of graves in silent salute. Batteries had erected memorials to their fallen comrades—"faithful soldier" and "humble Christian" with crossed swords carved in stone. Every gravestone was an echo: "he rode with Stonewall" or "sacrificed at Bull Run" or "the first Confederate soldier killed at Bethel, Virginia." And those were the lucky ones who were brought home to rest. Visitors could hear the cannons and the sound of the charge in their imaginations. In the haunting

silence they absorbed the screams, the wounds, the instant and lingering death. The dates of birth added to the tragedy, almost everyone of them born in the 1840s.[16]

Benjamin's best friend, Gustavus Myers, the leading Jewish lawyer in Richmond, who married the Gentile daughter of a former Governor of Virginia, was buried in a plot in Hollywood. The records have since been burned, so we do not know of Benjamin's intent should anything happen to him, nor do we know if he had plans to prevent the use of his body as an example. If he were to have turned to anyone to carry out his wishes, it would have been to Myers. Gustavus Myers had influence and would have understood that the Talmud stated that a man's life was enough payment for a crime, that burial should be prompt. Gustavus Myers would have made certain that the Jewish laws of burial were obeyed.

My Fellow-Citizens
To Arms

I have just received a message direct from the highest authority of the Confederacy, to call upon the Militia Organizations to come forth, and upon all other Citizens to organize Companies for the defense of this City against immediate attack of the enemy. They are approaching and you may have to meet them before Monday morning. I can do no more than give you this warning of their new approach.

Remember New Orleans!

Richmond is now in your hands. Let it not fall under the rule of another BUTLER. Rally, then, to your Officers tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock, on BROAD STREET, in front of the CITY HALL.

Joseph Mayo
Mayor of Richmond

May 28, 1862[17]

Though McClellan still had a two-to-one advantage in men, he had been forced by topography to divide his troops around Richmond on either side of the winding Chickahominy River, swollen by days of "Confederate weather." The separation enabled General Joseph Johnston to throw twenty-seven Southern brigades against a single Northern corps. At the battle of Seven Pines, however, the confusion,

chaos, and mismanagement of the South in its first campaign in months enabled McClellan to withdraw and regroup, and Johnston lay wounded with a piece of shrapnel in his chest. On June 8, 1862, a historic day in the short history of the Confederacy, on the ride back from Johnston's tent just four miles from the frightened city, Jefferson Davis offered Robert E. Lee the command of the Army of Northern Virginia.

Lee seemed destined for legend from the beginning. His name was synonymous with Virginia's proud history.

Three days after the greatest torchlight parade in the history of Richmond to celebrate the night Virginia voted for secession, when thousands sang the new anthem "Dixie" as Roman candles and rockets blazed across the sky lighting up the city like daylight, Virginia's Governor Letcher had offered Colonel Robert E. Lee the post of Major General commanding the Virginia forces. Fifty-four years old, erect and handsome, with a strong black mustache, Lee had turned down a formal offer from President Lincoln to command the Northern armies. Leaving his stately home in Arlington, where he owned not a single slave, yet the hero of the white South for putting down John Brown's raid at Harpers Ferry, Lee gave a brief acceptance speech to a cheering convention, underscoring his loyalty to birth and land.

After all, Robert E. Lee had traces of George Washington's blood in him and had married the daughter of the adopted son of the first American President, thereby representing for Davis and the Confederacy a link to the first revolution. Also, in the early days of the war, some newspapers had compared Lee's decision to reject Lincoln's temptation to "the agony and bloody sweat of Gethsemane." (His old general from the Mexican War, Winfield Scott, had told Lee, "You have made the greatest mistake of your life but I feared it would be so.")[18]

But Lee had not lived up to that early promise. In fact, his record in western Virginia had been so undistinguished in the early years of the war that when Jefferson Davis had appointed him as military adviser to the President, it was not widely cheered by either political or military leaders and was hardly noticed at all by the newspapers. He was thought to be too plodding, too adept at engineering rather than fighting, without demonstrated achievements in the field. They called him "Granny Lee" because of his record of bumbling in western Virginia. He was seen as a caretaker general "too tender of blood,"

who had a "pious horror of guerrillas," without talents other than digging trenches, designing fortifications, and defending fixed embattlements.[19]

Robert E. Lee was a jumble of contradictions. He was raised in the heroic tradition, outsiders thought, but his father had deserted the family when the boy was six, leaving his mother in financial ruin. His unusual marriage to his distant cousin, the dominating and spoiled Mary Custis, had drained his personality of much of its joy, but he sought the admiration of women, often writing long, intimate letters to young girls he had met only once. He even held unorthodox views on slavery, having written to his wife in 1856 that "in this enlightened age, there are few I believe, but will acknowledge that slavery as an institution is a moral and political evil in any country."[20]

Lee was handsome, and his bearing was thoroughly military. Benjamin had almost nothing in common with him—not politics, ambition, family, or history. On both sides of the war, the generals and leaders had come out of a common military past at West Point, but Sherman had left the army for almost a decade to pursue careers in education and administration; McClellan left to become a railroad executive; and Jefferson Davis to make a fortune as a planter. Lee, however, had spent thirty years in the army, rising only to the rank of lieutenant colonel with a salary of $1,200 a year, bitter toward the officers who sought advancement with their charm and good manners rather than their swords. Benjamin and he shared a penchant for hard work, but Lee worked out of an exaggerated sense of duty and the obligations of his Virginia birthright, whereas Benjamin came from Jewish roots with modest beginnings that drove him to seek recognition, status, and the respect of his peers.

Judah P. Benjamin's new duties as Secretary of State placed him in an office that was not only on the same floor as the President's but less than 100 feet away. Each morning they would visit to bring each other up to date on army news, then meet for several hours during the day. Often the President would ride out around the city to show himself to the populace and bolster morale while Benjamin took care of the paperwork.

Benjamin's own office was a plain room in the center of which was a black walnut table with a green cloth covered with a multitude of state papers. One corner contained bookshelves. None of his favorite classics were there, unless they were of professional use: Headley's

History, The Parliamentary Debates, and a dozen separate copies and bound volumes of the *Atlantic Monthly.*[21]

The bonds between Varina and Benjamin were maturing also, made more intense by a common commitment to the President. She was not just an onlooker but a participant who could take advantage of her position as First Lady to help the State Department smuggle messages abroad.

"Many of Mr. Benjamin's inimitable state papers," she wrote, "were an account of the dangers of the blockading squadron, transmitted to Miss Rosine Slidell through me under an assumed name, and the answers were returned to her in the form of friendly letters in which the 'high contending parties' were spoken of under assumed names also."[22]

Benjamin treated her as an equal and never censored himself in her presence. He wanted her to read what she was transmitting and talked with her about his strategy. She returned his trust, independent of her husband, as an emerging third dynamic at the top of the Confederacy.

"They were most interesting reading for me," she wrote of the secret papers she transmitted to Paris and received in turn, "and Mr. Benjamin's clear explanation of the antagonistic policy of the Duke de Morny and the Emperor made them very plain—his tact was exhibited too in a pleasant way about the letters—he never put on a manner of reserve towards me nor did he caution me to 'observe the utmost secrecy towards every one about their contents' as another man who knew less of secret affairs did. Of what he knew I must be cognizant, he spoke freely when alone with me, but no more reticent man ever lived where it was possible to be silent."[23]

But Mason and Slidell, the ambassadors to London and Paris, were doing their jobs with less success. Diplomacy followed the logic of the battlefield, and the string of Southern defeats had caused the diplomats of Europe to watch and wait for the outcome of the battle of Richmond.

"I need not say," Slidell wrote from France, "how unfavorable an influence these defeats"—Roanoke and Forts Henry and Donaldson in Tennessee—"following in such quick succession, have produced in public sentiment. If not soon counterbalanced by some decisive success in our arms, we may . . . bid adieu to all hopes of seasonable recognition."[24]

Success or not, Benjamin and the President felt that Napoleon's

ambitions for a Hapsburg throne in Mexico and the well-known corruption of the court made France the most likely recipient of a Confederate offer, with "white gold"—cotton—as the bait. Benjamin carefully drafted his first and most brilliant state paper after only a few weeks in office, "conceding to the French Emperor the right of introducing French products into this country, free of duty, for a certain defined period if it were possible to induce his abandonment of the policy hitherto pursued." Then he instructed Slidell to offer the Emperor "a certain number of bales of cotton to be received by the merchant vessels of France at certain designated points. In this manner, one hundred thousand bales of cotton . . . costing this government but $4,500,000 would represent a grant to France of not less than $12,500,000." And to link that with the duty-free offer, "such a sum would maintain afloat a considerable fleet for a length of time quite sufficient to open the Atlantic and Gulf ports to the commerce of France."

The Secretary of State declared that the government was wide open to a bargain of even greater profit: "I do not state this as the limit to which you would be authorized to go in making a negotiation on the subject but to place clearly before you the advantage which would result in stipulating for the payment of cotton."[25]

Dispatches from Richmond could take as long as four months to get through the blockade, whether Benjamin used Varina or not. If the papers were captured, they could end up on the front page of the New York *Tribune.* But Benjamin had made special arrangements for this one on a French steamer by special courier.

When his old friend Count Henri Mercier, the French Minister to Washington, came to Richmond, Benjamin considered it opportune. The blockade was playing havoc with his dispatches, and he would not hear from Slidell again until mid-July. Mercier had come to test the resolve of the Confederacy and would return to Paris immediately to report his personal impressions to Napoleon III.

Benjamin knew that his exact words would be transmitted back to the Emperor, and he chose them carefully so as to leave no doubt that might undercut Slidell.

"I know your good feeling for us, and we require no proof of it," Mercier reported that Benjamin said. "But you know that we are a hot-blooded people and we would not like to talk with anybody who entertained the idea of the possibility of our dishonoring ourselves by reuniting with a people for whom we feel unmitigated contempt as well as abhorrence."[26]

Mercier was convinced of the determination of the Southern leaders to gain independence no matter what the cost. France could proceed with negotiations in good faith.

The fall of New Orleans had left Southern sympathizers in Paris in a state of shock. So many people had business links, relatives, loved ones, and friends there. The Creoles in Paris were outraged over the terrible stories of looting and molestation of women in New Orleans. "Beast" Butler sounded to them like a savage.

All war news was exaggerated and magnified by distance. Paris thought Richmond was doomed and the war would be over in a few weeks. Slidell was already beginning to consider schemes for his permanent residence in Paris.

At the age of forty-two, Slidell had married twenty-year-old Mathilde Douglas, daughter of one of the leading Creole families in New Orleans. She spoke only French until she was fifteen, and Slidell's French was perfect. Through Creole contacts in Paris, where many had fled before the fall of New Orleans, the Slidells would be in constant touch with Natalie and Ninette.

The Slidells were keeping up the spirits of the Southern community. Everyone was charmed by them, and Empress Eugénie invited Mathilde and her daughters to every event. The Slidells' oldest daughter had become engaged to Baron Erlanger, the head of a Jewish banking house, said to be one of the most influential men with Napoleon. Because of Benjamin, the Erlangers pursued Natalie socially. Oddly, in this instance, she was more socially desirable *because* of Benjamin's religion, which was usually a basis for exclusion, than she would have been otherwise. Mercier returned to Paris with messages of affection for Natalie and Ninette, a direct report for the Emperor, and personal regards for the Slidells.

The streets of Richmond were bustling with the activity of defense preparations. Thousands of slaves and soldiers were at work digging trenches, building fortifications, driving pilings into the James River to prevent a naval attack, and lifting batteries of artillery up to Drewry's Bluff overlooking the river. With the surrender of Norfolk and the Gosport Navy Yard, the Confederate dreams of a navy had ended; even the proud *Merrimac* had to be scuttled to keep it from falling into the hands of the enemy. Richmond would have to defend its river approach from the batteries on the shore.

The morale of the city was sagging, although it had not yet experi-

enced the sting of actual attack. Citizens still had faith in their proud fighting men. Just a few weeks before, Longstreet's division had marched through the streets of Richmond, mud-stained but high-spirited, as the city turned out to cheer them, the women carrying armloads of spring flowers, which they tossed to the passing soldiers or stuck in the muzzles of their guns. The troops were showered with spring violets, yellow jonquils, and hyacinths as they marched past the handkerchief-waving crowds to the tune of "Dixie" and "Bonnie Blue Flag."

A craggy veteran spotted a young man and a woman in a window and yelled out to the lad, "Come right along, sonny! Here's a muskit for ye!"

"All right, boys," he answered, "Have you got a leg for me, too?" The boy stuck the stump of his leg on the window sill, and with one impulse, the battalion halted, faced the window, and spontaneously came to "present arms" as the ringing rebel yell rattled the windows of the block.[27]

A sense of dread crept over Richmond as it waited in the nine straight days of rain that followed Lee's assumption of command. There was tension in the President's deep-set eyes and, for the first time, traces of desperation. Richmond was swarming with spies. Even the most secret details in Cabinet meetings would be gossip in the lobby of the Spotswood Hotel by nightfall. Word traveled so fast that General Johnston's troops had heard about his military strategy before he could get back to the encampment to write up the orders.

Varina and the children, with other wives and families, had been sent to the safety of Raleigh, North Carolina, and Davis prowled the White House like a nervous lion. Varina was not around to steady him and make him rest.

Davis and Lee delighted in the rains, because it made the roads behind McClellan as impassable as those in front, undermining "Little Mac's" confidence. In that mud, the President asserted, McDowell could not get here to save McClellan, no matter what Lincoln decided.

The courage and daring that Richmond needed to survive were embodied in Jeb Stuart. He was the scout who preceded the army, and he was called "Lee's eyes." Loving glory, he had been restless under the retreat-and-wait game all spring, having had no chance for personal distinction since he had cut up the Yankees at Manassas. Here was the kind of flamboyant hero who creates cavalry legends—

high boots up to his thighs, a yellow sash and gauntlets that dangled halfway down his arms, a theatrical red-lined gray cape, a big-brimmed soft hat with one side pinned up with a gold star, and a foot-long ostrich plume. Stuart's features were unattractive, yet his cinnamon beard and light blue eyes lent color to a cavalier horseman in gray. His West Point classmates recognized he was dashing from a distance though homely up close, and they nicknamed him "Beauty" Stuart.

At 2:00 A.M. one night in June 1862, he assembled 1,200 troopers for his expedition (not a "scouting party," he insisted) with orders carefully drafted by Lee, who knew his man. "You must bear constantly in mind" Lee wrote, "not to hazard unnecessarily your command . . . but be content to accomplish all the good you can, without feeling it necessary to obtain all that might be desired."[28]

Stuart rode out at the head of his column as if headed for Shenandoah, but only he knew the real destination. For three days he was not heard from, and the weather was turning "Union"—dry enough for McClellan to think about reinforcements and his turn to punch first. Even with the head of the Union cavalry (Jeb's father-in-law) chasing him with particular fury, he completely circled McClellan's army and jangled into headquarters after two days in the saddle with 170 prisoners, 300 horses and mules, and precisely the information Lee had sent him for. He reported that the roads were worse than in Richmond, so big guns could not be moved on them; what was more, the flanks were open to an attack by Jackson. The Southern and Northern newspapers hailed Stuart as if he had twisted McClellan's moustache. He had done it all with only one casualty!

The time had come, but the date would be dictated by Stonewall's rate of march. Lee sent Jackson a directive to start moving his men to Richmond, disguising the movement as a pursuit of the enemy. "I should like to have the advantage of your views and to be able to confer with you. Will meet you at some point on your approach to the Chickahominy."[29]

A few days later, a slumping, dusty horseman with one aide alongside came riding into army headquarters near Richmond. Stonewall Jackson had ridden fourteen hours in the saddle on relays of commandeered horses to have that talk with his commander. After several hours of discussion, Jackson mounted and rode back out again to rejoin the "Foot Cavalry," which was already on its way to meet him.

"The prayers of the Confederacy will have more effect if Benjamin was dismissed," the Richmond *Examiner* complained.[30] It seemed that John M. Daniel, editor of the *Examiner,* took special pleasure in linking Benjamin and Jewishness to Confederate failure, speculators, gamblers, and all manner of ills.

Daniel had a small head with large features. One biographer described him, with the bias of the times, as having "a decidedly Jewish face." His mouth was wide, unpleasing, and overhung by a thick, black moustache. His cheeks were thin, and his weak chin was covered by a dense, coarse, jet-black beard. Even his friends said that he had a cold, self-contained, and gloomy disposition and a body racked with the pain of a rising and receding tuberculosis. He carried a derringer pistol, had a history of dueling, and kept at his home a barber's chair in the parlor, elevated above the ordinary chairs in the room. To visitors, he seemed like an editorial pontiff, looking down from his throne. He lived alone with his two dogs, which he liked to goad into fighting. He cackled as they mauled each other, after which he would drive them off with a flick of his horsewhip. The author of a pro-slavery tract called "The Nigger Question," he was unyielding in his extremism, publishing a paper that was well known all over the Confederacy and the favorite of the army. Criticism of the Davis government always received coverage, especially the anti-Semitic comments of Congressman Foote. If the Jews of Richmond had feared that Benjamin's high offices would mean that all the Confederacy's troubles would be blamed on the Jews, Daniel was doing his best to make their fears come true.

If Benjamin wanted another identity, neither his Richmond critics nor his friends would allow him to have it. Regardless of Benjamin's beliefs, even fellow members of the Cabinet could not leave aside the question of his religious background. Postmaster General John Reagan wrote in his *Memoirs:*

> I will mention another incident in which I was relieved from a dilemma. I had invited members of the Cabinet to dine with me. Among the dishes on the table was one of fried ham and eggs. Knowing that Mr. Benjamin, Secretary of State, was a Jew, I was perplexed to know whether I should offer them to him. But to my relief, he told me that the night before a burglar had broken into his smokehouse and stolen all of his fine hams.[31]

In late June 1862, President Davis paced his office restlessly as the pressures mounted toward the battle of Richmond. Hearing the guns booming in the distant light, he could stand it no longer. He

ordered Benjamin and other Cabinet members to join him on the bluffs, which Benjamin relished, having never been in battle.

From Drewry's Bluffs in the east and the hills beyond, thousands of fires in Yankee camps could be seen flickering in the summer night.

Benjamin's horse bolted back from the roar of cannons, and he glimpsed flashes of lights at the start of the Seven Days battle. The roads were oddly crowded for such an early hour as people flocked out to the bluffs to get a better view. McClellan's troops were now only 8 miles from the city, and Lee made the daring decision to count on McClellan's caution, strip the defenses of Richmond of fighting men, and wage an all-out assault on the flanks of the Union army.

As Lee rode his horse, Traveller, out to his headquarters, the sun came out through the fine, misty rain, and a beautiful rainbow was formed across the city. The Southern generals considered it an omen. All waited for Stonewall to assault the rear and unhinge McClellan, causing him to push his troops back to cover. But Jackson, for the first time in his life, was three hours late.

Stonewall had driven his men relentlessly for four days with only ten hours of sleep. They had met resistance and were delayed in the steaming heat, and he had gone into bivouac to rest them before the battle, satisfied he was in position.

The others attacked without him, and since he arrived late in the afternoon, with only a few hours of daylight remaining, he waited for Lee to drive the enemy back into his guns rather than assault them himself.

The plains were splashed with gunfire and cavalry. Without Jackson, the crucial element of pressure and alarm was missing, and the balance turned against Lee's army.

Just at the moment of peril, Lee spotted among the shellbursts Davis and Benjamin, now joined by Secretary of War Randolph and a number of Congressmen, watching the battle below. The general was furious—a single shell might kill them all—and rode over to them quickly.

With a steely salute, Lee asked, "Mr. President, who is all this and what is it doing here?"

Davis blushed with embarrassment, like a small boy who had been caught at the keyhole. "It is not my army, General," he said.[32]

Lee replied with an icy tone in his voice, "It is certainly not *my* army, Mr. President, and this is no place for it."

Davis motioned with his wide-brimmed hat to his invited guests

to fall in behind him as he wheeled his horse about, saying, "Well, General, if I withdraw, perhaps they will follow." Benjamin tugged at his reins, ending his first and only brush with "the taste of battle."

Lee conferred personally with Stonewall the next day, and the junior general returned to his old self. The sound of rebel yells on the flank shook the confidence of the Union troops, which had withdrawn to a powerful position in the weeds to await an all-out charge. Bayonets flashing, the Confederates lost a thousand men in one charge against the embankment, but the sacrifice paid off as the Federals turned and scampered up the hill, stumbling across a second line of riflemen, which joined them in flight. But this was not Bull Run again. McClellan orchestrated a well-organized retreat with a cool head and the foresight of a month of planning against all eventualities. It was, as one of his generals said, "a big skedaddle."

But the important fact remained: Richmond had been rescued from the threat of destruction, and the momentum of the war had shifted. The cost was terrifying: Now the East had a battle to exceed bloody Shiloh in the West by more than half; 20,614 Confederate casualties and 15,849 Federals for a total of 36,463 (as against 23,741 at Shiloh). Those were not mere statistics. McClellan described an unforgettable scene of carnage as he looked across a field of five thousand dead and dying Confederates, "enough of them alive and moving to give the field a singular crawling effect."

On the Fourth of July, blackberry-picking time in Virginia, a strange truce came over the contending armies. As one private described it in his diaries later, "Our boys and the Yanks made a bargain not to fire at each other, and went out in the field . . . and gathered berries together and talked over the fight, traded tobacco and coffee and exchanged newspapers as peacefully and as kindly as if they had not been engaged for the last seven days in butchering one another."[33]

Richmond was turned into one vast hospital. Ambulances, litters, carts, and wagons rolled into the streets, stacked with bodies of the dead mixed with the wounded with missing limbs who could not walk. Those who could move at all or who had friends to help them hobbled back into the city—thousands of bloodied and bandaged men, some blinded in both eyes, so many that the back porches, the hallways, the parlors and drawing rooms of the Richmond mansions were crowded with the wounded and the half-dead. The doors

of the houses were opened to as many as could get in, and women stood in the streets with basins of water and baskets of food, looking for their loved ones and then helping any man who came by. Church pew cushions were sewn together to create mattresses for the badly wounded. Others less critically injured just slept on bare boards or on the floor with their knapsacks as pillows.

Chimborazo Hospital gave off odors like the "vapors of the charnel house." The amputation room was a Stygian nightmare. Arms and legs were piled outside the door, covered with flies, waiting to be carted away; inside was a scene of such gory horror that it was all the volunteers could do to stop themselves from vomiting. The building was 30 by 100 feet, and men were packed solidly on tables along the whole length of it. The morbid stench of gangrene and burned skin pervaded the air as the men groaned with pain and delirium, a constant low refrain of suffering interspersed with screams of agony and violation, as the surgeon hacked and sawed away at their limbs, then cauterized the wounds with a hot poker. Phoebe Yates Pember, the legendary Jewish matron of the hospital, stood guard over a barrel of whisky with a pistol strapped to her hip, protecting it for only those who needed it most. Without supplies, the hospital survived on improvisation: persimmon juice as a styptic, hemlock for opium, and wild cherry for digitalis.

At Hollywood, the gravediggers worked feverishly in the rain to bury the hundreds of coffins stacked in the mud awaiting the shovel and the packed, wet earth. The rain washed away all the dirt from some of the shallow graves, leaving the coffins partially exposed. The upper classes undertook a more dignified burial of their officer-rank dead as the women, with pale, sad faces, wept over an unending parade of funerals. Each had its sword, cap, and riderless horse with reversed, empty boots. Each had its dirge. For days the sad music and the muffled drums engulfed the city in the heavy sounds of death and mourning.

Richmond struggled through the aftermath of the battle as Lee's army began to push McClellan back across Virginia, back "to the country he came from." The news from further South, however, was not good. "Beast" Butler's men had pushed into Mississippi and sacked Brierfield, the family home of Jefferson Davis. Benjamin still had heard no news from New Orleans of his sisters Harriet and Penny and her daughter, Leah. The anxiety filled him with melancholy.

Benjamin asked the War Department to make inquiries through spies in New Orleans. Finally he received some news. According

to reports from the War Department, one night about 9 P.M. a Union lieutenant arrived and told Penny and Leah that the house was needed for a military hospital and they would have to be out in the morning. The lieutenant said he would send some soldiers over immediately to protect them—but they knew what that meant: "Beast" Butler did not get his other nickname, "Spoons," for nothing. He was going to make sure he had some men there to watch them pack.

They began packing immediately. In a while, the soldiers came. The women had held some whiskey in reserve and, plying the soldiers with some of Benjamin's best cognac and bourbon, they were able to humor them into helping to move all their furniture into an adjoining empty house. All through the night they worked, packing and moving. They even bribed a next-door neighbor into forgetting a debt they owed by giving him their cow. In the morning a squad of Butler's best showed up to relieve the easygoing guards of the night before. "Madam?" one of the soldiers said. "Are you the sister of the arch rebel, Benjamin?" Penny said yes, though timidly. "Then you are not to remove anything from this house. It is a military necessity."[34]

But nothing happened. The unit was relieved in the afternoon, and the women bluffed their way out by telling the new officer in charge that they had permission to move. Since half their things were already moved, he assumed that they were telling the truth. Penny and her daughter and sister were then smuggled into a two-room apartment in the French Quarter to wait to hear from Benjamin.

Secret agents inquired quietly and arranged for the women to go to La Grange, Georgia, where they would be safer, in a small town away from the fighting. Benjamin sent $900 by secret courier, thankful that his family had survived the battle of New Orleans with Benjamin ingenuity.

All of Richmond turned out for the Excelsior Minstrels to celebrate the victory. The show featured the banjo-picking of Old Joe Sweeney, who traveled all over the Confederacy to entertain the boys in the army camps, and "Brudder Bones" and the "jig dancer," complete with an acrobat and tightwire walker.

Crowds welcomed Varina home outside the Metropolitan Hall as the carriages arrived for the evening's performance. To all present, her return from North Carolina was a sign of victory, reassuring and hopeful, and set spirits rising in Richmond again. The carriage doors opened for the elite of the government and the military. The

President was relaxed as well, and as Benjamin and the Cabinet lined up behind the President to enter the hall triumphantly, the band struck up "Dixie." Written on the program was the theme of one of the acts:

The Celebrated Burlesque

RECRUITING UNBLEACHED CITIZENS OF VIRGINIA

FOR THE CONFEDERATE STATES ARMY

A trained bear chased a Yankee soldier up a tree, the dancing chorus did a Virginia reel, and a soprano sang "The Moments Were Sad When My Love and I Parted," followed by a duet of "The Soldier's Return."

The whites in blackface assumed their positions, with their outlandish costumes of spangled ties and tails and glittering orange bowlers. The end man and interlocutor began their routines:

INTERLOCUTOR: Whut's de first duty of de Suthrin' people?

END MAN: To keep out of de army. (*The hall burst into laughter.*)

INTERLOCUTOR: And whut's de second duty?

END MAN: To make all de money they can out of the government since wars come so seldom.[35]

The audience laughed, but hatred was growing for the speculators and the profiteers pouring into Richmond.

10

Lee Invades the North: *Enticing France and Britain*

After the Battle of Richmond, Robert E. Lee's army chased McClellan right out of his command, as Lincoln replaced "Little Mac" with a crafty but not very imaginative pair from the Western successes: Major General John Pope and General Henry "Old Brains" Halleck. Pope, who was to head the new Army of Virginia, immediately issued a ringing statement entitled "Headquarters in the Saddle." It announced: "I come to you from the West where we have always seen the backs of our enemies."[1] That was the trouble with the Yankees, one of Jeb Stuart's old cavalry veterans responded, "they got their headquarters where their hindquarters ought to be."

Lee's infinite patience and tact, and still more his serenity of purpose and spirituality, won another crucial battle in Virginia, the battle for the trust and confidence of Stonewall Jackson. At last, Jackson was learning how to fight in coordination with others, no longer as the lone commander, the elusive ghost of the Shenandoah, where he had to shimmy, sting, and strut off in the night to hide and fight again. He was learning how to show his moves intentionally and draw a charge, and thereby weaken another flank for Lee's fresh assault. He was learning how to probe and sally, to count on help, to believe in a strategy that depended on others. Lee, for his part, was learning how to use his general creatively: to ask the impossible, because Jackson's men loved the challenge; to use the legend of

his ubiquity and the rebel yells to frighten the enemy into overcompensating for him and covering every possible position; to build on Stonewall's reputation for the unexpected, to let him lead left while another command slashed right. Lee was molding a team of commanders who believed enough in each other to move instinctively even before he gave the order to do so.

The Second Battle of Manassas in late August drove the Union forces back into Washington, and Lee paused to consider his options: whether to sit tight, attack Washington, or move north into Maryland.

Lee had wired back his misgivings to the capital: "The army is not properly equipped for an invasion of an enemy's territory. It lacks much of the material of war, is feeble in transportation, the animals being much reduced, and the men are poorly provided with clothes, and in thousands of instances, are destitute of shoes . . . what occasions me the most concern is the fear of getting out of ammunition."[2]

Benjamin and Davis argued the pros and cons of the next step. Lee could not sit still for lack of supplies, and he could not attack Washington, where the enlistments were arriving to the tune of Stephen Foster's song, "We are coming Father Abraham, three hundred thousand more." Maryland was the choice—it was a divided state where thousands were already serving in Lee's army and where thousands more could be expected to join. If Lee could win a victory there, Benjamin argued, then England and France would have to take the South seriously and give it the recognition it deserved.

On September 7, 1862, Lee crossed the Potomac, and the army soon arrived at the little village of Sharpsburg and the Battle of Antietam Creek. For the first time in the war, the Confederates had invaded the North.

Benjamin was obsessed with enticing France and Britain into the war. The maneuverings over the previous three years were taking on a pattern of their own so that he could almost predict the rhythm of events. When the Confederacy did well on the battlefield, interest in financial inducements bubbled in Europe; but if the war was going badly, the French and British became an audience for the drama, awaiting the outcome to decide what steps would be to their advantage.

For example, news of the Southern victory at Richmond in 1862 reached Napoleon while he was soaking himself in the waters at Vichy, where Slidell went as soon as he received Benjamin's dispatch

to offer 100,000 bales of cotton. The dispatch did not arrive until July 6, more than three months after it was written, but with McClellan in retreat and a firm offer in hand, it could not have been more timely. Napoleon agreed to spend an hour or so talking, a conversation partly in French for Slidell's pleasure and partly in English to show off the Emperor's pride in his own mastery of the language.

Slidell and Benjamin knew that bales of cotton were not as appealing to France as to Britain, for even in normal times England bought 5 million bales a year from the South, as against France's 500,000. Indeed, the scarcity of cotton even brought some benefits to the competing linen, silk, and woolen industries on which the French had to place greater reliance. The problem with winning Southern sympathy in France was slavery: The upper classes were blasé, but the French masses were vehemently against it, and some of Napoleon's advisers were afraid that overt entry into the war without Britain could unseat him from his shaky throne.

Slidell, taking advantage of his previous ambassadorship to Mexico in 1845, shifted his conversation with Napoleon to ways in which the South could aid France in Mexico. Benito Juarez had overthrown a conservative Mexican regime in a people's revolution, had undertaken stern measures against the Catholic Church, and had repudiated the international debts of his predecessors. The canceled debts were just the excuse Napoleon needed to intervene. Encouraged by Duke de Morny, who had been secretly promised a share of whatever debt was restored by the bankers involved if France would act, Napoleon persuaded Great Britain and Spain to join him in sending troops to Mexico as a show of force to recover their debts. Slidell did not know that when the other countries were compelled to withdraw under United States pressure, Napoleon would leave his troops there to execute an even more grandiose plan—to march to Mexico City, unseat Juarez, and install Maximilian as emperor on a Hapsburg throne in Mexico. All that was in Napoleon's mind to do when Slidell stated flatly (though Benjamin's memorandum did not say it) that since Lincoln's government was a Juarez ally, the Confederacy "could have no objection to make common cause with France against a common enemy."[3]

Slidell suggested a range of steps short of French entry into the Civil War—mediation, recognition, a six months' armistice—but Seward in Washington had threatened war with France in Europe if there were any alliance with the Confederacy from Mexico, and Slidell reported to Benjamin the Emperor's response in a precise transcription:

"Your Majesty," Slidell pleaded, "has now an opportunity of securing a faithful ally, bound to you not only by ties of gratitude, but by those more reliable—common interest and congenial habit."

"Yes," the Emperor replied, "you have many families of French descent in Louisiana who yet preserve their habits and language." The Emperor continued, "But the policy of nations is controlled by their interests and not by their sentiments. I committed a great error and I now deeply regret it. France should never have respected the blockade. And she should have recognized the Confederacy. . . . But what can now be done? To open the ports forcibly would be an act of war."[4] He held steady to the view that France could not act without Britain.

Slidell realized that Napoleon needed time to consider these new questions and left the Emperor a crucial piece of information to appeal to an experienced conspirator. "This proposition," Slidell concluded to Napoleon, "is made exclusively to France. My colleague in London knows nothing about it."[5]

The English attitude toward the Confederacy had not changed since the Confederacy was formed, but Robert E. Lee gave Benjamin a chance to test the water again. The London *Times* had summed up the attitude of the British government about the South in an editorial after the *Trent* affair: "But we may as well observe," the *Times* said, "[that] the Messrs. Mason and Slidell are about the most worthless booty it would be possible to extract from the jaws of the American lion. They have long been known as the blind haters and revilers of this country. . . . So we sincerely hope that our countrymen will not give these two fellows anything in the shape of an ovation. . . . The only reason for their presence in London is to draw us into their own quarrel. The British public has no prejudice in favor of slavery, which these gentlemen represent. . . . They must not suppose, because we have gone to the verge of a great war to rescue them, that they are precious in our eyes."[6]

James Murray Mason oozed Virginia aristocracy from every pore and looked the part of the Southern diplomat—tall, big-framed, dignified, with graying temples and a large, impressive head. "A fine old English gentleman," correspondent Russell of the London *Times* wrote, "but for the tobacco."[7] James Mason chewed tobacco and spat its juices, which did not charm the English as a quaint American frontier custom. Except for the fact that he was the quintessence of Southern manhood, Mason in every other respect was the worst possible representative for Davis to have sent to England. He was

one of slavery's most ardent defenders, a fierce advocate of its extension into new territories, author of the hated Fugitive Slave Law, and a fire-eating proponent of secession in 1850. He even had written a public letter praising South Carolina's Preston "Bully" Brooks for bludgeoning Senator Charles Sumner with his cane on the floor of the U.S. Senate. To the North, Mason symbolized the South's inhumanity and, to make matters worse, a traitor to his heritage of democratic principles, since his grandfather was George Mason, who refused to sign the U.S. Constitution unless it included the Bill of Rights.

It is understandable that the British virtually ignored Mason. Other than being polite, officials would have almost nothing to do with him, refusing even to grant him appointments. One cannot treat a Virginia aristocrat like a bootblack for long, however, and eventually Benjamin received a dispatch from Mason saying that he intended to press his next proposal for recognition "as a demand of right; and if refused—as I have little doubt it will be—to follow the refusal by a note that I did not consider it compatible with the dignity of my government, and perhaps with my own self-respect, to remain longer in England."[8]

While Southern strategy abroad was stymied, at home all social customs were being uprooted; both races were caught in the uncertainties of the turmoil. The war was working a strange transition on the relationships between slaves and masters. Having been told they were free if the North won the war, what should be the attitude of slaves who had worked all their lives for the same household? How were they to live, facing the fears of an unknown called "freedom," cast out alone into the cruelties of a world more terrifying than the certainties of the plantation life they were leading? Whites were asking themselves what was going on behind the eyes of the family servants.

Slavery had been an immutable fact of Southern life, a condition unto eternity of subjugation. But now, with the white man gone from the plantations and deprivation gnawing away at the order of things, whites could sense rumblings of dissatisfaction among the slaves as the walls holding back the tides of change began to crumble.

Nowhere was the disquiet deeper than in Richmond. Thousands of male slaves gave the city its sinew, and the Yankee spies and sympathizers played on the white fears. They spread rumors of sabotage and whispered secret plans of mass uprisings that never came. Enticed by bribery or promises of freedom, trusted household servants now stole jewelry for the speculators.

But the prospects of invasion also stirred the slaves with misgivings. On the plantations, as the enemy approached, slaves fled to the hills in terror of being kidnapped for Lincoln's black legions, the two hundred Negro regiments the U.S. Congress had authorized.

There was no predictability any longer; that was the hell of it. When Dahlgren's Raiders arrived at the Seddon plantation just outside of Richmond, it was a black maidservant who buried the family silver; on the other hand, Colonel Chesnut received the news from Camden, South Carolina, that his slaves had stolen all of his corn crop. Loyal house slaves went door to door to perform the humiliating task of selling the dresses of their mistresses and candelabras of the family on consignment. Some Negroes were so obvious a part of the Yankee spy network that they dressed like dandies and walked the streets sporting canes and fat cigars.

Lee's message from the field was unusual in that it commented briskly on political matters but in a most natural way, as if Lee had not been consumed by three months of battle but had been sitting right in Richmond all along debating government policy. The message urged the President, in view of the military situation, to make some kind of public peace proposal to the North, based on permanent separation and recognition of the Davis government.

"Such a proposition, coming from us at this time," Lee wrote, "could in no way be regarded as suing for peace, but, being made when it is in our power to inflict injury upon our adversary, would show conclusively to the world that our sole object is the establishment of our independence and the attainment of an honorable peace. The rejection of this offer would prove to the country that the responsibility of the continuance of the war does not rest upon us, but that the party in power in the United States elect to prosecute it for reasons of their own." Lee foresaw the move as having a positive impact on the fall elections in the North, strengthening the Northern peace parties by enabling the voters to decide "whether they will support those who favor a prolongation of the war, or those who wish to bring it to a termination, which can be productive of good to both parties without affecting the honor of either."[9]

Benjamin and Davis were not sure. They thought that Lee was heading into Maryland for one of the turning-point battles of the war. If they asked for peace now, that battle was still going to take place. They thought that nothing but the outcome of the battle would influence Lincoln or his Cabinet.

Britain and France would surely await the results of the battle

before acting. If Lee won it as decisively as he had been winning recently, then the Confederate leadership knew the diplomatic situation could break wide open. If the South lost or the battle was a draw, Europe might still provide arms, loans, and informal assistance, although the European leaders would probably hold back recognition.

In addition, the Congressional elections in the North were six weeks off. Once again, the battle would be the decisive factor, not what the government in Richmond did or said.

A crucial question was the impact that a peace statement might have on the battle itself.

That worried President Davis and the Secretary of State. The Confederates had been fighting to save their homes and their capital. Now a whole new dynamic would be entering the equation: engagement on terrain the South did not know well against an enemy who would be fighting for *his* survival. The South would be the invader. And the peace proposal now might change the chemistry. It would sound weak and apologetic at a time when the troops should be getting their battle blood up. It could have a detrimental effect not only on the morale of Lee's men but also on the troops in the West, where things were not going well either. Besides, suing for peace would give President Davis political troubles with the Congress. Tough, courageous talk was the kind of rhetoric needed for the press right now, not a lively debate over whether or not a peace treaty was timely.

There were some disquietingly bad signs out in Maryland. More than one-fourth of the soldiers were without shoes; "Confederate disease," as dysentery was called, was rampant from the green corn and unripe berries the soldiers had been eating; and the desertion rate was way up—the quartermaster had Lee listed with 66,000 men, but the actual count was about 50,000. That meant there were more than 15,000 soldiers absent without leave, most of them deserters.

The dispatch revealed more about Lee's state of mind than about the realistic strategic options of the South. His morale was down; he was concerned about stretching the supply lines too far. Plainly, he would like to avoid this next step if he could. Benjamin and Davis agreed that Davis should do all he could to respond to Lee's military concerns while delaying a peace feeler. Davis tried to get the news out that volunteers were pouring into Richmond from the other states to fight in Maryland and beyond. That would shake Lincoln and the British more than peace talk.

Varina was struck by Benjamin's good humor and optimism through discussions of the gravest consequence. She wrote:

> His demeanor puzzled us so much that at last I asked him what comfort came to him. Was he hopeful of a fortunate termination? Then from his answer I discovered he was a fatalist. He said he believed there was a fate in the destiny of nations, and it was wrong and useless to distress one's self and thus weaken one's energy to bear what was fore-ordained to happen.[10]

With Lee threatening in Maryland by moving toward Baltimore and Washington, McClellan, who had been put in charge solely of the Washington fortifications, moved out on his own to join others in the battle to save his capital. Again faced with the super-cautious McClellan, Lee audaciously divided his army into four parts. His General Order 191 described the intricate convergence he wanted to execute as the armies approached Antietam. But three Union enlisted men came across an abandoned Confederate encampment and, while foraging around for some food or booty, found three cigars wrapped in a very important-looking document. They gave the paper to their company commander, who showed it to the colonel, who took it to his general, who rushed it to McClellan. There it all was before his eyes: the General Order with names, places, plans, Lee's army divided in front of him so that the full force of his army could split them and knock them down like tenpins, a segment at a time.

"I have all the plans of the rebels," he wired Lincoln, "and will catch them in their own trap if my men are equal to the emergency."[11]

McClellan started to move, elated and on the offensive, more confident than he had been since he had moved toward Richmond in May. Even Stonewall was startled by his change of spirits.

"I thought I knew McClellan," Jackson wondered, "but this movement of his puzzles me."[12]

A Maryland sympathizer who was in McClellan's headquarters galloped with the news to Jeb Stuart, and Lee discovered the reason for McClellan's enthusiasm. With his quadrant of 19,000 men facing 90,000, the only answer was retreat—hurried and complete, try to save as many men as possible and not worry about the supply wagons; break out of the trap; join the quadrants together; pull back.

McClellan waited overnight, and then another day, careful, always careful, so that Lee was able to rush his men through Turner's

Gap, to consolidate with one other command, and to repair some of the damage.

Because of the divided Confederate army, the battle of Antietam was really three separate battles. The contending armies slugged it out in bloody fighting on September 17, 1862, from dawn till dusk, in every direction. In the end, each side lost about one-fourth of its men in the bloodiest single day of the war—11,000 Confederates and 12,000 Union. Lee could not afford such losses at this point, and he retired from Maryland with his bloodied, exhausted troops, back to the safety of the Shenandoah, Stonewall Jackson's old briar patch. Not a rout by any means, more of a desperate standoff, but it gave Lincoln the confidence he needed. Five days later, on September 22, 1862, Abraham Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation.

Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation unnerved white Richmond and stirred its deepest fears. For one thing, there were now thousands of blacks in the city digging trenches and building fortifications, working at the Tredegar Iron Works and for the railroads. Whites in the city talked to each other quietly in a state of deep concern. It was the middle sentence of the Proclamation that frightened them: "The Executive Government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof . . . will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom."[13] As the South saw it, Lincoln had issued a call for black insurrection; his proclamation was an invitation to violence. The Richmond *Examiner* spoke for the city when it charged that it was "an act of malice towards the master, rather than one of mercy to the slave."[14]

President Davis declared the proclamation illegal. In his January 12, 1863, message to Congress he said: "We may well leave it to the instincts of common humanity to pass judgment on a measure by which millions of human beings of an inferior race, peaceful and contented laborers in the sphere . . . are encouraged to a general assassination of their masters by the insidious recommendation."[15]

Some Abolitionists claimed it was a clever but meaningless document that freed only those slaves now firmly under Confederate control, in states where Lincoln had no power to do so. "A poor document but a mighty act," the Governor of Massachusetts said to a friend.[16]

It did not matter in its details. Lincoln would be known to history as "the man who freed the slaves," and the Proclamation had the

impact he wanted in the two places it was aimed—in the North and in Europe. In one stroke, Lincoln had transformed this war of brothers into a bold crusade to end slavery.

In the fall of 1862, Secretary of State Benjamin summoned Belle Boyd to Richmond for a public ceremony. She was already an internationally renowned Confederate spy at the age of nineteen, and Benjamin conceived the idea of sending her to France and England on a public relations mission.

She was fresh out of a Yankee prison, where she had tacked up a picture of Jefferson Davis in her cell, had sung Confederate songs to the prisoners, and had frustrated the prison guards, who would find her in her cell reading *Harper's Weekly* and eating peaches with one leg propped up on her bunk. To the prison superintendent who had offered to exchange her freedom for an oath of allegiance to the North, she declared, "If I ever sign one line to show allegiance, I hope my arms fall paralyzed to my side." "Bravo, bravo," the other prisoners shouted from their cells, and the whole incident ended up the next day in the papers, North and South. The Union army was so exasperated that it offered to exchange her to get rid of her, and she arrived as the toast of Richmond.

Belle's figure was so splendid that Northern officers would become infatuated and spill out their deepest secrets to her. Never mind that she had a homely face—what was below her neck made up for that. She was tall and athletic, with "wild, raging blue eyes." The new Confederate goodwill ambassador wore a closely cut gray riding costume of an "honorary captain."

The newspapers said she had "an utter abandonment of manner" and a "dash about her," and they were right. The "Cleopatra of Secession," as the British press called her, was a deliciously curvaceous creature with too long a face and a prominent chin, in truth, part Cleopatra, part clown. She was indeed a publicity prize who would charm the foreign press and generate columns of praise in London and Paris, to give the sympathizers in the foreign capitals a personality to celebrate and rally round. But she was also an effective Confederate agent. Belle, born in the Shenandoah Valley, had moved so effortlessly behind the enemy lines that she had become a crucial spy for Stonewall Jackson's 1862 Valley campaign.[17]

The most celebrated incident of Belle's career, recounted in newspapers all over the world, exemplified her extraordinary panache. In a long, low-cut dress, with a revolver in her sash and Yankee

shells bursting all around, she ran through an open field to bring her hero Stonewall word that Fort Royal was vulnerable, then waved the Confederates to victory with her bonnet. The French papers, which called her "La Belle Rebelle," carried a drawing of her brandishing a saber and leading a charge.

She carried a letter from Stonewall Jackson with her at all times, composed at Fort Royal: "I thank you for myself and for the Army, for the immense service you rendered your country today. Hastily, I am your friend, T. J. Jackson, CSA."

Now Belle Boyd had come to see the Secretary of State in his office. On behalf of President Jefferson Davis and the entire Confederacy, Benjamin presented her with $2,500 in gold. He instructed her to leave soon for Canada, England, and France and to carry the message of the Confederate cause proudly as his public relations envoy. Benjamin, sensing a rare opportunity, would instruct his diplomats to use her wisely.

"I have been quite surprised," Slidell wrote Mason and Benjamin, "at an uninvited suggestion on the part of a respectable banking house of a disposition to open a credit to our government of a considerable amount—the basis to be cotton delivered to the parties making the advance at certain parts of the interior."[18]

The offer regarding Southern cotton came from Erlanger & Cie., the Jewish bankers who headed the most distinguished banking house in France. As intimate advisers of Napoleon, the Erlangers were trusted intermediaries. Moreover John Slidell's daughter had recently become engaged to marry the Baron Erlanger. The term "uninvited suggestion" must have amused Benjamin, who remembered Slidell's expression of surprise at the "uninvited" victories of the Democratic Party in Louisiana.

The deal Erlanger was offering had a decidedly "Slidellian" flavor to it. The details revealed that it was not really a loan at all but a complex scheme to speculate in cotton for European purchasers. The firm would obtain 8 percent bonds at 70 points to be sold at 100; the bonds would be backed by a promise to exchange each one at face value *after* the war for cotton at 12 cents a pound, which was exactly half of what cotton was selling for already. The total involved was about $25 million.[19]

The Erlanger house saw in events an opportunity to make a great deal of money for itself by handling the bonds while at the same time doing a profitable favor for everyone involved. The market would be the thousands of rich Southern sympathizers among the

upper classes in England and France, along with speculators in Europe who were watching the Confederate successes on the battlefield and Napoleon's diplomatic maneuvering in England and Russia. The Confederacy would reap desperately needed funds from the deal, but also a form of recognition in the European financial community that would carry political weight in the North and the South.

Benjamin balked. He felt Slidell wanted the Confederacy to give cotton away in exchange for an enormous debt in Europe. He feared the proposal was such a giveaway that banking circles would think the Confederacy had no confidence or money sense. Erlanger wanted to come to Richmond to discuss it, and Benjamin agreed.

Slidell was right that the South would be doing Napoleon and the French a favor; in fact, Benjamin would not have been surprised if half the money ended up in the Duke de Morny's pocket. But Erlanger was close to Napoleon, and it might be worth it to be linked to France economically. Benjamin would have to improve the deal to make it palatable to the South.

The fact that Emile Erlanger himself was coming meant that two Jews would be sitting down to hammer out a financial deal for the Confederacy. The Cabinet looked to Benjamin alone, not the Secretary of the Treasury or the President, to handle the negotiation, probably because of Benjamin's presumed connections with the Rothschilds and the Erlangers. After all, famous Jews were supposed to know each other, to speak a special language to one another and be involved in international intrigue. Even Erlanger and Benjamin could not escape the shadow of Gentile suspicion. *Harpers Weekly,* the Cincinnati *Gazette,* and other papers criticized Jews because of Erlanger's assistance to the Confederacy, and Isaac Wise was so concerned that he wrote in his paper "Baron Erlanger is not one of those common Jews and usurers . . . he was baptized many years ago!"[20]

The Southern newspapers trumpeted a quotation from England's Chancellor of the Exchequer, William Gladstone: "There is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the South have made an army," Gladstone said at a banquet in Newcastle. "They are making, it appears, a navy, and they have made what is more than either—they have made a nation." When the cheering and the cries of "Hear, Hear!" subsided, Gladstone added, "We may anticipate with certainty the success of the Southern states so far as regards their separation from the North."[21]

Davis smiled for the first time in months, because both he and Benjamin knew what those words might mean. The third-ranking

British official had spoken; England must be wavering, and recognition and intervention could not be far away.

A few weeks later Napoleon summoned Slidell for an audience, in which he announced that he felt the time was ripe for a joint mediation by France, England, and Russia to end the war. "My own preference is for a proposition of an armistice in six months," Slidell reported that Napoleon said. "This would put a stop to the effusion of blood, and hostilities would probably never be resumed. We can urge it on the high grounds of humanity and the interest of the civilized world. If it be refused by the North, it will afford good reason for recognition, and perhaps for more active intervention."[22] A week later, with Benjamin's cotton working its quiet magic, Napoleon notified his ministers in Europe to "exert their influence at Washington as well as with the Confederates to obtain an armistice."

But Lincoln's Secretary of State, William Seward ("Old Billy Bowlegs," his enemies called him), was watching events carefully and was not about to let Benjamin score that kind of triumph. His bushy eyebrows wiggling and an ever-present cigar bouncing as he talked, Seward dispatched Ambassador Charles Adams, breathing fire and hinting of war, to see Foreign Minister Russell in London. Russell assured Adams that England intended to remain neutral. Benjamin knew what that meant: The British government wanted to wait longer, to see if the South had staying power, before jeopardizing its supply of Northern wheat. It was time to launch a propaganda campaign with the British public.

Slidell may have seen through the simple anti-Americanism of Britain's policy from the beginning, in which Britain favored neither side, only an extended conflict. "I am satisfied," Slidell wrote Benjamin in August, "that [England] desires an indefinite prolongation of the war, until the North shall be entirely exhausted and broken down. Nothing can exceed the selfishness of British statesmen except wretched hypocrisy."[23]

Benjamin was deeply frustrated by the prize dangling in front of him. His letters indicated that he thought he was close, enticingly close, to winning the war for the South, if only France would intervene; but the British were holding firm, which was causing the French to hesitate. Still, the news from Paris was not bad. Slidell was making progress with Erlanger, and for the moment the negotiations in Europe were leaning the South's way.

Emile Erlanger was dressed so elegantly when he arrived in Richmond that by comparison Benjamin must have looked as drab as a

poor relative. Maybe it would help negotiations if Erlanger were to see that the South needed the money more than he did. For the entire day, they would speak in French. The baron was a tall, quiet man, with long, slender fingers and a sensitive face. This was not the bloated figure of the overfed banker, but a cosmopolitan who loved the arts, collected sculpture, and moved with ease in rarified social and professional circles all over the world. They had many hours to speak of the Champs Elysées and of the Emperor and Empress; of the Tuilleries and of Notre Dame and of the recent wedding of Erlanger to the Slidell's daughter; of Natalie and Ninette.

They moved from the sitting area over to Benjamin's black walnut table covered with green cloth, where Erlanger spread his papers and laid out the plan carefully. Their discussions lasted into the evening. Benjamin had done his homework and had mastered the numbers on both sides of the table. He knew the impact on the bargain of every possible change in percentage point, size of loan, and length of time for payment. He had studied the firm's brokerage activity and evaluated its risk. He made it clear that the Confederacy was interested, but not at Erlanger's proposed terms. After hours of wrangling, the amount of the credit involved was lowered to $15 million, the interest rate to 7 percent, and the starting price of the bond to Erlanger raised to 77 points.

It was now a better bargain for the Confederacy, but still quite lucrative for both Erlanger and the French. In the end, even with a questionable agreement, Benjamin felt that the loan was worth the price if it encouraged Napoleon to be more interested in the outcome of the war. Benjamin's chips were more political than financial.

A week later, in Congress, when Davis announced the results of the negotiations, including the improvement in terms, Congressman Henry Foote sarcastically described Benjamin's meeting: "On the occasion of the recent visit of Mr. Erlanger," Foote said, "Minister Plenipotentiary, Envoy Extraordinaire from His Highness, the Emperor of France, to his Highness the would-be Emperor of the Confederate States, Judas Iscariot Benjamin had spoke for two hours in French."[24]

News of an agreement with France lifted spirits momentarily, and the gossip in Richmond about Benjamin over the next year reflected that. "Everything Mr. Benjamin said we listened to," Mary Chesnut wrote in her diary, "bore it in mind, gave heed to it diligently. He is a Delphic oracle. He is one of the innermost shrine, supposed to enjoy Mr. Davis' unreserved confidence."[25]

11

Anti-Semitism and the Jews of Richmond

The Richmond Jewish community, comprising 3 percent of the population, had historic ties to Virginia, and the attitudes of the Jewish "first families" somewhat mirrored the condescension of other Virginians. The early wave of immigrants had risen to high station. They fought alongside the patriots in the American Revolution and successfully allied themselves with the Founding Fathers such as Jefferson and Madison to enact in 1786 the statutes of religious freedom assuring the rights of Jews to vote and hold office. Isaiah Isaacs was elected to the Richmond Common Hall two years after the statutes were passed; Jacob Cohen, who once hired Daniel Boone to survey his land, was also elected to the Common Hall, to replace a nephew of George Washington. Isaacs and Cohen cofounded Beth Shalome, the Sephardic congregation in Richmond.[1]

Richmond's most distinguished Jewish leader in 1860 was Gustavus Myers, an outstanding attorney and a civic and religious leader from one of Richmond's oldest and wealthiest families. Myers was Judah Benjamin's closest friend in Richmond: As young lawyers they had worked together on cases of national and international importance. Tall and lean, Myers had clear, dark blue eyes, light, curly hair and a prominent, straight nose. His face reflected an artistic temperament—an expression of extraordinary kindness and sensitivity reminiscent of Rembrandt's paintings of the Jews of Amsterdam.

His eyes had a melancholy look, as if he had inherited the wisdom of the ancient prophets, with a commitment to a far distant past and the prescience of an uncertain future.

However, Myers also had a pragmatic side to his personality. He had been a member of the Richmond City Council for thirty years and its president from 1843 to 1855, so he understood the special pressures on Jews in public life. Unlike Benjamin, however, he was a pillar in the Jewish community. He was head of Beth Shalome and contributed at the same time to the more recently organized German congregation at Beth Ahabah. He must have fascinated Benjamin, because he was so at ease with his Jewishness. Benjamin could relax with him as with perhaps no other person in Richmond, sharing interests in nonreligious matters such as the law and politics.

Myers and Benjamin were, then, contrasting in their Jewishness, yet similar in background. Descendants of early waves of Jewish immigration, both were successful lawyers, holders of political office, and cultivated men. Both had married into the upper reaches of the non-Jewish world, Myers to Anne Giles, daughter of the Governor of Virginia and a member of the Episcopal congregation in Richmond. Both men had a strong sense of their own personal destiny. As it was the custom among some early Dutch Jews of Richmond to name their sons after an admirable figure in history, Gustavus Adolphus Myers carried the name of the King of Sweden and the symbol of Swedish independence. Such a heritage led him early to public life.

Benjamin's roots were not in public service, but he grew into politics naturally through the law. He and Myers shared connections with the Jewish banking house of August Belmont in New York and the international contacts implicit in such friendships. Myers, too, had traveled widely. He once presided at a meeting to protest the treatment of the Jews of Damascus, since he felt himself at one with the suffering of Jews everywhere.

"Saw a lovely Jew," Mary Chesnut wrote in her diary. "Elsewhere Jews may be tolerated. Here they are *haute volée*. Everybody everywhere has their own Jew exceptions."[2]

J. B. Jones was a Northern journalist with Southern sympathies who settled in Richmond at the age of fifty-one and wrote a diary of the war. A job in the War Department gave him an inside view of the action, and his two-volume *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capitol* offers invaluable observations of the day-by-day events. Jones disliked Jews. In his original (unedited) diaries he mentions the word "Jew" in a derogatory way forty times,

with special hatred for Benjamin and other Jews of prominence. His anti-Semitism gives insights into the thinking of the times.

The atmosphere in Richmond against all Jews, even the "exceptions," grew worse as the impact of the war unsettled the economy. Jones wrote that A. C. Myers, the "Jew Quartermaster General," met the plea of soldiers for blankets with the answer, "Let them suffer." He called the distinguished Gustavus Myers "the little old lawyer for Jew clients." "Illicit trade," he wrote, "has depleted the country of gold and placed us at the feet of Jew extortioners." He reported laughter in the streets of Richmond "when a Jew is asked what will be the price of shoes, etc., tomorrow." Finally, he concluded, "These Jews . . . have injured the cause more than the armies of Lincoln."[3]

Southern Punch magazine also vented its rage against the Jews to its Richmond readers: "Who are our capitalists at the present time? . . . The dirty greasy Jew peddlar [sic], who might be seen, with a pack on his back, a year or two since, bowing and cringing even to Negro servants, now struts by with the air of a millionaire."[4] The German Jews were subjected to special scorn: They were considered foreigners, charged with avoiding conscription, and suspected of antislavery sentiments. The Richmond *Examiner* hammered home this theme, to the consternation of the Jews of Richmond:

> While many of our people have been dragged from their homes and frequently from sick and needy families by the inexorable demands of conscription, thousands of Jews . . . have gone scot-free simply for the virtue of denying their allegiance to the country in which some of them were born and which many of them by the plainest acts have pretended to adopt.

The editorial grew in vituperation as it enlarged its attack:

> They have flocked here as vultures and birds of passage. One has but to walk through the streets and stores of Richmond to get an impression of the vast number of unkempt Israelites in our marts. . . . Every auction room is packed with greasy Jews. . . . Let one observe the number of wheezing Jewish matrons . . . elbowing out of their way soldiers' families and the most respectable people in the community.[5]

The German Jewish community reacted to the harangues with an outburst of patriotism, sending its sons to war and raising funds for supplies and food when they lacked such essentials themselves.

Rabbi Maximilian Michelbacher at Beth Ahabah prayed that "a way may be opened whereby we, the people of the South, may pass with dry feet in safety to the position of peace and plenty, attended with the protection which Thou gavest to thy chosen people of old."[6]

Phoebe Yates Pember of South Carolina, a fiery Jewish woman who moved to Richmond to be with her wounded husband and stayed on to preside over a section of Chimborazo Hospital, wrote defiantly in *A Southern Woman's Story:* "At last I lifted my voice and congratulated myself at being born of a nation and religion that did not enjoin forgiveness of its enemies, that enjoyed the privilege of praying for an eye for an eye."[7] Her Old Testament militance reassured her non-Jewish friends of her patriotism.

Congressman Foote delivered another attack on "foreign Jews, spirited here by extraordinary and mysterious means." Foote alluded to Benjamin as the culprit, the high official granting passage to Jews from outside the South, almost inviting them. He claimed that "it was by official permission that this swarm of Jews from all parts of the world had come to this country invited to trade with us, and permitted in many cases to conduct illicit traffic with the enemy without much official examination into this part of their transaction."[8] With the phrase "official permission," Foote thus blamed the economic troubles of the Confederacy on the Jews and then tied their presence to Judah Benjamin for allowing them to travel freely. "If the present state of things were to continue," Foote said a friend had told him, "the end of the war would probably find nearly all of our property in the hands of Jewish Shylocks."[9]

Foote ranted on the floor of the Confederate Congress that "foreign Jews were scattered all over the country, under official protection, engaged in trade to the exclusion of our own citizens, undermining our currency." Senators Chilton of Alabama and Hilton of Florida agreed. Hilton said Jews "had swarmed here as the locusts of Egypt. They eat up the substance of the country, they exhausted its supplies, they monopolize its gains . . . they flocked as vultures to every point of gain. . . . They should be dragged into the army."[10]

The attacks persisted all over the Confederacy, with Judah Benjamin as the special target of the Richmond *Examiner*'s fulmination and the Jewish "extortionists" as the enemies in the local newspapers. In Richmond, the *Examiner* quoted Foote as saying he would never "consent to the establishment of a Supreme Court of the Confederate States so long as Judah P. Benjamin shall continue to pollute the

ears of majesty Davis with his insidious counsels."[11] In Alabama a candidate for office referred to "that infamous Jew . . . Judas P. Benjamin."[12]

Even an effort at praise seemed to have a certain bite to it. A contemporary observer said Benjamin was a "Hebrew of Hebrews, for the map of the Holy City was traced all over his small, refined face . . . [He] was of the highest type of his race."[13]

For years Benjamin had faced the anti-Semitic slanders of Jefferson Davis's political enemies, who found it easier to blame the Jews for their troubles than to face the somber realities of the war. It did not matter that some of the first families in Richmond were Jews, for their fancy carriages only seemed to confirm the darkest suspicions of profiteering from the war. Speculators were called Jews, rising prices and money troubles were blamed on Jews, a suffering army had the Jews to thank. *Southern Punch* referred to Richmond as "Jew-rue-sell-'em" and Jews as "Richmond Yankees."[14] The convenience of having a Jew at the President's right hand made the juicy parlor gossip an easy pastime. Perhaps Benjamin's own ambivalence about his Jewishness encouraged those who hated him; they knew their remarks were a way to prod him and raise his temperature. The political writers in the North as well as the European writers who covered the war invariably chose to describe his "decidedly Jewish features" after an interview.

Finally, Richmond's Rabbi Michelbacher delivered a sermon in defense of the Jews, which was printed in newspapers in both the South and the North. According to Bertram Korn in *American Jewry and the Civil War,* the nation was experiencing the greatest outpouring of "Judaeophobia" in its history, and Rabbi Michelbacher's unusual remarks touched a responsive chord.

Rabbi Michelbacher was thin, wore steel-rimmed glasses, and had a long face. His black hair stuck out from under his German yarmulke, which looked like a flattened chef's hat. He was beloved by his congregation. He fathered three children by his first wife and ten by his second, which won a certain admiration for him from his wartime congregation. Michelbacher said that if the Jews were guilty of the charge against them, they would find no defender in him, because he prided himself in the fact that "I always speak of your faults without fear, favor or affection." He had investigated the conduct of Jewish merchants personally and was convinced that "the Israelites are not speculators or extortioners." He buttressed his argument with details, pointing out that the Jewish merchant special-

ized in "rapid turnover sales," while the speculator made his fortune by "hoarding." Besides, he pointed out, Jews did not even deal in the basic commodities in which speculation was most common: flour, meal, wheat, corn, bacon, beef, coal, and wood. And if Jews were extortionists, how could they stay in business? Wouldn't the trade go to non-Jews, who by implication were "free of all taint of profiteering?" He concluded that the condemnation of the Jews was "instigated" so that those who were "actually guilty could escape punishment."[15]

In Richmond, the *Examiner* had kept Benjamin's Jewishness in the spotlight where it could operate on everyone's subconscious, especially that of the new German immigrants, who must have shuddered every time it published the slurs of Henry Foote or printed the editorials of John M. Daniel. Daniel was the pen of anti-Semitism, and Foote was its voice.

A Jewish reader wrote a letter of complaint to another Richmond paper, the *Sentinel,* complaining about Congressional coverage by the *Examiner* and other papers in the city:

> That a man like Foote should habitually denounce the Jew is to be expected; he denounces everybody and everything; his mouth is a "well-spring" of slander and I should doubt the beauty of virtue, itself, should he chance to praise it. But, that the whole press of your city (your paper excepted) should add fuel to these fires of persecution, and should seek to direct public opinion in such foul channels, surpasses my comprehension.[16]

When Lazarus Straus of Talbotton, Georgia, whose son Oscar later was to create his own legend after the war when he purchased Macy's in New York City, heard that a Talbotton grand jury had condemned Jewish merchants, he packed the family up to move to Columbus, a few miles away. Every member of the grand jury called on him to stay; every minister in the town asked him to change his mind; every leading citizen explained that there had been no intention to reflect on *his* ethics or *his* faith, just on the Jews in general. The incident is an example of how a climate of prejudice had gotten out of hand across the South.

There is no written verification that Judah P. Benjamin ever attended or contributed to a synagogue in Richmond or in any other community where he lived. However, *The History of the Jews of Richmond from 1769 to 1917* by Ezekiel and Lichtenstein reports on an interview with an old Richmond citizen who said that he

had seen Benjamin "called up to the reading of the Law at Beth Ahabah synagogue."[17] The truth of that statement has been contested by historians, because it does not seem to square with their own impressions of Benjamin as a nonbeliever. It is unlikely that such a noteworthy event would have left behind no corroborating testimony, they argue. They point out also that Beth Ahabah, the German Jewish synagogue of the new immigrants, was the congregation of the family that had lost Private Henry Adler at Roanoke Island, the battle for which Benjamin had been publicly blamed. Beth Ahabah still stands, and in fact there are no records substantiating the visit.

The eyewitness account becomes more credible, however, if one assumes that the congregation in question was actually Beth Shalome, the older Sephardic synagogue. Unfortunately, the building and records of Beth Shalome were destroyed in the evacuation fires of 1865, so the truth of the matter will probably never be known.

Benjamin might well have visited Beth Shalome at least once in his four years in Richmond, because its president was Gustavus Myers. Myers's close friendship with Benjamin gives some credence to the eyewitness account since it would have made it natural for Myers to have invited him to the synagogue, and courteous as well as respectful for Benjamin to have accepted.

Because of Myers, the common view among the older Jewish families in Richmond was that Jews of high station reflected well in the eyes of both the Gentiles and other Jews by serving in visible office. For the Gentiles, they would be patriots. For the Jews, they would serve as signals to the new immigrants that Jews were an integral part of the Confederacy, that they could aspire to any position and could become as accepted and influential as their talents allowed.

It was true that regardless of his thirty years on the City Council, Gustavus Myers was still essentially an outsider to the Gentile community, still not accepted in its inner social circles. Both he and Judah Benjamin were court Jews, whom those in power had anointed to help organize the realm. It had been ever so. But Gustavus Myers did not depend on the Gentiles' acceptance for his self-worth. He lived his life as an open and proud Jew, a Southerner, a citizen of Virginia and of Richmond. Myers thought Jews had to set an example, and the only kind of Jew the Gentiles did not understand was one who was ashamed of being Jewish.

Myers could argue with his friend that, looking to his own example, it would be wiser for Benjamin to declare himself as one with the Jewish community of Richmond. The Gentiles would identify him

with them no matter what. Would non-Jews not respect him all the more? Benjamin, who had learned at Yale to read Hebrew, Latin, and Greek, would feel at home at Beth Shalome. It was, after all, a Sephardic synagogue like his father's house of worship in Charleston, with a service he would recall and find comforting. As a friend of Gustavus Myers, the congregation would welcome him. Besides, as the war went badly, the President had ordered a "day of prayer" for the entire city. It would have been appropriate for a loyal member of the Cabinet to honor the proclamation.

The President frequently sought to involve the churches in the war, especially when news grieved the city and he sensed that the people needed an uplifting experience that would be good for morale. As required on such days, Benjamin's staff participated, so he must have faced a dilemma. To work would only point up his lack of affiliation and make him appear insensitive to the religious backbone of the city.

Gustavus Myers by example showed the Jews of Richmond that, as a city council member, he was neither above them nor distant from his religion. Myers's positive approach could not have been lost on Benjamin. Jews in Richmond had been concerned about Benjamin's visibility, the animosity it was sure to raise, the blame and denunciation that might descend on them should anything go badly. And indeed, events were confirming the fear that if he failed, all the Jews would be blamed for it; his Senate career had proved to him that anti-Semitism was real. He could do nothing about that; all he could do was let the Jewish community meet him and hope that they would be more accepting than afraid.

Jewish issues had come to Benjamin's desk more than once during the war. Rabbi Michelbacher at Beth Ahabah in Richmond sent him a letter to pass on to Robert E. Lee, requesting High Holy Day furloughs to "soldiers of the Jewish persuasion in the Confederate States Army." Benjamin must have thought that an unwise request, but he understood the fervor of the new German Jewish community, even if he did not share it. We do not know the private advice he offered to Lee, but with as many as ten thousand Jews in the Confederate Army, Lee handled the request in a careful and politically astute manner. Lee addressed his response to Rabbi Michelbacher as "Preacher, Hebrew Congregation, House of Love" that "I feel assured that neither you nor any other member of the Jewish congregation would wish to jeopardize a cause you have so much at heart by the withdrawal even for a season of a portion of its defenders."[18]

With his background in the Charleston Jewish community, Benjamin would have been at home with the Sephardic character of the beautifully decorated Beth Shalome synagogue with its stained-glass windows and its altar in the center. He would have approved of the English prayerbooks, the hymns, the English sermon from the rabbi. All in all, it had a service that even a nonbeliever could understand and appreciate.

The German Jews who had flooded into the South in the 1850s had worried the old, settled Jewish families. They were highly visible, peddling all over the South; they spoke English with an accent and actually went to the cabins of free Negroes to sell their trinkets. True, their religious services were in German, not Hebrew or English, and Benjamin's father Philip would have approved, but their cultural ties to Bavaria, their observance of dietary laws, and their belief in resting on the Sabbath only confirmed to the Gentiles the foreign and exotic nature of the Jews. Men who acted like strangers would be treated that way.

Jewish leaders were concerned about the image of Jews in the Southern mind. Regardless of his own beliefs, Benjamin's position as a Cabinet member helped to increase the acceptability of Jews in the South, especially among the poor whites. Rabbi Einhorn preached fire and abolition from Baltimore, pretending to be a prophet speaking for the Jews. The Southern rabbis were more circumspect. Many Jews in the Deep South welcomed the sermons of Rabbi Morris J. Raphall in New York City, who claimed slavery was sanctioned in the Bible because the ten commandments mentioned slaves and the Hebrew patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were all slaveholders. Jews in the South feared that they would be physically attacked if tarred with the antislavery views of the Abolitionists. In that sense Judah Benjamin's identification with the Southern cause and Judaism could help insulate the Southern Jews from calamity. Southern whites might respect all Jews if they had confidence in the few they knew best.

The Confederacy heralded David Lopez, the talented builder who was working to create the South's first torpedo boat; M. C. Mordecai, who outfitted his steamer as a blockade runner; Benjamin Mordecai, organizer of the "Free Market of Charleston," which was supporting more than six hundred families during the war at a cost of $8,000 a month. But those men were not well enough known to influence the opinion of the Gentiles. Only Benjamin symbolized the Jew who was also a Southerner—one who was loyal to the Confederacy, who

could provide an antidote to the suspicion among Southern Gentiles that Jews at heart were Abolitionists.

It is well known that Benjamin was not an observant Jew, to say the least. He did consider himself an intellectual Jew, however, steeped in his people's literature and culture, in their philosophy and language. He could debate issues in the Old Testament. He was a Jew of the head, not the heart.

An invitation from Myers to attend Beth Shalome, if nothing else, would have served a governmental purpose for Benjamin in that it would provide him a place to join the rest of the Cabinet and the Congress at worship on an official day of prayer and fasting.

If Benjamin did attend, he would have been a celebrated visitor and guest of the congregation president. As was customary with distinguished visitors, he most certainly would have been "called up to the reading of the law."

Benjamin would not have been a stranger to the reading of the Torah. He would have studied it for his confirmation before going off to Yale, even though the protests and eventual expulsion of his father from the Charleston congregation may have been a distraction. He was familiar with the Five Books of Moses as literature, as law, as moral parables, and was known to quote them in discussions.

The ancient parchment of the Torah with the Hebrew letters had been at the center of Jewish life for two thousand years. Even when times were good, the Jews were singled out as if they had leprosy and expelled from every country in Europe, their property seized or unequally taxed. They were ghettoized by special laws and barred from entering the professions, owning land, getting an education, practicing a trade, or worshiping their God. When times were bad, as they now were in Richmond, they had always been blamed and were banished into the wilderness or even massacred—as witness the terrible episodes of the Inquisition and the Crusades.

Why did Christians mistrust them so? It was ingrained from childhood. Here in the South, even though Jews wanted to assimilate, to be the Christians' friends and equals, they would never let Jews grow up as part of them. Southerners made the Jews different from them, apart, both a devil and a prophet figure. They admired the Jews, but they feared them too. Jews were of the same faith as Jesus, and yet they were the people who crucified Him. They loved the Jews, they hated the Jews, and neither emotion was ever far from the surface. They blessed the Jews, they blamed the Jews, and the choice was unpredictable. They must convert the Jews or

suspect them, because Jews were responsible for His suffering on the cross and must pay the price for the crucifixion. Whichever the Christians chose, admiration or condemnation, the Jews could not be ignored and just left alone.

Benjamin surely was outraged when the courier brought the Union message to him from Memphis. "General Order No. 11, December 17, 1862: Jews as a class violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department [of Tennessee] within 24 hours from the receipt of this order. Signed, U.S. Grant, General, United States Army."[19] That was the most celebrated event of the war concerning Jews.

General William Sherman had earlier complained of "swarms of Jews and speculators" flocking into Memphis on the Mississippi and had falsely accused the Jews of buying up or stealing thousands of bales of cotton with the intention of selling them for huge profits in the North to the reopening textile mills.[20] Confederate spies had conclusive proof that the army itself was involved in speculating in cotton, yet Grant nonetheless had issued this order.

Southern Jews who had lived in the Tennessee district for decades, even former Jewish Union soldiers, were forced to pack up their families hurriedly and leave. Parson Brownlow was one of the few to applaud the order. "It is useless to disguise the fact that nineteen out of every twenty cases brought to light of all this smuggling, turns out to be the work of certain circumcised Hebrews."[21]

Had the order been issued in Louisiana when Benjamin was still in New Orleans, he himself could have been loading a carriage again like his ancestors in Spain. Penny and Leah, had they not fled to Georgia but to the Tennessee district, could have been among the banished Jews. For Jews in the South (and many in the North), Grant's order was deeply disturbing; it raised the ancient question of security. Could Jews ever be assured of a home in the war-torn South? Must they always have secret plans to flee, always keep an escape route in mind and an emergency trunk packed in the attic?

It was seemingly easier for the Union generals to believe that the Jews were bogeymen than to accept the facts about speculation in the midst of an economy in ruin. Grant and Sherman had to know the truth behind the stories—that a gold rush over cotton speculation had broken out, spreading a get-rich-quick mania around Union lines of such magnitude that cotton fever had even gripped

the military. The temptations were so great that even Grant's own intimate circle of advisers was involved. Records show that $12,000 could buy 1,500 pounds of cotton in Mississippi, which could be resold for $500,000 in Kentucky. Charles Dana of the New York *Tribune* wrote: "Every colonel, captain or quartermaster is in secret partnership with some operator in cotton; every soldier dreams of adding a bale of cotton to his monthly pay."[22] A close friend of Grant's strongest Congressional supporter, who had traveled with the general, confessed to making $25,000 during the trip, his only regret being that he "could have made an eternal, hell-roaring fortune."[23] There is evidence that cotton deals were offered to Grant himself, but never a hint that he accepted the bribes.

Grant sent a detailed explanation with his order to the War Department. It stated: "The Israelites especially should be kept out. . . . The Jews seem to be a privileged class that can travel anywhere. . . . If not permitted to buy cotton themselves they will act as agents for someone else, who will be at a military post with a Treasury agent to receive cotton and pay for it in Treasury notes which the Jew will buy up at an agreed rate, paying gold."[24]

There was the smell of corruption to the order and some evidence that influential cotton buyers and their officer cronies in the Union army persuaded the gullible general to issue the order to make way for larger profits. Rabbi Isaac Wise pointed out later in his journals from Cincinnati that the price of cotton in Tennessee dropped from 40 cents a pound to 25 cents after the expulsions, but the price in the North remained high. "The Jews must leave," Wise said, "because they interfere with a branch of military business."[25]

The General Order projected anti-Semitic feelings all over the North. Citizens had to decide whether their most celebrated general had acted correctly. In some, it unleashed deep feelings that spilled over onto other issues.

Senator Henry Wilson of Massachusetts stated in a Senatorial debate on fiscal measures that "you will have every curbstone Jew broker . . . and the class of men who fatten upon public calamity . . . using all their influence to depreciate the credit of the government." He described the issue of the nation's financial structure as "a contest between those curbstone brokers, the Jew brokers, the money changers, and the men who speculate in stocks, and the productive, toiling men of the country."[26]

Jews in the North organized themselves to petition Lincoln in

behalf of their Southern brethren. A delegation of Jews, summoned by Rabbi Wise and Cesar Kaskel of Paducah, Kentucky, visited Lincoln with affidavits from leading Republicans and military authorities. According to the record, the following conversation took place in the White House:

LINCOLN: And so the Children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan.

KASKEL: Yes, and that is why we have come unto Father Abraham's bosom to ask for protection.

LINCOLN: And this protection they shall have at once.[27]

Lincoln rescinded an order of his most popular general in the middle of the war. He was moved not only by the plight of the Southern Jews; some of those deported had been Union soldiers, and Wise cleverly organized the Jewish relatives of Northern Jewish soldiers to complain. Still, it would have been easier for Lincoln to keep his blinders on and not risk a collision with Ulysses S. Grant.

General-in-Chief Halleck interpreted the order for Grant in a letter that Grant could understand: "The President has no objection to your expelling traitors and Jew Peddlers, which I suppose, was the object of your order; but as it is in terms proscribed an entire religious class, some of whom are fighting in our ranks, the President deemed it necessary to revoke it."[28]

12

Christmas in the White House: *Growing Bonds of Trust*

The winter of 1862 was especially cold and unyielding in a city without blankets or fuel, with the wounded crowding the hospitals and prisoners crammed into the Libby Prison. The weather quieted the battlefields and gave the troops much needed respite from constant marching and fighting, but the cold was so undeserved, the snow so cruel, that it seemed God was punishing the Southern warriors as He had Job: Starvation, fire, and death were not sufficient. Let them feel ice.

As the war raged on, the South chafed under the ever-increasing demand for more soldiers to march into the maw of battle. The calls on the civilian population to support the Confederate war machine became increasingly overbearing and impossible to meet.

In a strange way, the Yankees were holding the South together. The pressure of active invasion was the only thing that was keeping the fabric of political life from unraveling. But the Davis government in Richmond called for still more sacrifice, still more supplies, still younger and older men.

Impressment, the hated law by which arrogant Confederate officials seized crops, wagons, horses, and mules, left not enough to feed the families and slaves who had worked the land to produce the food seized. Without the implements and animals to farm, civilians were left helpless for the next season. Worse, the government agents

impressed supplies fiercely around camps, railroads, and in cities but left more remote areas alone. So farmers refused to bring their produce to markets where it would be seized. Thus Richmond and other cities were deprived of food even when it was available.

Conscription—administered in Richmond by what most people sarcastically called the "Bureau of Exemptions"—undermined morale in the army, because it turned "a rich man's war into a poor man's fight." Exempted from the draft were railroad men and industrial workers, telegraph operators and state officeholders, professors and mail carriers, schoolteachers with twenty pupils, Quakers, apothecaries, and one editor from each paper. The exemption of overseers with twenty slaves—the so-called "twenty nigger law"—caused a storm of protest, because young planters used it for themselves; no one dared abolish it, however, because the specter of hundreds of thousands of uncontrolled slaves was too frightening.

The rich could either buy an officer's commission or pay a farm boy to serve as a substitute. The price of substitutes had reached $6,000. One distinguished son of the South argued that since his substitute had been killed, he himself was dead as far as the draft was concerned.

The demands from Richmond brought violent reaction from the states, many of whose leaders thought they had seceded to begin with to escape the despotism of a central government. Vice President Alexander H. Stephens, "a little, slim, pale-faced consumptive man," almost dwarflike in appearance, had returned to his native Georgia to tell the Georgia legislature that conscription was unconstitutional. Governors Joseph Brown in Georgia and Zebulon B. Vance in North Carolina threatened to use state troops, if necessary, to prevent impressment on their farms and conscription of the state militia. Their argument was grounded so deeply in constitutional principle that Joseph Browne could assert states rights even as the war moved to Georgia soil, knowing that if other states agreed, Georgia would have to fight alone. It was no wonder that Jefferson Davis could remark that if the South succumbed to the North, they could write on its tombstone "Died of a Theory."

To reassure the armies of the West that the government in Richmond was not concerned solely with the defense of Virginia, the President embarked on a 2,500-mile trip on December 11, 1862, down to Mississippi, looping up to Montgomery, Atlanta, and the Carolinas, speaking to crowds on each of the twenty-five days he

was gone. During his triumphant return to Mississippi, where he said, "This was the land of my affections, here were situated the little of worldly goods I possessed." But Benjamin had been interested in another passage, which he imagined being read in Britain and in France:

> In the course of this war our eyes have often been turned abroad. We have expected sometimes recognition, and sometimes intervention, at the hands of foreign nations; and we had a right to expect it. Never before in the history of the world have people so long a time maintained their ground, and shown themselves capable of maintaining their national existence, without securing the recognition of commercial nations. I know not why this has been so, but this I say: "Put not your trust in princes" and rest not your hopes on foreign nations. Their war is ours; we must fight it ourselves. And I feel some pride in knowing that, so far, we have done it without the good will of anybody.[1]

At the White House on Christmas morning in 1862, the Davis children gathered around the tree, sparsely decorated (with candy at $8 a pound), playing with the wooden soldiers and other toys that Varina and the absent President had given them. Like other families, Varina, the older children, and the slaves were all involved in repairing old toys for an orphanage, and one slave had even built a dollhouse replica of the White House for a little girl who would be selected for the prize. Cabinet wives had contributed little Confederate uniforms made from the torn clothes of the wounded and the dead.

For almost a month, Benjamin and Varina saw each other at the end of every day, two people alone in the capital. She would give him news of the President's trip, and he would keep her up to date on the war.

The war news from Mississippi was depressing. Brierfield itself was invaded and sacked. Old Joseph Davis had reported to his brother that after the overseers had fled, the slaves had begun breaking down doors and robbing the house, carting off all of the family's finest possessions. He also reported that the slaves would not remain to cultivate the new cotton crop, and Confederate troops had burned all the bales currently in storage to prevent them from falling into the hands of the enemy.

Otherwise, the President's journey continued to go well. In Chattanooga crowds serenaded him at the hotel, and he presented a promo-

tion to Brigadier John Morgan, the hard-riding son of a saddle-spur who had ridden out with two thousand men, taken on four times that number near Nashville, and had come away with 1,700 prisoners and a wagon train, then had ridden hard for Murfreesboro to fight somebody else.

On December 26, 1862, Davis told the Mississippi legislature that he looked on the Mississippi soldiers with a pride and emotion such as no other sight inspired. There was weeping in the hall as he continued: "You have been involved in a war waged for the gratification of the lust of power and aggrandizement, for your conquest and subjugation, with a malignant ferocity and a contempt of the usages of civilization entirely unequaled in history." The President was getting wound up. He told them what he had heard—that the enemy said they had handled the other states with gloves, but Mississippi was to be handled without gloves; that the Yankees were a ruthless foe, and to Mississippi they had devoted the direct vengeance of all. "But vengeance is the Lord's," he said, "and beneath His banner you will meet and hurl back these worse than vandal hordes."[2] The response was electric. He thought the legislators were going to storm out of the State Capitol and whip the whole Union army.

General Johnston's wound from Seven Pines had healed completely, and Davis persuaded him to stay on in Mississippi to confront Grant and Sherman. Johnston still despised the assignment and thought Davis had banished him to the boondocks. Davis thought Johnston craved Virginia because there was more glory to be had there, and he liked to see his name in print. The South was undermanned in Mississippi and split badly, with one army up in Tennessee and the other in Mississippi. Johnston said that he would rather have fifty men of his own than a split command. But the Confederates drove back Sherman from Vicksburg, thanks to Nathan Bedford Forrest, another heroic cavalryman, who cut Sherman's supply lines and stopped the Yankee advance. Davis's brother Joseph had moved with as many of his belongings as he could take to a friend's plantation near Jackson, where the President had spent several several days visiting him.

"Beast" Butler's troops stripped the Brierfield plantation bare of anything left, but the house was still standing. A big sign on it said "The House that Jeff Built." As long as they did not burn it down, Varina felt she could spruce it up again after the war. But Joseph's fortune had disappeared. It was difficult to get a cotton crop in with shells going off all around and his slaves gone. Still, he told

Davis, he had plans in the spring for another planting. The President had some cause to share his brother's optimism.

There was a new song in Washington that went: "Abraham Lincoln, what yer 'bout, stop this war. It's all played out." Such things raised spirits in Mississippi. The women were wearing homespun as a badge of honor, and President Davis thought they looked fine in it.

The formal garden behind the Richmond White House invited strolling on mild days. Its winding paths were designed to make flowering elliptical designs of double hearts and half-moons filled with flowers in spring, but now they wore the gray of winter to match the somber news of the Yankee sacking of Brierfield. Varina must have worried about the impact of such a personal loss on the President—the double pain of the fall of Mississippi and the destruction of his home.

But it was Christmas, a time for celebration and a moment's respite from bad news. Varina had baked a mince pie as a surprise, using substitute ingredients. After a noon luncheon, she took her family by carriage to St. Paul's and they were met by the director of the orphanage, who ushered them downstairs to the room where the children were gathered and waiting.

The orphan children cried for joy over their Christmas gifts: eyeless dolls, three-legged horses, tops with the upper pegs broken off, and stuffed monkeys with the squeak gone silent. Richmond ladies had painted fresh faces on rag dolls gone lifeless without their cotton stuffing, which was needed for the hospitals. Varina presented the model White House with the doll furnishings to an "honor girl," who was too small to handle it. As the other children crowded around to see it, the little girl dropped it, and it shattered into pieces.[3]

Benjamin and Varina had been tossed together constantly and shared secrets that they both considered necessary for their respective roles in the President's life. Benjamin needed to know the day-to-day state of the President's health in order to respond to him in his office, and she needed to know in timely detail the pressures of his office in order to deal with him at home. Together and by turns, they could help him over the most difficult days.

They had a special relationship. The First Lady could not talk about her husband to anyone but Benjamin. He was a safe and intimate sounding board, a man of absolute discretion, and, of course, an appointee without ambition for higher office who owed everything

to her husband. Benjamin was an intelligent and informed listener as well as her instructor; he provided her with a way to feel competent, insightful, and powerful.

Varina attributed to him almost mystical powers: "No shade of emotion in another escaped Mr. Benjamin's penetration—he seemed to have a kind of electric sympathy with every mind with which he came into contact, and very often surprised his friends by alluding to something they had not expressed or desired him to interpret."[4]

When she was a girl, Judge Winchester nurtured in her a sense of power and a feeling for politics. Davis may have resembled the great judge physically, but Judah P. Benjamin was more like him intellectually. One cannot imagine a Jefferson Davis listening to her as seriously as Benjamin did. Conversations with Benjamin allowed her to participate in public affairs, gave her the sense that she understood politics and could be a factor if only given a chance. At the end of her life, she wrote to Lawley that Benjamin's "greatness . . . was hard to measure; his humanities were so many and sincere—I loved him dearly."[5]

For Benjamin, Varina was the ideal woman for his purpose. She offered him a bridge to the powerful as Natalie had in New Orleans, only this time it was not to the Creole establishment but to the President of the Confederacy. Varina, like Natalie, was unavailable to him, but in fundamental ways she was the very antithesis of Natalie. Natalie was beautiful, frivolous, and faithless; Varina was plain-featured, serious, and loyal. Natalie had abandoned him; Varina was a devoted wife who would do anything for her sometimes indifferent and preoccupied husband. Varina offered Benjamin the model of a partner he had never had. Seeing her often and knowing her well introduced him vicariously to a loyal and loving woman who would tolerate a man totally absorbed in his work and his mission in life. She was undemanding and ever available. She would remain his friend, and he would be her intimate adviser for the rest of his life.

When the President returned in January 1863 to Richmond, Varina was appalled at his state of exhaustion. As they went inside the White House, they heard drums and bugles outside, bringing a crowd of several hundred to the mansion to welcome him home. He could not disappoint them. Surely he could not deprive them of at least a sampling from the speech he had been giving around the South. Though near collapse, he seemed to warm to his denunciation of the North as the crowd warmed to him and grew more demonstrative.

> You fight against the off-scourging of the earth. (*Applause*) Every crime which could characterize the course of demons has marked the course of the invader . . . from the burning of defenseless towns to the stealing of forks and spoons. (*Hisses*) For what are they waging war? They say to preserve the Union. Can they preserve the Union by destroying the South? (*No, no*) Do they hope to reconstruct the Union by striking at everything which is dear to man?—by showing themselves so utterly disgraced that if the question was proposed to you whether you would rather combine with hyenas or Yankees, I trust every Virginian would say: "Give me the hyenas!" (*Shouting, whistling, laughter and cheering*)[6]

Varina invited Benjamin to breakfast the next morning, knowing he would be as eager as she to hear about the trip. Though the fatigue was still etched in his face, the President was in considerably better spirits than when he had left in December. The people of Mississippi had faith in Lee and Jackson, he said, and hoped they would go North again in the spring and end it all.

Benjamin's personal life did not revolve solely around Varina, official functions, and his work. He relaxed around the card tables of Richmond with friends and strangers and seemed to enjoy high-stakes encounters.

Benjamin was an inveterate gambler who had become addicted to cards at an early age. His skills had been sharpened by the city where he had earned his reputation and wealth. New Orleans was a sinner's town. Benjamin often had met the elite of the city and its wealthy visitors in its gambling halls, where he had been known as a man who rarely lost. In Richmond, he frequented the various dens of iniquity, which attracted a mixture of Confederate officials and lowlife, using the poker and faro tables to relax from the rigors of the day.

The source of the stories about Benjamin's gambling was William Howard Russell, a correspondent of the London *Times,* who toured the country at the beginning of the war and wrote a series of articles that became a book entitled *My Diary North and South.* In the book he wrote that Benjamin was "the most brilliant perhaps of the whole of the famous Southern orators . . . but his love of the card-table rendered him a prey to older and cooler hands, who waited till the sponge was full at the end of the session, and then squeezed it to the last drop."[7]

Benjamin was so concerned that such a report would appear in the most important English newspapers that he made reference to it in a humorous way to Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Fremantle, an English visitor who came to interview him in 1863:

> Mr. Benjamin complained of Mr. Russell of the *Times* for holding him up to fame as a "gambler"—a story which he understood Mr. Russell had learnt from Mr. Charles Sumner at Washington. But even supposing that this was really the case, Mr. Benjamin was of [the] opinion that such a revelation of his private life was in extremely bad taste, after Mr. Russell had partaken of his [Mr. Benjamin's] hospitality at Montgomery.[8]

Benjamin was offended that Russell had taken the word of Sumner, the fierce Abolitionist Senator from Massachusetts, and had portrayed him as unskilled at cards when his reputation was just the opposite. Because it was such a small point, and awkward, he chose to handle it with a bit of cultivated humor.

The Richmond *Examiner* once reported that at a gambling saloon the previous night, "it is said that a cabinet minister, who was in one of the inner chambers reserved for distinguished guests, effected his escape by jumping from a window."[9] The "minister" referred to clearly was Benjamin.

A Confederate Treasury official noted Benjamin's visits to a low place called Johnny Worsham's on the wrong side of town. Henry Foote, too, complained that "this man Benjamin was notoriously occupied every night during his stay in Richmond in betting at faro, and on several occasions while thus disreputably engaged is reported to have owed his escape from the vigilance of the officers of the law alone to his dexterity in leaping from the back-doors of the gambling halls."[10]

His reputation was part of the undercurrent of Richmond gossip. Mary Chesnut recorded a brief bit of conversation involving Jules St. Martin:

> "People call names so differently. Now, Mrs. Grundy says 'Saint Martin.' So do I. I like straight English. The little sinner calls himself *Samartan.*
>
> "Why sinner?"
>
> "Ain't he Benjamin's brother-in-law?" &c&c&c[11]

There are many accounts of the dark side of Richmond during the war. The streets were crowded with drunken soldiers, prostitutes,

barkers, black marketeers, and hustlers of all kinds as night enveloped Richmond. If Benjamin walked along Martin Street away from the west side, he would have been walking away from the "best people," who would never, this late at night, be caught in the streets of Richmond without their carriages. If so, the scene must have reminded him so much of the New Orleans French Quarter that he felt at home. It might have afforded him some relief to escape for a while from the staid first families of Virginia, who used their tenuous cousinships with the Founding Fathers to lord it over the Confederate officials, whom they treated as coarse outlanders. The British papers described Richmond as a new city "modeled after Sodom and New York."

Johnny Worsham's gambling den was not the best emporium in the city. It attracted a mixed clientele of lowlife and gentlemen who enjoyed a bawdy and salacious atmosphere for their games. It has been described in a number of histories of Richmond as a huge, barnlike place with a stage for dancing girls. By the door, like twin statues, stood two giant black bouncers in bowler hats and identical suits. The gamblers could take a drinking break at a bar two steps up all around the walls, under a balcony of upstairs rooms for more private pursuits. The house was filled with cigar smoke and piano music, absorbed customers and powdered women, who strolled about to lubricate the action at the tables. Gamblers eager to try their luck had their pick: roulette, dice, or cards.

Card games demanded total concentration. They lifted the player above the ordinary experience of the day and washed away his troubles in a sea of cards, numbers, and suits, which his mind had to reorganize quickly into a coherent strategy. Pure chance, like roulette or dice, never appealed to Benjamin: Not enough of his brain was involved. He liked poker and faro, the game in which players bet on a special board as the dealer draws two cards from his box. It is a game that rewards the ability to recall and chart the frequency of numbers and colors. Poker, on the other hand, was a game where he could hone his skill at bluffing and assert his will over his opponent, rewarding a controlled temperament.

In poker, as well as faro, he was the selector; he chose the course, and determined the risks. The outcome was instant, the results immediate. By contrast, in wartime his brilliance would always be overshadowed by the Beauregards, the Lees, the Jacksons. The most careful planning in the President's office could be totally wrecked by a blunder in the field, for which he would always be blamed. But if

there was victory, the soldiers and the generals received the accolade, not the mere politician back in Richmond.

Benjamin's mind could work through the cautions that were necessary to deal with the unfamiliar chemistry of a new game. If his foe was a political enemy, it required a special kind of control. A successful poker player never let his emotion prevail over his cards; he used the antagonism of his opponents as a weakness to be exploited. Poker was a game of cunning. Benjamin could spread confusion among his opponents while keeping a clear head. Poker was also a game of probability and intelligent risk; the object to any player, especially one as brilliant as Benjamin, was to reduce that risk by absolute concentration. It was a skilled ambivalence, reducing risks and taking risks simultaneously.

There is some evidence at just how good Benjamin was at poker. In 1870 Benjamin met General Robert Schenk, the American Minister to England, at a party where poker was being played. Schenk had also once been an Ohio legislator and was an expert on draw poker, having even written a book on it:

"I recollect very well, General Schenk," said Benjamin, "when we last met over a game of poker."

"So do I," Schenk replied, "for I remember well what you won from me."

"Well, sir, if I did, you have had your revenge, for since then I have lost and you have won a bigger stake than that."[12]

To win consistently at poker was to dismiss enmity and fear of humiliation, to know when to withdraw, not to reveal weakness, to wait to fight another day when the odds were better—to be consistently inconsistent. If a player is looking for the big kill, the objective is to increase the range of options at the crucial moment, to reduce the need for the stunning hand at the showdown and win with ordinary cards.

Players of poker relish that one hand when the stars are humming in the heavens and both players think they have the strength for the test. Sometimes even the most skilled players would withdraw, but eventually one had to gamble, to choose the precise moment for engagement or else lose the edge. A player felt a confrontation approaching when his opponent dramatically upped the stakes. Diaries of the time report that the crowd in Johnny's would sense blood and begin to gather around the table. Other players folded adroitly and left the two adversaries to face each other in the bearpit. Then no matter what the cards, the skilled player would play out

his hand until the end. If bluff was the name of the game, then bluff he would.

We can imagine Benjamin's disappointment when Johnny Worsham interrupted the game with news they were about to be raided. He must have been led to a street-level window, smiling calmly at the matter-of-factness of the situation, and foiling once again the sporadic forays of the temperance ladies and the hellfire preachers.

Benjamin was willing to take risks in life as well as in games, and as in cards, he sometimes lost, and lost heavily. His list of disappointments was considerable: Yale, marriage, being a son to his father, being a father to his daughter, his tenure as Confederate Secretary of War, and his growing frustrations as Secretary of State. He had been successful as a lawyer and as a U.S. Senator, and, presumably, as a friend and a provider. He excelled at being a survivor, triumphing over defeats, accepting his failures and facing forward.

One could almost discern something in Benjamin that compelled him to take progressively greater chances, seemingly to court failure. For example, to know nothing of the military yet accept an appointment as Secretary of War had all the elements of a gamble destined for failure. So also did pushing ahead with the Erlanger loan, unwisely confident in a foreign policy linked to cotton when the South was trapped in a blockade. But when a gambler loses he has to gamble again, and if his losses are too great he must increase the stakes in order to recover. Benjamin was not a man who liked to stop and think about his life. From boyhood onward, he was always pushing forward. As the fortunes of the Confederacy began to fade, the question about the gambler who was Secretary of State was whether this lifelong pattern would catch up to him, and the risks become so dangerous that the laws of probability finally would get the upper hand and consume him.

Benjamin's success as a gambler in Richmond was not matched by success in his financial gamble overseas. The first issue of the Erlanger bonds was oversubscribed as the price went to 95½, and it seemed as though Benjamin's plan would work. But Seward's agents went to work in Paris and London, quoting from a statement by Jefferson Davis (issued just before the war) that the State of Mississippi should repudiate its debts to the Federal government. They passed the rumor strongly, in financial back rooms that thrived on whisper: that if the South won the war, Davis would again repudiate the

bonds. They said the entire effort was a Confederate stunt to milk money from Europe. When the price of the bonds fell precipitously, Benjamin, in order to counter the rumors and reassure the French bankers of the South's good intentions, ordered Mason to reinvest the first $6 million in the bonds to shore up the market for them. For a moment that worked. But in the next few weeks, it did not. The bonds dropped to 36, and all the investors were hurt except Erlanger. He had insisted on a 5 percent commission on every bond sold.[13]

Though a financial disaster in the end, along the way the bonds did stir Napoleon to greater interest in intervening in the war. But at every turn, the answer was the same: Prime Minister Palmerston in London was taking seriously Seward's threats to cut off wheat shipments and his hints that British intervention might cause the United States to extend Seward's own "Manifest Destiny" policy to the seizure of Canada. Palmerston quoted a nursery rhyme to a friend: "Those who in quarrels interpose, are apt to get a bloody nose."[14]

Benjamin was furious at the shilly-shallying in Paris, the duplicity in London, and the manipulation by Seward. "This war may not last beyond the present year," he wrote to Slidell in anger, "perhaps not beyond the sickly season of a Southern summer, and yet he suffers himself to be restrained from decisive action by alternative menaces and assurances uttered with notorious mendacity by leaders of the frantic mob which now controls the government of the United States."[15]

On January 1, 1863, Lincoln signed his Emancipation Proclamation, ninety-nine stormy days after he announced it. It was a curious compromise document, in that it exempted all the divided states (Maryland, Kentucky, Missouri, and Tennessee) as well as the areas of Louisiana and Virginia under Federal control. Many supporters in the U.S. Congress thought it a tragic error that would have no effect whatsoever except "to unite and exasperate the South"—which it certainly did—without freeing a single slave within Lincoln's domain. But to the 3.5 million black souls involved, the Abolitionists in the North, and the Union soldiers in the field, the proclamation did say, loud and clear, that the future of slavery would be decided on the battlefield, and that wherever the Union army marched, freedom for the slaves would march with it.

Though individual battles had gone badly for the North for months,

the brutal arithmetic of war was still with the North: 918,000 men under arms, as against 446,000 for the South. Put simply, the North could afford to lose men, the South could not. Too, the country above the Mason–Dixon line was growing stronger. Howe's invention, the sewing machine, had created 180 new factories in just two years in Philadelphia—and already the name "the garment industry" had achieved coinage. The new McKay boot-stitching machine could finish a hundred pairs of boots in the time it used to take to sew one pair. A drought in Europe caused England in 1862 to import from the United States 5 million quarters of wheat and flour, as compared to 100,000 three years before. Seward again had a knife at England's throat—even as Lee was scavenging the battlefield for boots, blankets, and arms.

13

Fateful Defeats: *Stonewall's Funeral and the Battle of Gettysburg*

They called it "Degradation Proclamation." When it was signed, fear gripped the streets of Richmond. Street robberies were common, and Richmond blamed the lack of safety on the rising number of slaves in the city and the inevitable attraction to a military center of every swindler, pickpocket, and thief within a hundred miles. Davis accused Lincoln of issuing an "invitation to a slave uprising."[1] The Confederate government responded by turning over Richmond's streets, jails, and civil liberties to a gang of secret police wielding billy clubs and chains, known to the citizenry as "Winder's detectives." General John H. Winder was a stout old man who had demanded a commission based on an old association with Jefferson Davis as an instructor in tactics at West Point. Once appointed, he moved with brutal dispatch, arresting and jailing without trial anyone on the street who got in the way of his men. His prison was called "Castle Thunder." Rumors of whippings and beatings there circulated through Richmond. Law and order came to the streets in the form of a hip-pocket justice more corrupt than the criminals it was called upon to stop. Richmond saw the hardened enforcers as "plug-uglies," common lowlife from big cities like Baltimore and Philadelphia, illiterate petty thieves set loose on the streets of Richmond to do whatever they wished.

When the War Department decided to require passports to root out the Yankee spy system, Winder's men were soon selling them for a hundred dollars apiece. Many a soldier on furlough spent the night in jail after one of Winder's roundups, then had to pay his way out to report back to his unit. Once Jeb Stuart and his men, thirty strong and without proper credentials, challenged Winder's men to lay a hand on them. Like all bullies, the "plug-uglies" stepped aside.

To try and win back public favor, Winder decreed a ceiling on food prices. Farmers stopped bringing their food into town, and speculators, some of them in league with Winder's detectives, bought what there was to hold for the future. The city experienced shortages in the midst of overflowing warehouses of food. Finally, when Winder removed the controls, prices of staples doubled overnight. Everyone criticized the Jews for creating such havoc and profiteering on food. The Richmond *Examiner* joined in, of course, and the editor's finger of blame seldom strayed from the direction of Judah P. Benjamin.

When the President called for another "day of fasting," people in Richmond derisively renamed his order "a day of fasting in a famine."

Richmond was growing tense from the scarcity of food and seemed to need only a single spark to start a riot. Benjamin could not have missed an incident outside his window: A giant of a woman with a pistol in one hand and a Bowie knife in the other, wearing an incongruous picture hat with a long white feather, harangued a crowd of about three hundred women and children in the area where the wives usually gathered to buy bread. Her name was Minerva Meredith and she worked as a butcher's assistant. With Minerva taking dramatic giant strides at the head, the mob marched off shouting, "Bread! Bread!" making for the shops on Main Street. They were halted by the mayor, who read the Richmond Riot Act to them, but they were not to be denied. They hooted and surged past him, breaking windows and stealing meal, flour, shoes, clothing—anything. The armed militia gathered to charge when suddenly, as if sent by some divinity, a tall, gaunt man appeared on horseback. His presence seemed to halt the women from their mischief. Jefferson Davis addressed the crowd: "You say you are hungry and have no money. Here"—and he emptied his pockets of change and bills—"is all I have. It is not much but take it." And with that, Davis tossed the money into the crowd. He pulled out his watch and looked at the militia:

"We do not wish to hurt anyone but this lawlessness must stop.

I will give you five minutes to disperse. Otherwise you will be fired on." He gazed directly at the women with forceful intensity.

It was over. In five minutes, the streets were empty of people. The militia returned to its station.[2]

"When the Southwestern army fights a battle," the Richmond *Examiner* grumbled, "we first hear that it has gained one of the most stupendous victories on record; that regiments from Mississippi, Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas . . . have exhibited an irresistible and superhuman valour unknown in history this side of Sparta and Rome. As for the Generals, they usually get all their clothes shot off, and replace them with a suit of glory. The enemy is, of course, simply annihilated. Next day more dispatches come, still very good, but not quite so good as the first. The telegrams of the third day invariably such as make a mist, a muddle, and a fog of the whole affair."[3]

If the Union could lose all those men at Fredericksburg and still be strong and fighting hard; if still another Southern victory had turned out not to be "a turning point in the war," what would it take to subdue the Yankees?

In the West, Grant had made seven attempts at either taking or bypassing Vicksburg. In the East, Lincoln had placed "Fighting Joe" Hooker in command of the army. Hooker moved out in mid-April toward Chancellorsville with 133,450 men supported by seven batteries with 412 guns.

Facing him on the other side of the Rappahannock River was Lee's army, less than sixty thousand strong, its general, newly nicknamed "Audacity," pondering his next strike.

Benjamin had another critic inside the government, Robert G. H. Kean, the head of the Bureau of the War, who kept a diary throughout the war. His entry for May 3, 1863, says: "Mr. Benjamin circulated a story last night of a telegram from Colonel R. H. Chilton [Lee's chief of staff] to Jackson that the Yankees were fighting badly, that we had driven them five miles and held the fords by which they had crossed the [Rappanannock] river. . . . Mr. Benjamin is the most unreliable of news reporters, believes anything, and is as sanguine as he is credulous."[4] On August 13, 1863, he added that Benjamin "is a poor adviser. He is a smart lawyer, a ready, useful, drawer-up of papers but perhaps the least wise of our public men."[5] A year later, he summed up: "The fickle manner in which the President has dealt with the *honorable* men he has had in the War office—

Walker, Randolph, and Seddon—and the acceptableness of Benjamin to him there and elsewhere, is the strongest fact against his sense and capacity as a President I know."[6]

Jefferson Davis lay ill with what he called diurnal fever, almost a daily occurrence that left him burning and exhausted by the end of the day. This was followed by a difficult case of bronchitis, which left him unable to speak or to meet Varina, who would be returning home soon from her father's funeral in Natchez.

When the train arrived, Varina was still dressed in black. She seemed inordinately subdued and unrecovered from the shock. She was surprised not to find the President at the station but relieved in one way, because she never liked burdening him with her troubles. Her mother had survived the funeral well, the way old people do, accepting bereavement because it was no stranger in the war. The funeral had been difficult, but Varina told Benjamin she now felt a unity with the thousands of women mourning losses from the war.

For each battle, whether victory or defeat, the numbers of dead and wounded mattered more than the outcome. Nowhere was that more true than at Chancellorsville, where Jackson and Lee crouched together over a fire studying the maps of the terrain.

With two hours of daylight left, Old Blue Light looked down on the enemy positions and felt his battle blood rising. The rear line of Hooker's army lay resting with thousands of men playing cards, smoking, butchering rumps of beef, and clustered in front of fires and tents, relaxed and unsuspecting. Jackson ordered sabers drawn, then Jackson's horse, Fancy, reared at his command, and the rebel cavalry attacked hell-bent for slaughter, slashing at heads and bodies as the enemy fled in a jumble of pots and pans, long underwear, and blue coats.

Confederate foot soldiers followed the cavalry, bayonets flashing, and charged into the tents. They merged into the crowds of fleeing Union soldiers. Then some resistance was offered, causing a slight hesitation by the Confederates in front. To the Confederate soldiers in the rear, their comrades ahead loomed as indistinct silhouettes. "Cease fire! Cease fire! You're firing at our own men." A Confederate bullet slammed into Stonewall's arm, another through his raised palm. His horse bolted and turned its rider into a new volley, whirling out of control in fear until an officer could catch the bridle. Another officer helped Jackson down to lie on the grass under a tree. "My own men," he muttered, and closed his eyes in pain.

Word of Stonewall's wounds spread over the countryside as the horse-drawn ambulance passed among the lines of the people of Virginia, offering from their empty kitchens such as they had: fresh buttermilk, hot biscuits, and fried chicken. The general, his wife at his side, lay for several days, babbling battle orders in his delirium. "Order A. P. Hill to prepare for action! Pass the infantry to the front. . . . Tell Major Hawks—" and then he put the two years of battle weariness behind him as he uttered his last words, "Let us cross the river and rest under the shade of the trees."[7]

While the battle raged on at Chancellorsville, Richmond was in an uproar over the imagined hoofbeats of Northern General George Stoneman's raid. Word spread that the Union cavalry had broken through to the Confederate rear to tear up railroad tracks between Richmond and the front. The city was edgy over its vulnerability, stripped of all soldiers to build up Lee's army, and rumor escalated quickly into panic.

"Everyone in the building, out into the streets!" someone screamed to the office workers in the Customs House where the state treasury and the executive offices were housed. "Man the barricades!" people shouted as they saw clerks running for their weapons toward the arsenal. The aged, the city employees, and the women who could shoot all gathered at Capitol Square to defend the city against the marauders.

Jefferson Davis, who had lain speechless for several weeks before Chancellorsville, suddenly awoke to find the upstairs of the White House almost deserted because Varina had been spending the evening at the Chesnuts. Sentries guarded the door, but inside, the servants were running around frightened. Some were on their knees praying. Soldiers yelled at them that the Yankees were not that close, when suddenly a slim, drawn figure appeared at the top of the stairs. Jefferson Davis was propping himself up against the banisters, with his head hanging and arms dangling with loaded pearl-handled pistols in each hand.

Rumors aside, Stoneman was still 40 miles from Richmond, bogged down in mud and blocked by a swollen river. By morning, troops arrived from Petersburg to thwart his mission, which ended up accomplishing the burning of two barges on the James River and the destruction of a couple of hen houses.

In the meantime Jeb Stuart had assumed command of Jackson's brigades. With the call "Charge for Jackson," he continued to rout

the Yankees in his dying leader's name. Chancellorsville was Jackson's last battle, and a masterpiece it was—some say the greatest that Lee and his general had ever fought. Outgunned and outmanned two-to-one, they managed to take more than 4,000 prisoners and inflict losses of 17,287 on the Union.

Jackson's death left Benjamin with some mixed emotions. Stonewall, after all, had been one of the generals demanding his resignation during his difficult tenure as Secretary of War. An English visitor recalled:

> Talking of the just admiration which the English newspapers accorded to "Stonewall" Jackson, [Benjamin] expressed, however, his astonishment that they should have praised so highly his strategic skill in outmaneuvering Pope at Manassas, and Hooker at Chancellorsville, totally ignoring that in both cases the movements were planned and ordered by General Lee, for whom (Mr. Benjamin said) Jackson had the most "childlike reverence."[8]

Stonewall Jackson's body arrived in Richmond at five o'clock in the afternoon of May 11, 1863. The city was transformed into a vast house of mourning. Every flag stood at half-mast, candles burned in the windows of the houses, every business and home was draped with black crepe. As the caisson bearing the body passed through the streets, thousands lined the way, heads bare and weeping. Behind the cortege followed an almost spontaneous procession of the wounded and invalid veterans of the Foot Cavalry, on crutches and limping, marching with rifles reversed and downcast faces, marching one last time for their fallen commander.[9]

At high noon the next day at St. Paul's Church, the President and the Cabinet attended a memorial service in honor of the dead hero. The sanctuary and the galleries around it were packed with official Richmond, the military contingent in full dress grays with yellow sashes and medals. Benjamin sat next to Varina in the Davis family pew, which was in the center of the sanctuary, directly beneath the eye of the great dome of the church.

The President, who had been bedridden for a month, sat on the aisle, erect but lifeless, chalk-pale and creased as a corpse. Varina was dressed in black with veil, her eyes downcast in the repose of the mourner. Before them, over the columns behind the altar, were the words, "The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the Earth keep Silence Before Him."

"Stonewall" had been the least suitable name for him, many thought, for he was ever in motion, swooping down like an eagle on his prey. His way was to mystify, mislead, and surprise—a phantom ever mobile and adroit—but the name stuck.

The walnut pews and stone floors contrasted with the rich velvet cushions the color of blood. Below the mourners on the floor were the small knee cushions. At the closing prayer everyone, including Benjamin, slipped out of their seats and knelt as the minister waited for the congregation to quiet down so that he could begin.

Even today, in the sanctuary of St. Paul's, the receding sun darkens the stained-glass windows, casting the church into a dim kind of twilight. High above the congregation, one can observe a triangular shape with hundreds of golden spokes extending outward from the center of the dome. The letters in the center of the triangle are barely visible in the cool gray dimness of the church. Had Benjamin looked up, he would have noticed that they were Hebrew letters—the ancient unspoken name of God—JHVH. The letters grow darker and more precise in the failing light, like lettering looming in the clouds, hovering over the kneeling congregation, just as they must have done at Stonewall's funeral when all faiths gathered to mourn his passing.

The defeat at Chancellorsville so alarmed Lincoln that he ordered Grant and Sherman immediately to set out still again to assault Vicksburg, the Southern Gibraltar on its powerful bluffs over the Mississippi River. They were determined to succeed this time, and after losses of 4,000 men on the steep rocks, they vowed to do it with the most difficult but passive tactic of all, the siege. For more than forty days they would seal off the city, driving the inhabitants into caves to eat dogs and dead mules to stave off starvation.

In the East, Longstreet, Lee's best general with Stonewall gone, had been doing some calculations and was disturbed by what he discovered. The South could not afford any more spectacular "victories" like Chancellorsville: Four more battles in which the South was outnumbered two-to-one and inflicted casualties at a rate of three Union soldiers to four Confederates, and Lee's army would be destroyed.

The Cabinet debated whether to send Lee south to the defense of Mississippi and to try to lift the siege of Vicksburg. But Lee approached them with an even bolder plan: move north again, far

north into Pennsylvania, toward Gettysburg, and await the enemy's response. By so doing, he would force Lincoln to pull Grant away from Vicksburg, free the Virginia countryside for harvest, defend Richmond by threatening Washington, encourage the peace parties of the North, win a battle, and thereby attract European recognition. Davis's heart ached for his home state of Mississippi, but Lee would not hear of moving his troops so far from his own Virginia. At least, not so far south.

Lee had won four battles, each against a different commander; now he would get a fifth. In early June, Lincoln replaced "Fighting Joe" Hooker with General George Meade.

Meade was called a "snapping turtle," because he was small and testy; he was devoid of flair, and his balding head and frazzled beard made him look more like a professor than a soldier.[10] But he was decisive. The very next morning he called early reveille, and the 94,000 men of the Army of the Potomac moved north themselves, paralleling Lee in case he should turn toward Baltimore, all the while heading for the rendezvous at Gettysburg.

Neither army had planned to meet at the little college town, but the Southerners had been drawn there by reports of a large storehouse of shoes in the town. "I'm going to get those shoes," one of Lee's generals said, and so two armies almost blundered into each other. But once the battle began, it was fought with fury. For three days they fought, the South battling to take Cemetery Ridge and Devil's Den. Without Stonewall, Lee did not have his nimble left hook to draw enemy strength away from the main clash. On the climactic third day, over the objection of Longstreet, Lee ordered Major General Pickett to lead 15,000 men in a four-fifths-mile charge at Meade's center across open, flat ground. "Pickett's Charge" became synonymous with bravery, but to the men in the long gray line mowed down at Cemetery Ridge like waving wheat before the scythe, the charge meant certain death.

The Union losses at Gettysburg were 23,000, as against the Confederacy's 20,000, but that was almost one-third of Lee's army. Longstreet had been right: With continued costly battles, whether victory or defeat, Lee's army could not survive the grim arithmetic of the war. The South's defeat at Gettysburg devastated the Army of Northern Virginia and left its leadership ranks grievously shattered. This time the pundits did not have to exaggerate: Gettysburg was indeed "the turning point battle of the war."

For the leaders back in Richmond, too, July 4, 1863, was the most decisive day of the war. The depressing news of Lee's defeat at Gettysburg was joined by the simultaneous fall of Vicksburg on the Mississippi.

For weeks, Benjamin had watched the President sinking into what Varina called "the acutest anxiety." General Joe Johnston, always preferring to give up territory rather than men, was yielding Davis's home state to the invaders, and the President had even considered leaving his desk to go out into the field and fight. "If I could take one wing and Lee the other," he confided to Varina, "I think we could between us wrest a victory from those people."[11] It was not just a fanciful exaggeration; he meant it.

Even at so dark a moment, Benjamin was the South's best propagandist.

Lieutenant Colonel Fremantle of the British Coldstream Guards spent three months in the Confederacy in the early half of 1863, traveling with the armies, talking with leaders, and noting his observations and experiences in a diary. He reported that Judah P. Benjamin had told him, the South's peace terms: "On a blank sheet of paper [he wrote] the words 'self government.' Let the Yankees accord that, and they might fill up the paper in any manner they chose. All we are struggling for is to be let alone."[12]

He also reported on the state of mind of Jefferson Davis: "Walking home with Mr. Benjamin, he told me that Mr. Davis' military instincts still predominate and that his eager wish was to have joined the army instead of being elected President."[13]

The generals were arguing among themselves in recrimination, and newspapers were battering away at the ineptitude of the Richmond government. Still, almost as a ritual, Davis rode out daily among the people of Richmond, stiff and regal. Varina had pleaded with him not to do it, but he wanted to show the people that he was not afraid.

One evening, a bullet whistled past his ear. Instead of fleeing, Davis boldly turned his horse right toward the source of the shot and galloped into the shanties, where a crank was found shivering. Davis did not prosecute the man but sent him to a more useful fate: to General Lee as a soldier.

The war was now reaching into the Southern heartland of Alabama, and the need for more soldiers was becoming desperate.

Where were new recruits to come from? How could Lee's army

be replenished? One suggestion would come from Lincoln himself, who had urged General Grant to recruit and train slaves in the Mississippi area. "I am not abolitionist nor even what could be called antislavery," Grant admitted, but he had carried out the order. Could the Confederacy, which so far had used blacks militarily only for digging trenches and building fortifications, risk issuing their own Confederate Emancipation by arming slaves to fight against the North and freeing them in exchange? How would the slaves behave under fire? Would the Southern slaves treat the war as a battle for their homeland and their families, like the men who fell at Fredericksburg and Gettysburg?

Several months after Gettysburg, Benjamin received an apologetic letter from the brother-in-law of his old law partner in New Orleans, now a cotton mill owner in Alabama. The letter was apologetic because it dared to suggest arming the slaves, but Benjamin took it seriously, for he himself was beginning to ponder it and was turning over in his mind the practical problems of such a momentous step. He drafted a careful reply with a detailed analysis of the issues the government would face:

> 1st. Slaves are property. If taken for public service, they must be paid for. At present rates each regiment of 1000 slaves would cost $200,000 at the very least, besides their outfit, and the Government would become a vast slave holder, and must either sell the slaves after the war, which would be a most odious proceeding after they had aided in gaining our liberties, or must free them to the great detriment of the country.
>
> 2nd. If instead of buying, the Government hire them, it would stand as insurer for their return to their owners; it would be forced to pay hire for them the outfit and rations; and it would have to pay hire according to the value of their services on a fair estimate. Now negro men command readily $30 a month all through Virginia. How could we possibly afford such a price, and what would be the effect on the poorer classes of whites in the army, if informed the negroes were paid $30 a month, while the white man receives only $11.
>
> 3rd. The collection and banding together of Negro men in bodies in the immediate neighborhood of the enemy's forces, is an experiment of which the results are far from certain. The facility which would be thus afforded for their desertion in mass might prove

> too severe a test for their fidelity when exposed to the arts of designing emissaries of the enemy who would be sure to find means of communicating with them.

Finally, Benjamin argued, the male slave population was performing an important service already, more perhaps than the South could expect from them in uniform.

> A nation cannot exist without labor in the field, in the workshop, in the railroad, the canal, the highways, and the manufactory. In coal and iron mines, in foundries and in fortifications we could employ the total male slave population that could possibly be spared from the production of supplies for subsistence. This is the appropriate field for negro labor to which they are habituated, and which appears at first sight to be altogether less liable to objection, than to imitate our enemies by using them in military organizations.[14]

Benjamin selected carefully the phrase "less liable to objection"; he knew the fire-eaters in the Congress would be driven to frenzy over the use of slaves for any other purpose than labor, and some would even be nervous at placing slaves anywhere in the vicinity of ammunition and armament. But his objections were practical, not a matter of principle. The Confederacy, he said, simply could not afford at this point to purchase or rent slaves. He mentioned freeing the slaves after the war, so he understood that there were other forms of compensation for slaves. Indeed, the subject had been before him earlier in the war.

A month after Lincoln's Emancipation, in October 1862, Benjamin heard that James Spence, a Confederate financial agent in England, was publicly opposing slavery and suggesting that emancipation would bring about a speedy British recognition of the Confederacy. Spence was no ordinary Liverpool merchant but the well-known author of *The American Union,* a popular two-volume defense of the Confederacy that had gone through four large editions in less than a year, and the man who had organized two London associations to help the South. Spence had become convinced that the popularity of his books had given him the independent moral stature to influence the South. The Richmond *Enquirer* demanded his dismissal, complaining that "here we are paying a man for abusing us as a nation of criminals steeped in moral evil! The operation of our State Department seems to be against us, not for us."[15]

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Benjamin as the Confederate statesman, in Stephen Vincent Benet's words, "the dark prince . . . with the slight perpetual smile." A contemporary observer described him as a "Hebrew of Hebrews for the map of the Holy City was traced all over his . . . refined face." As the war took its toll, he was bitterly attacked. "The mob calls him 'Mr. Davis' pet Jew,' " wrote Mary Chesnut in her diary. Others used him as a scapegoat for all the South's failures. One congressman consistently referred to him as "Judas Iscariot Benjamin." Benjamin never reacted publicly to the taunts and managed to achieve a career, in the words of a British newspaper, that "is not likely to be repeated [with] all the fascinations of a brilliantly narrated romance."

JUDAH P. BENJAMIN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, NEW ORLEANS

JUDAH P. BENJAMIN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION, NEW ORLEANS

ROBERT D. MEADE PAPERS (#9989), MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY

Judah P. Benjamin's wife, Natalie St. Martin *(top left)*, whom he married in 1833, was the daughter of a leading Catholic and Creole family in New Orleans. Their only child, Ninette *(top right)*, was born in 1843. Benjamin built the grand house at the Bellechasse plantation in Louisiana *(bottom)* in the early 1840s and furnished it lavishly as a showcase for balls and parties for Natalie. Natalie left Benjamin and fled to Paris in 1845, taking Ninette with her. Thereafter he saw them only once a year. She preferred to call him by his French name "Philippe." Only one revealing sentence survives from her letters to him: "Oh, talk not to me of economy, it is so fatiguing." Her notorious reputation was a constant source of embarrassment to him. A diarist of the time wrote that she had "rumored delinquencies" which "affected the French legation" and once "stole away (to meet a handsome German officer . . .)." A Confederate Congressman wrote she "lives in Paris with a paramour." Although she stayed in a different country from her husband for almost forty years of their marriage, Benjamin never wholly abandoned her.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Varina Howell Davis *(top)* and Jefferson Davis *(bottom)*, circa 1849, when she was twenty-two and he was forty-one. By this time, they had been married for four years, and he had already been elected to Congress; had fought in the Mexican War and returned to Mississippi as a wounded war hero; and had been appointed to his first term in the U.S. Senate. She wrote her mother when they first met that "he is the kind of person I should expect to rescue me from a mad dog at any risk, but to insist upon stoical indifference to the fright afterward." Varina, an unusually intelligent and sensitive woman, was to play a critical role in bringing Judah P. Benjamin and Davis together, acting as Benjamin's confidante throughout the Civil War and for the rest of his life.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

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Senator Judah P. Benjamin of Louisiana *(top left)*, circa 1853, and Senator Jefferson Davis of Mississippi *(top right)*, circa 1858. Varina wrote of them: "Sometime, when they did not agree on a measure, hot words in glacial, polite phrases passed between them." Because of a suspected insult on the floor of the Senate, Benjamin challenged Davis to a duel. Davis quickly and publicly apologized, and the incident of honor defended and satisfied drew them together in a relationship of mutual respect. The formal portrait *(top left)* was painted in 1853, shortly after Benjamin was elected to the U.S. Senate, where he was considered one of the greatest orators in Senate history. The drawing *(bottom)* has printed on it the words "from Daguerrotype by Brady, 1856."

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

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Jefferson Davis *(top left)* and Varina Davis *(top right)* as President and First Lady of the Confederacy. He was the rigid, West Point–trained President they called the "Sphinx of the Confederacy," and she was referred to as "Queen Varina." Varina wrote of Davis's relationship with Benjamin that "it was to me a curious spectacle, the steady approximation of a thorough friendship of the President and his War Minister . . . a gradual rapprochement, all the more solid for that reason." The White House of the Confederacy in Richmond *(bottom)*, where the President and the First Lady of the Confederacy lived and entertained, was called the "Gray House" by wags. Benjamin visited there often for intimate meals, meetings, and receptions. It looked somewhat like a Northern townhouse, in contrast to the Union White House, which, if anything, reminded visitors of a Southern mansion.

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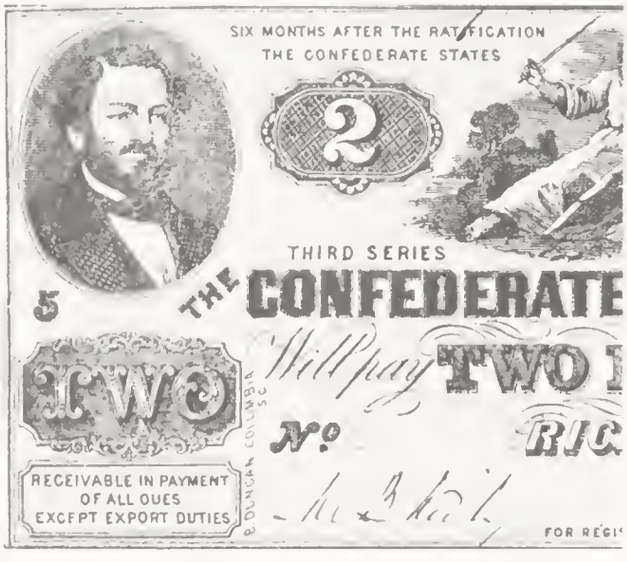
JEFFERSON DAVIS AND HIS CABINET



SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

Jefferson Davis and the first Confederate Cabinet *(top)* in council with General Lee. This idealized lithograph, copyright 1866, was produced to sell to the public. Benjamin, second from left, is sitting closest to Jefferson Davis. "There was only one man there who had any sense," said Secretary of War Walker, just behind Benjamin in the picture, "and that man was Benjamin." Benjamin *(right)*, in 1860, served first as Attorney General, then as Secretary of War, and finally as Secretary of State. He was even honored, dubiously it turned out, on the Confederate two-dollar bill, issued in 1862 *(bottom left)*.

COURTESY OF JOHN O'BRIEN

COURTESY OF JOHN O'BRIEN

Secretary of State Benjamin *(top left)*, circa 1863, showing the strains of the war, in a recently discovered photo by Rees, a popular photographer in Richmond. John Slidell *(top right)* was the senior Senator from Louisiana and the state's political boss. More than anyone else, Slidell was responsible for Benjamin's election to the Senate, the first acknowledged Jew to sit in the U.S. Senate. Slidell's political enemies accused him of being a Jew himself, their only explanation of so strange a political action. Benjamin later persuaded Jefferson Davis to support his political mentor as the Confederate Commissioner to Paris. Gustavus Myers *(bottom)*, Benjamin's best friend in Richmond, was a leading lawyer; member of the Richmond City Council for thirty years and its president from 1843 to 1855; and president of the Sephardic synagogue in Richmond. Myers was married to the daughter of the Governor of Virginia. Because of him, Mary Chesnut could write in her diary: "Elsewhere Jews may be tolerated. Here they are haute volee." His position did not spare him from ugly criticism, however; J. B. Jones called him in his diary "the little old lawyer for Jew clients."

COLLECTION OF THE VIRGINIA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

As Secretary of War, Benjamin had highly publicized quarrels with General P. G. T. Beauregard *(top left)* and General T. J. "Stonewall" Jackson *(top right)*. Beauregard called Benjamin in a letter to Davis "that functionary at his desk, who deems it a fit time to write lectures on law while the enemy is mustering at our front." Jackson threatened to resign, writing Davis that "with such interference in my command, I cannot expect to be of much service in the field." Davis defended his "right hand," as Varina described Benjamin, who was working twelve and fourteen hours a day with Davis and was being blamed by the military for carrying out the President's orders.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, DC

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Union Generals Benjamin Butler *(bottom left)* and Ulysses S. Grant *(bottom right)*. Butler was in command of the Union forces that conquered New Orleans. He said that "the most effective supporters [of the Confederacy] have been . . . mostly Jews . . . who all deserve at the hands of the government what is due the Jew Benjamin." Grant issued the infamous General Order 11 on December 17, 1862: "Jews as a class," it said, were to be expelled from Tennessee in twenty-four hours. "The Israelites should be kept out," he wrote, and though Lincoln rescinded the order, it was the most controversial event of the war affecting Jews.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

The Confederate Cabinet flees south over the Georgia Ridge in April 1865; Benjamin can be seen just behind Davis in the silk hat. This sketch was made by an *Illustrated London News* artist, Frank Vizetelly, who traveled with the Cabinet during the flight.

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IN MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

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As the Lincoln funeral train *(bottom)* made its way back to Illinois in a three-week trip through unimaginable grief, millions of Americans lined up at stops along the way to file past the casket. Lincoln's last photograph *(top left)* was taken on April 10, 1865; tens of thousands of Americans displayed this photograph and others of him in their homes for years after his death. Killed on Good Friday of what was later to be called "Black Easter," Lincoln was deified in two thousand sermons, and his apotheosis was dramatized in drawings, paintings, and newspaper cartoons *(top right)*. Ministers saw in Lincoln the martyred Christ figure, whose assassination was compared to the crucifixion, his life taken for his country by John Wilkes Booth, whom some called the "American Judas."

THE LAST DITCH OF THE CHIVALRY, OR A PRESIDENT IN PETTICOATS.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

A Currier & Ives cartoon depicts the capture of the Confederate President *(top)*, forever ridiculing him for having picked up Varina's cloak in the dawn light. Davis was jailed and accused of treason, though he was released after two years without ever facing a trial. Earlier, Benjamin had taken leave of the President to travel alone in a broken-down wagon, disguised first as "Monsieur Bonfals," a Frenchman who spoke no English. The name itself showed bravado—probably translated from the Cajun French "a good disguise." Later, he changed to the ragged clothes of a farmer. His escape to England over several harrowing months, barely avoiding capture and death at sea, became a Southern legend, as depicted in these 1938 drawings *(bottom left and right)* from the book *Flight into Oblivion*, by A. J. Hanna, illustrations by John Rae.

FROM A. J. HANNA, *FLIGHT INTO OBLIVION* (RICHMOND, 1938)
ILLUSTRATIONS BY JOHN RAE

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The dictatorial Edwin Stanton *(top left)*, the Union Secretary of War, blamed the assassination on the Confederate leadership and took steps to prove it with high-handed legal tactics, bribery, and false testimony. William H. Seward *(top right)*, the Secretary of State in Lincoln's Cabinet, had a smoldering hatred for Benjamin, his Confederate counterpart, and once said in a Cabinet meeting that he believed "Booth and Surratt had conferred with Benjamin [who] had encouraged and subsidized them." Seward even sent a detective to London to try and find a connection between Benjamin and Surratt, but the detective reported his lack of success to Congress.

NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION, WASHINGTON, D.C.

Andrew Johnson *(left)*, the new President, who muttered "they will pay for this" when he heard the news, had once attacked Judah P. Benjamin on the floor of the Senate as "Another Jew . . . that miserable Benjamin." President Johnson, in a meeting with a number of senators, suggested that Davis, Benjamin, and others be hanged. In the maze of assassination conspiracy charges that eventually followed, however, all three men were themselves accused.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

FINALE of the "**JEFF DAVIS DIE-NASTY.**"

"Last Scene of all, that ends this strange eventful History."

The mood of the country was vindictive. A cartoon *(top)* depicted Jefferson Davis hanging over an open grave, as other Confederate leaders, including Robert E. Lee, awaited their turns with John Wilkes Booth, nooses dangling over their heads. Benjamin is third from the left. John Surratt *(bottom)*, the messenger whom Judah Benjamin sent with dispatches to the Confederate spies in Canada, was wanted as an accomplice to John Wilkes Booth. Surratt was discovered eighteen months later in the Vatican, where he was serving in the Papal guard (photo shows him in his uniform). He escaped to Alexandria, Egypt, where he was eventually captured and brought back to the United States for trial but not convicted.

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COURTESY OF JOHN O'BRIEN

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As the voice of her imprisoned husband, who was shackled in irons in a prison cell, Varina Davis *(top)* fought for his release in letters, public statements, and visits to influential newspaper editors and Republican businessmen. This portrait, taken by Brady probably during a highly publicized trip to Washington to plea personally for her husband *(bottom)* in the White House office of President Andrew Johnson, reflects those desperate and forlorn years. Benjamin met Jefferson and Varina Davis a number of times in England, when the President, once released from prison, sought business opportunities abroad. Though they had worked together for interminable hours each day throughout the war and shared its few triumphs and many desperate chapters, Davis wrote only one sentence about Benjamin in his two-volume, 1,500-page treatise on the war.

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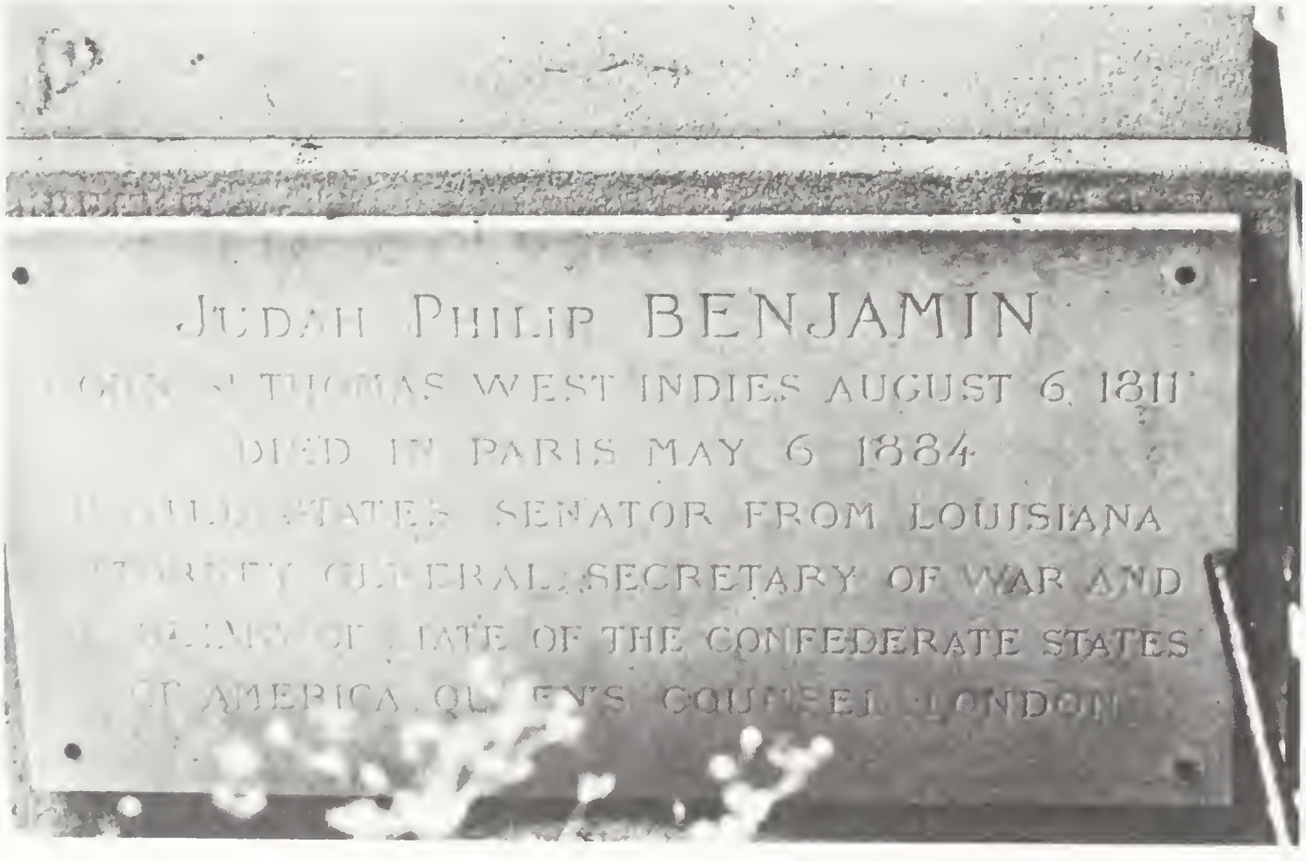
Despite lingering suspicions and investigations by his enemies in the United States, Benjamin had an extraordinary second career in England, rising to the position of Queen's Counsel, which qualified him to practice before the House of Lords. He wrote a brilliant legal treatise still studied by law students today, known as *Benjamin on Sales*, and as one of the leading international commercial lawyers in England contributed to British financial and commercial hegemony in the nineteenth century.

AUTHOR'S PHOTO, 1983

Benjamin was buried in 1884 in Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris under the name of "Philippe Benjamin" in the family plot of the Boursignac family, the in-laws of his daughter. In 1938, the Paris chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy provided an inscription that finally identified the man in the almost anonymous grave.



AUTHOR'S PHOTO, 1983

Benjamin did not write, as one might have expected, an angry letter demanding Spence's resignation, a retraction, or even an explanation. For more than a year, he allowed Spence to speak out in favor of emancipation. In the meantime, to scotch rumors in Europe that if peace came the South intended to reopen the African slave trade, Benjamin circulated through his diplomats copies of the Confederate Constitution, calling attention to the provisions that specifically denied the power. Benjamin also noted in other documents in June 1863 that Negro troops had performed bravely for the North in the battle of Port Hudson.

Finally, in October 1863, Spence wrote Benjamin a letter explaining his views on emancipation, and the government was obliged to release him from his post.

But in his reply to Spence, written several months later, Benjamin apologized for the "intemperate attacks" of the Richmond newspapers, which he said were regarded "with pain and mortification by all men." Benjamin explained that the attacks on Spence were really aimed at himself, not Spence, "by unscrupulous partisans." As to Spence's views of emancipation, Benjamin admitted to "some embarrassment in replying to them." As a private citizen Spence would not "with self-respect conceal or color his views," Benjamin said, because they were a "matter of principle." Benjamin even said that Spence's opinions on slavery made his advocacy more effective with people who agreed with him, but it would be impossible to keep him in the service of the State Department. Benjamin did not express anger at public airing of such controversial views or personal disagreement with those views; on the contrary, he said "as a man of the world" he would meet Spence "on the most cordial terms without the slightest reference" to his views on slavery.[16] Benjamin seemed to be saying that continued agitation on this subject would neither destroy his own personal regard for Spence nor impair Spence's future access to the Secretary of State. It sounded as if he wanted Spence to continue to advocate a more radical step and to maintain lines of communication to report on the English response to his advocacy. If Spence was correct and emancipation would influence Parliament sufficiently to guarantee British entry into the war, then the Confederacy would have to consider such an action seriously, with survival and even victory in the balance.

The atmosphere of desperation intensified as losses mounted. The Alabama Legislature in 1863 recommended to the government the enlistment of slave soldiers but, of course, made no mention of

emancipation. Adoption of that kind of sweeping proposal would require the strong support of the military. With such a profound issue at stake, a fierce, bare-knuckle debate could be expected both inside and outside the army.

The defeats at Gettysburg and Vicksburg had their expected impact in Britain and France as well. Benjamin had already become exasperated with Napoleon. When the Emperor had placed Maximilian on the Mexican throne, he hatched a surreptitious plan for enticing Texas to leave the Confederacy and become a buffer state and a source of cotton for the French mills. Not only had Confederate relations with the French soured, but the hardening of opposition in the British Parliament and despair among the sympathizers in the British Government caused Benjamin at last to accede to the request of Commissioner Mason in London that he be allowed to withdraw.

"Perusal of the recent debates in the British Parliament," Benjamin wrote to Mason, "satisfies the President that the government of Her Majesty has determined to decline the overtures made through you for the establishing by treaty, friendly relations between the two governments, and entertains no intention of receiving you as the accredited minister of this government and the President therefore requests that you consider your mission at an end, and that you withdraw, with your secretary from London."[17]

After months of being snubbed, Mason was happy to walk away from the mission. He went to Paris to await developments with Slidell, who himself had become disgusted with the machinations of the French court. Slidell had written to Mason in sympathy: "The time has now arrived when it is of comparatively little importance what Queen or Emperor may say or think about us. A plague, I say, on both your houses."[18]

To Benjamin, dealing with the British Government in London had been almost impossible. Britain was governed by a small clique, and whatever his point of entry into their circle—whether through friends, millionaire shippers, or the press—once inside, he was stopped.

A few months after Mason's withdrawal, Davis and Benjamin decided to go even further and expel the remaining British consular agents in the South. Plans were completed after Davis left for a short trip to settle a dispute that had broken out among the generals in Tennessee. The more virulent anti-Davis Confederate press excori-

ated Benjamin for taking a step "no other man in the Confederacy would have dared to take." Benjamin called a Cabinet meeting on his own and received "unhesitating and unanimous" approval to expel the representatives. Only the most confident second-in-command would convene, preside over, and seek approval of a policy change in the absence of the President.[19] The South was in such desperate straits that almost any proposition, no matter how preposterous, seemed to have merit. After the war Benjamin revealed how he took advantage of the English rumor mills and discussed the gullibility of the English upper classes when a forged letter surfaced alleging that he had offered to make the son of Queen Victoria the King or Emperor of the Southern States of America:

"The letter," he said to the correspondent of the New York *Daily Tribune* after the war, "is a fiction but to some extent it is founded on fact." He elaborated:

> I have always gone on the principle of speaking to fools according to their folly. There was, some twenty years ago, among the upper classes in England a general desire to believe that the republican form of government was an impossible one . . . it was imagined that all the British colonies were future kingdoms for the children of the Queen, and I was constantly asked by letter and verbally by Englishmen not only of high position but more than average intellect whether it would not be better for the South to have a monarch than a president. I humored this idea or fancy and said on many occasions to persons who I thought would advantageously echo my words that the best thing that could happen to the Southerners would be for Queen Victoria to make them a present of her second son and place her third son over Canada. This produced the effect in certain clubs as I had intended. The Duke of Argyll was strongly of the opinion that there would be monarchial governments all over America before the end of the century.[20]

Benjamin, it seemed, would toss any rumor into the English social scene to win sympathy for the South, even an idea as preposterous as the restoration of the monarchy in America.

It was a strange war. The North had offered a $500 bounty in Ireland for men to emigrate and fight for the Union, and 75,000 had decided that soldiering was preferable to starving. It was a cynical way to recruit, and Benjamin thought the North vulnerable to certain countermeasures. He dispatched emissaries to Dublin with pamphlets describing the hatred and violence in Boston and New York against

Irish immigrants; he sent another emissary to Rome to see Pope Pius IX, who offered little solace but did say that gradual emancipation of the slaves would be looked upon with favor by the Church.

Dangling attractive promises to gain foreign intervention was exhausted as a policy. "Look not to princes," Davis had said; Benjamin was turning his mind to more devious ways to lure the Europeans into the war.

For Benjamin, Sunday mornings were a time of deep loneliness.

With so many churches on Grace Street, the clatter of carriages took over the mid-morning, leaving Judah Benjamin alone in his garden to think and dream. It was his own choice neither to acknowledge his Judaism to the Gentiles nor to partake in the social wellsprings of Christianity. He would have been welcomed at St. Paul's Episcopal Church if only he pretended to be a searching Jew who wanted to sample its service. The word "conversion" need not be spoken, since Christians in the South always consider conversion to have occurred when they meet a Jew two Sundays in a row in church. So the minister and the old congregation would have welcomed him with their eyes, and it would be a sincere welcome, because his presence would be seen as an acting out of the New Testament prophecies concerning the conversion of the Jews.

Today one can sense his feeling of isolation when walking on the Capitol grounds on Sundays, in the utter tranquility and solitude of the day. Benjamin could have sat alone in the shadows of Thomas Jefferson's building and Washington's statue, secure in the knowledge that the President and all the members of the Cabinet, the generals and Congressmen, were absorbed in the Bibles and hymnals at their pews. They were all preoccupied, so he could rest his mind for a few minutes—not losing ground, not alert in his nerve endings, not defensive to the point of paranoia, not outthinking adversaries or critics.

Alone.

On the hill of the Capitol grounds overlooking St. Paul's Church, for the moment, Benjamin could have floated in inner space unchallenged, the nonbeliever in a Christian world, a detached rather than an involved heart.

At noon the bells of St. Paul's signaled the end of the Sunday service, and the good Christians of Richmond would be leaving the churches, returning to their homes for Sunday dinners, Sunday teas, and conversations about the war.

Why did they hate him so? Why did Christianity sometimes wear a smoky cloak of cruelty?

White Southerners seemed to project on him the dark qualities of Iago: of stealth and cunning, manipulation and distrust. Was it their own sense of guilt? That they were blessed and touched by destiny on this continent, but had defiled this Eden by bringing a primitive evil to these shores? Slavery. They knew God would curse it, that slaves would rise up here against them as the Hebrews had against Pharaoh. The whites were steeped in the Bible, and it told them that the Jews were once slaves. And the white Southerner would never trust an ex-slave, for deep down the whites knew that a man who had known slavery and tasted freedom could not be trusted, though he be white like them, Southern like them, even a member of the Cabinet guiding this war in their behalf.

Historians of Confederate times have written that, on Sundays around Capitol Square, one could hear the gabble of the Negroes who had left the African Church a block away and were coming for a walk around the square. It was a grand, mixed crowd of all classes, since the African Church boasted of having the largest Negro congregation in the world. Some congregants strutted in fancy duds, with bowler hats and canes, and a few were in calico dresses with hoops and bustles, like the white ladies they served. But mainly there were poor men in clean work clothes and a few women in simple dresses. A few couples were out to sashay around Screamersville, but the preponderance of the crowd, men alone without women or families, seemed aimless and without destination.

In Richmond, the war was taking its greatest toll on the poor.

The White House was only a few blocks away. The Sunday church hour was over, and Benjamin was often invited for Sunday dinner with Varina and the President. It was time to resume the air of vigilance and climb back into the stream and the pulse of Richmond's political life.

Lee's offer to resign after Gettysburg filled Jefferson Davis with apprehension and dismay. Davis knew he could not go on without Lee, as he confessed to Benjamin in a rare show of humility. Benjamin advised him to write Lee and tell him that he had not lost the confidence of either the soldiers or his Commander-in-Chief.

Davis knew Lee well, and Benjamin would help draft a reply that would play upon Lee's pride and honor. It was a difficult letter to compose because it required Davis to adopt a deferential tone that

was not usual for him and to give Lee the chance to resign without giving the appearance that the President was begging him to stay. The letter read:

> "Expressions of discontent in the public journals furnish but little evidence of the sentiment of the army. . . . But, my dear friend . . . where am I to find that new commander who is to possess the greater ability which you believe to be required? . . . Our country could not bear to lose you. To ask me to substitute you by someone in my judgment more fit to command, or who could possess more of the confidence of the army or of the reflecting men in the country, is to demand of me an impossibility."[21]

For the rest of the war, there would be no more talk of Lee's resignation.

While Davis might have been slightly cheered in the autumn of 1863 at the news of a victory of sorts at Chickamauga Creek in Tennessee, the casualty list was again so long—18,000 Confederates—that the attrition far outweighed the objectives won or lost. Whatever comfort might be drawn from a costly victory was quickly overcome with Grant's capture of Lookout Mountain and the fall of Chattanooga. Now Johnston's army was the only barrier separating Grant and Sherman from the prize of Atlanta.

Harsh criticism of General Braxton Bragg by his generals in Tennessee required a trip by the President for an on-the-scene assessment of Bragg's capacity for command. Soon after Davis left Richmond, Benjamin received news that members of the British consulate in Savannah had forbidden British subjects who had enlisted in the Confederate army to "be brought into conflict with the forces of the United States." The Confederate newspapers were outraged over this "breach of sovereignty," and Congress demanded instant action. Benjamin convened a Cabinet meeting at his own initiative and, after a unanimous vote, expelled the British consulate in a swift action that would receive worldwide attention. Benjamin then wrote to the President on October 8, 1863:

> You had scarcely left Richmond when an exigency occurred which seemed to me to call for immediate action, but at which I could not assume the responsibility of acting in your name during your absence without the clearest responsibility. I accordingly requested my colleagues to meet me yesterday and found them

unhesitating and unanimous in the conclusion that the British consular agents should be at once expelled from the Confederacy. . . . The letter to Mr. Fullerton will put you fully in possession of the facts on which the decision of the Cabinet was based, and we were all of the opinion that as soon as an offensive encroachment on the sovereignty of the Confederacy had been made public, it would be very unfortunate to delay action till you could be heard from . . . the telegraph would be insufficient to put you in possession of the whole case. . . .

I am very sensible how grave is the step taken without your sanction but trust you will not consider me as having overstepped the bounds imposed by necessity under the circumstances."[22]

The letter is extraordinary on several counts. First, there is the clear implication that Benjamin was empowered to act in the President's name during Davis's absence and, if he thought it urgent enough, without even notifying the President first. Second, Benjamin was the individual in charge who did not simply convene a Cabinet meeting but could "ask my colleagues to meet with me." Thus they were advising him on an agenda that he determined and, with their vote, they gave him the constitutional authority to act. Third, Benjamin was confident enough of Davis's trust to announce the action and seek presidential approval after the fact. In a sense, in this episode, Judah P. Benjamin was actually "Acting President" of the Confederacy, issuing orders in the name of the government with authority possessed by no other person in the government. But even Benjamin knew that there were limits to his power. In a postscript to the letter, he wrote that "it would be gratifying to me to hear by telegraph that our action meets your approval."[23]

It was a chill November night in Richmond when the Davises walked from the river fortifications and the wharves back to the mansion. Their route took them past Libby Prison, which Varina hated because it reminded her of the difficulties that the government had in providing food and care even for its own army, let alone for the thousands of prisoners packed into the old converted warehouse.

"Halt! Who goes there?" A sharp voice abruptly stopped them near the prison gate.

"I am Jefferson Davis," the President answered in a loud, clear voice from the darkness. The sentry challenged him and lifted his rifle to hold them fast. Davis suddenly pulled his sword cane, and

the sentry cocked his rifle. Varina screamed and jumped in front of her husband, urgently assuring the young soldier that it really was Jefferson Davis and asking him to lower his rifle. Hearing a woman's voice startled the sentry, and he peered more intently at the approaching two figures now becoming more visible in the light of a lamp. He recognized the President, apologized profusely, and let them pass.[24]

3

THE STRUGGLE AGAINST DEFEAT

1864–1865

14

Tragedy at Home

Richmond in 1864 lay almost still, grieving for the dead of Gettysburg the previous summer and for the shattered illusion that a single Southerner could whip a dozen Yankees in a fight. Women stole mosquito netting out of Chimborazo Hospital to use for party dresses; the wounds of soldiers made for bizarre scenes at social events—a handsome face scarred by sabers; a small lead ball lodged permanently in the throat of a lieutenant so that he wheezed to the belles at the parties around the city; an eye lost at Antietam; a jaw shattered at Shiloh.

Stories of mass defections, epidemics, and imminent surrender circulated widely by means of the Yankee spy network. A report that President Davis had committed suicide rushed like wildfire all over Richmond and across the enemy lines. The rumor was telegraphed to the Yankee press, which whipped it into fact. Richmond ladies whispered the news that "Beast" Butler had been transferred from his salacious conquest of New Orleans to fight against Lee in northern Virginia. Henry Foote criticized "the Israelitish Secretary of State," and the Richmond *Examiner* whined: "One could almost earnestly wish . . . that the first tentatives towards a foreign policy . . . were entrusted to an uncircumcized Christian man."[1]

Carriages cost $25 an hour and a new dress of the plainest material more than $500. A half-dozen cups and saucers brought $160 at an auction, and one could easily spend $1,500 in two hours of shopping. The price of everything was going up as gold supplies dwindled

and the Davis government in Richmond, the states, and the individual cities printed money to meet their needs. Tredegar paid for slaves with iron bars and rails, products more valuable than money to the plantation owners. Prices of everyday essentials, too, were already outrageous: A pair of shoes cost $60; boots were $100; a cord of wood $40; a pound of butter $4; chickens $12 a pair; a pound of sugar $20; a whole ham $350; a barrel of flour $300. Food speculators stored staples in warehouses, knowing that the price would rise. Farmers kept their goods off the market for the same reason. But the needs were enormous, just to maintain the human beings involved in the war, not to mention finding money for weapons for the army. To feed the work force at the Tredegar Iron Works alone, itself almost a separate state of black slaves and white overseers, the government needed yearly 300,000 pounds of bacon, 600,000 pounds of beef, and 40,000 bushels of corn. Such amounts were out of the question.

In those days, Benjamin wrote to an admirer who had sent him a substantial amount of brandy: "I made no scruple of receiving the presents you sent me previously, because they were of small pecuniary value and were regarded by me as testimonials of friendship which were cordially accepted; but a demijohn of brandy at present prices represents quite a sum of money, and in my public position it makes me feel somewhat uncomfortable to accept presents of any value."

But he did not, in Richmond's time of scarcity, want to return the brandy. "I trust you will fully appreciate my motives and will not think that requesting your permission to reimburse the cost of the brandy I am actuated by any but the kindest feelings towards yourself."[2]

The city seemed to one observer to be "crazed on the subject of gaiety," almost like Paris during the French Revolution.[3] Belles and young men on their way to the war referred to the starvation parties as "dancing on the edge of the grave." Women coming home from tending the sick and dying at the hospitals could catch the sounds of music and dancing wafting out into the street. Lovers promenaded on the hillside behind Third Street in the evening to catch the breezes from the waterfalls on the James and watch the intermittent glow of the belches from the Tredegar blast furnaces.

The apricot and cherry trees that bloomed in Richmond in April 1864 signaled, as at no time previously, both the hope and the

despair of the Confederacy. For the city had learned by bitter experience that the blossoms that had been tossed on the soldiers marching off to war could also be cut into sprigs for a funeral cortege.

The more sensitive souls of the social elite gathered at "waffle worries" or "muffin matches," in which they served a simple pastry enriched with poetry reading and discussions of essays they had composed or the latest literary news. They played charades at Mrs. Semmes's or went to plays at the Iveses', where Mrs. Clement Clay starred as Mrs. Malaprop in *The Rivals* and Constance Cary as the romantic lead. And there was music. The Rittenhouse orchestra played at intermissions of plays, and there were band concerts at the old Fair Grounds.

Varina wanted to hold a lavish affair as in the early days to show the wives of the Cabinet and the Congress and foreign representatives that there was still some grace left in the South. She arranged a "luncheon for ladies," at which she served gumbo, duck, chicken in jelly, oysters, chocolate cream, jelly cake, claret cup, and champagne. The guests drank from ruby-red tinted glasses, and the servants were dressed in frilled maid and butler outfits, special for the occasion.

Richmond seemed to be caught in a drama within a drama, acting out its old patterns to try to forget the acts of the present. Often at social events, the hostess would select a spirited play and assign the guests parts; they would go at their roles with great vigor, as an escape from the storm. But it was spring, and the actors in uniform were restless to send the curtain up on still another act in the passionate drama on the battlefields.

To show the South that the North knew where its advantage lay, Lincoln issued a call for 500,000 men in early 1864 to replace the men who had enlisted after Fort Sumter and whose two-year tours were coming to an end. With Congress eager to be assertive because it was facing an election year, Lincoln allowed it to pass a previously rejected bill creating a new rank in the army. The bill would require the President to appoint a senior officer to take military command in Washington and reduce his own powers as Commander-in-Chief.

There was no question whom the public or Congress wanted for the job: General Ulysses S. Grant, whose initials after Vicksburg had come to stand for "Unconditional Surrender." Once Lincoln was assured that Grant had no interest in running against him in the fall, the general had the job. To replace Grant in Chattanooga for

the final drive through Georgia, Lincoln appointed the red-bearded nemesis who had already cut "a swath of desolation" across Mississippi: Grant's second-in-command, William Tecumseh Sherman.

It was the fourth spring of the war. Having given up on foreign intervention, the Confederates now rested their hopes on the outcome of the 1864 elections in the North and on the emergence of a peace candidate to challenge Lincoln. That meant eight months of solid fighting with no spectacular, all-or-nothing battles to lift the morale of the North, but a season of standoffs to convince the Northern voters of the South's irreconcilability to rejoining the Union. But to play for time, the South needed "cannon fodder"—thousands of men to match Lincoln's numbers. To get them, Davis proposed and Congress passed a new law extending the age of conscription down to seventeen and up to fifty. Benjamin saw Davis grieve over the measure: "We're about to grind the seed corn of the nation," the President said.

Others were considering a more radical solution. At a meeting on January 2, 1864, of the general officers of the Army of Tennessee, General Patrick Cleburne, a division officer whose admirers called him the "Stonewall Jackson of the West," had read aloud a paper he had written advocating "that we immediately commence training a large reserve of the most courageous of our slaves and further that we guarantee freedom within a reasonable time to every slave in the South who shall remain true to the Confederacy."[4]

He recommended that the South emancipate its slaves and "change the race from a dreaded weakness to a strength. . . . We can do this more effectually than the North can now do, for we can give the negro not only his own freedom, but that of his wife and child, and can secure it to him in his own home." He also thought that emancipation "would remove forever all selfish taint from our cause and place independence above every question of property. The very magnitude of the sacrifice itself, such as no nation has ever voluntarily made before, would appall our enemies . . . and fill our hearts with a pride and singleness of purpose which would clothe us with new strength in battle."[5]

General Johnston had held the "Cleburne Memorial" for a month, but finally General Walker of Georgia, a Cleburne critic, sent a copy to the President expressing outrage at the "incendiary document." Davis ordered the debate promptly closed before it became public and through Secretary of War Seddon ordered "suppression not only

of the memorial itself but likewise of discussion and controversy growing out of it."[6]

But Judah Benjamin had been thinking in similar terms for much longer, and perhaps the recommendation of so respected an officer was just the impetus he needed. Ever since Lincoln's proclamation, the idea had been in the air. Why not issue a Confederate Emancipation Proclamation to free the slaves who would agree to fight for the South? It was the kind of stroke the South needed, a bold action that would at once electrify the watching world and solve many of the South's problems: manpower, military, and, more crucial, diplomacy, for it would remove the one barrier that was preventing England and France from entering the war. But the explosion among senators from slaveholding states would be horrendous, bitter beyond imagination, perhaps even causing outright rebellion. To them, what was the Cause if not slavery? Benjamin knew the arguments well. He had heard the rationale from the pulpit that God was saving the heathens and the South was His instrument. He had heard the debate in the legislative halls that each state was sanctified and independent and its people had the right to choose their own destiny. He understood the profound change implied in his forbidden thoughts. The whole Southern "way of life" rested upon slavery. To abandon it precipitously might create social chaos that would plunge the nation into anarchy.

But was not the nation already on the precipice? Each new Union victory created thousands of black freedmen, though many more were fleeing the Yankees from fear of the unknown and rumors of a new kind of slavery under the boot of the Union army. Richmond was brimming with frightened blacks. Whatever the pains of slavery, at least it represented certitude. Dare the government give the slaves arms in exchange for a promise of freedom when they then could seize that freedom for themselves?

For all the risks, there was no doubt in Benjamin's mind that emancipation could be the one grand stroke to save the South from defeat. He had been able to convince Davis that slaves should be allowed to serve as drivers and carriers for the army, paying their masters for their services. But that proposal accepted the premises of slavery and was just another form of hiring out property or taking property under the law of eminent domain. Emancipation, with all the drama and moral and political weight of a Presidential proclamation, would require the most careful preparation, even as to the

right approach to the President. Varina's help was crucial. Benjamin could not make a start without her, because the President would instantly turn to her for advice. Support by the military would be vital to winning political support in the Congress. Tennessee and Joe Johnston had no leverage with the President. It would require Virginia and the army in defense of Richmond itself, and that meant Robert E. Lee. Benjamin would have to ponder the most adroit way to approach Lee.

He had not really considered the personal risks to himself. It was Benjamin's pattern to be more cerebral about issues, to break them down into component parts and overlook any personal factors in the equation. But could he, as a Jew, dare risk masterminding such a step? Emancipation was no ordinary issue. If the Richmond *Examiner* were to discover that the President's closest adviser was involved, it would raise the cry of treason, and many would zero in on the phantom Jewish manipulator in the bosom of the Confederacy as the target for all the South's ills.

Benjamin could consider the reaction to the Cleburne paper as a possible dress rehearsal for his own ideas. What he heard was shock, condemnation, and denunciation as the generals called it "a monstrous proposition," "revolting," and "incendiary," and predicted that if it were even *proposed*, "the total disintegration of the army will follow in a fortnight."[7] And that was from the military—what would be the reaction of the politicians?

In contrast to Lincoln, who had to wait until the war was going well to proclaim emancipation, if Benjamin intended to advise Davis to do the same, he would be wise to wait until the South was even more desperate.

Varina was seven months pregnant with a sixth child, as if she were struggling to make a commitment of faith in the future before the sunshine of spring brought war back to Virginia. The embittered population was setting fire to some of the finer homes in Richmond out of resentment over its own deprivation. A few days earlier, Varina had accompanied with her friends, the Lyons, to survey the smoke and ruins of their home. When they found some tea cups, a scorched kettle, and a surviving ounce of tea in the burnt-out kitchen, they just decided on an impulse to have tea under the same clump of trees where they had gathered in better times, to remember how pleasant life had once been.

Davis had encouraged Varina to join him during the day at lunch, so she often came to the President's office carrying a picnic basket. The President had lost sleep over Sherman's victories in Mississippi and had lost all appetite, which had given him the wasted look of his soldiers. Just as she had done in Washington when he was too sick or anxious to keep food down, Varina would prepare a tempting lunch and bring it over to his office where she would stay and make sure he ate it.

Sherman had struck Davis's home state with a special fury and had issued orders to his men that had chilled the capital: "Vigorous war . . . means universal destruction," and just north of Jackson, his soldiers had burned 10,000 bales of cotton and 2 million bushels of grain, and had stolen 8,000 slaves and thousands of horses and mules needed not only for war but for the spring planting. Sherman was living by his credo that "war is cruelty. There is no use trying to reform it. The crueler it is, the sooner it will be over."[8]

The South was disillusioned. Two governors—Zebulon Vance in North Carolina and Joseph Brown in Georgia—cared not where the war was, but wanted to fight it only when the Yankees came to their own front yards.

They gave Davis no choice. He had to suspend the right of habeas corpus to save the country; he had to seize food in Georgia to feed the army in Virginia; he had to seize wagons in Georgia to help the war in Tennessee; he had to conscript Georgia boys so Alabama boys would not die in vain in Mississippi.

Davis had wanted to serve his people nobly, but they called him "despot"; he wanted to lead as a patriot, but they called him a "scoundrel"; he tried to provide strength for the army, but they said he was "power mad," a "Caesar." Senator Robert Toombs in Georgia had even spoken of "leaving a glorious name like Brutus."

The saddest day that spring was the day that five-year-old Joe Davis fell from the first floor portico to the brick pavement below.

"Oh, no . . . no," Varina muttered as she kneeled over the broken body of her son. Davis bent down beside her, and together they straightened the boy's legs and gently slipped the President's coat under his broken skull to make a pillow. Dr. Garnett came running up with his bag, and the boy's eyes opened ever so slightly, his chest heaved and then collapsed with a child's sigh. He was dead.

They were all paralyzed for a moment. Then the President lifted his hands to the heavens and cried out, "Not mine, oh, Lord, but Thine." He stood and walked over to the columns of the house,

repeating those same phrases over and over. A courier came riding up urgently with a message. The President looked at it for more than a minute, not even reading it, and handed it to Benjamin saying, "I must have this day with my little child."[9]

That night, a small open coffin surrounded by flowers sat in the center of the huge living room. At its foot the family kneeled in prayer. As they knelt, the wide-open windows of the mansion let the soft spring night waft through the curtains. Jeff, Jr., the seven-year-old, whispered in his mother's ear, "I have said all the prayers I know how, but God will not wake Joe."[10] When the silent prayers ended, the President shut himself in his room and paced the floor all night.

A large crowd turned out for little Joe's funeral and watched the President, "straight as an arrow, clear against the sky," standing by the tiny grave of his son. Varina's dark eyes were swollen and empty, scarcely noticing the hundreds of school children marching up the hillside to the cemetery, each carrying a bouquet or a green wreath, which they placed carefully among the white flowers massed around the grave. Varina, a pregnant mother mourning a lost child, was grieving death and nurturing life simultaneously.

Even worse times were coming to Richmond.

Red auction flags dotted the buildings along Main Street as people sold the last of whatever they had. The dragnet of the conscription agents had herded sullen young men from the city offices and auction rooms into compounds, where Winder's detectives kept them under bayonet until the old uniforms of the dead could be issued to them and they could be sent out to the field in locked wagons.

Out on the battlefields, short of medical supplies and racked with scurvy, soldiers had dug for sassafras roots in the woods while their horses turned into bony skeletons for lack of forage during the winter.

Not all the women at home on the plantations were heroines, but many were. Some plowed with old saw ponies, brought in a tobacco crop, and, if there were slaves, worked alongside them, while little girls did the hoeing and the spinning. Others were so helpless that they begged their men to desert and come home. They were all vulnerable to the marauding Yankee soldiers, the fierce Confederate impressment agents, and the Southern riffraff and scalawags careening over the countryside to steal whatever they could.

Some Southern ladies destroyed choice wine and whole libraries

lest the Yankees enjoy them. But in one town while the militiamen poured liquor bottles in the streets the locals sopped it up with their shirts so they could wring it out in their boots.

It seemed odd, in an atmosphere of deprivation, that Richmond society would engage in a night of revelry, but the Cary sisters often gave "starvation parties," and in the city with a tradition of conviviality one took advantage of every opportunity for enjoyment. The women prepared for those parties with a strong sense of duty. Robert E. Lee himself had encouraged them—"Go and look your prettiest"—so his men would have the charm of the women of Richmond to look forward to.

It was all make believe. The parties served no food and only water in wine glasses. They pretended that everything was just the way it used to be, like children at play, and perhaps for a few fleeting moments things would be the same as they were.

Judah Benjamin and Jules St. Martin attended those parties even in the darkest times. Jules always dressed "Parisian style" for social events—hand-tooled boots and a dark suit trimmed in velvet—just to remind the Richmond belles that the St. Martins were Creoles from New Orleans who knew how to live with flair and dress with distinction.

The scenes are recorded in novels and diaries from the times: As the elite walked the few blocks to a party, they might pass a group of scarecrow soldiers in a semicircle around a little black boy dancing the jig, a hat at his feet with several coins in it. The streets were filled with dusty gray uniforms of seasoned soldiers, wounded or furloughed, alongside the fresh grays of the raw recruits. The veterans shuffled along in broken shoes or with feet wrapped in burlap, visual lessons to the innocent eyes of the draftees. Drums continued to roll all day, measuring the death marches of the officers to Hollywood Cemetery. Bugles blared and bells tolled for the new brigades arriving at the Virginia Central Depot. Lines of prisoners in blue shuffled silently and aimlessly toward Libby Prison; deserters in gray shamefully slinked into Castle Thunder. And in the parks, very young boys and old men drilled for civil defense under the watchful eye of a one-armed ex-artilleryman.

Wallowing in lawlessness and decadence while near exhaustion, Richmond was still a city of passion, with a raw edge to its mood that reminded Benjamin of New Orleans. In Locust Alley, the painted

whores languished in the doorways to help the bruised young men forget the terrors of their first battles and give the wily veterans some soft memories to take back to the tents at the front.

Richmond was alive in other ways than the direct, licentious barter on the streets. After the city had driven back the invaders in the first battle of Richmond, the women had begun to return to the city—wives, daughters, bereft brides, eager spinsters, young widows—of all ages, alone in the city while the thousands of Congressmen, generals, diplomats, captains, Senators, aides-de-camp, colonels, ironworkers, cavalrymen, journalists, profiteers, spies, and commanders went about their work. Every moment of life, every minute of warmth was dear. As defeat followed defeat, everyone's bravado had been shattered. It would be a long war and they knew it; one had to squeeze the kernels of possibility out of every day.

Constance Cary and her Baltimore cousins, the sisters Hetty and Jenny, were known as the Cary Invincibles—three high-spirited thoroughbreds with a kind of spunky distinction.[11] Constance had a breezy column in the *Southern Illustrated News,* and Jenny had set to music the poem *Maryland, My Maryland* and had sung it at patriotic meetings, but Hetty was the beauty of the three. She had crossed the Potomac one night in a small boat, sitting on her trunk, after waving her Confederate flag from her window in Baltimore while the Union troops marched by. Hetty had a thick mane of auburn hair. She had brought along sumptuous Northern dresses of deep velvet and dramatic colors, which impressed the clothes-starved belles of Richmond. Every lieutenant in the army dreamed of her. Jeb Stuart once dashed up on his horse, his plume waving from his hat, flung aside his scarlet-lined coat, and held a ladder for Hetty to climb up on and perch while he sang her a ballad.

This was the world Judah P. Benjamin and Varina Davis knew as the war moved into 1864. The mood at the parties has been recorded carefully in various diaries and histories. The young girls seemed like dusty butterflies, chattering in their faded hoop skirts with threadbare sashes and flower-shaped cutouts sewn at irregular places on dresses to cover moth holes. They were fishing for beaux even in the slim pickings of the wounded officers. Quick wartime romances and marriages afforded them special excitement and poignance.

Some of the officers' uniforms were cleaned for the party, but most were frayed and stained. Their boots were shined with gun grease but scuffed beyond repair and worn down to irregular heels. A young captain sat in the corner talking to a belle, whose dress

billowed out to cover the stump of his leg, where his trouser leg was sewn neatly for a crisp appearance. Another couple danced clumsily because the lieutenant's left arm was missing; he could only hold his partner's waist for the turns of the waltz. She tried to cover his obvious embarrassment by holding her free arm at her side, but it occasionally swung out as they whirled.

Guests accepted the water in wine glasses graciously, even though later in the war the water works of Richmond were in such a sorry state that the water invariably had a muddy brown hue to it. Hostesses had to boil and strain it to an acceptable clarity.

Varina wrote about Benjamin's solicitude toward a young woman at a ball in Richmond:

> A very modest quiet girl, by no means pretty, and quite uninteresting, having suddenly discovered that her frock was too decolleté, had gone into a corner, unwilling to dance under the circumstances. Mr. Benjamin passed, and though he had rarely spoken to her, saw her embarrassment, and sat down by her. After a little desultory ballroom talk he said, "How very well you are dressed . . . I could not suggest any improvement in your costume." He told me afterwards how the poor little creature brightened up, and how he took some "grist to her mill" in the shape of partners. "Thus," he said, "I made two green blades grow where only one had been before."[12]

Another woman recalled that Benjamin provided the parties with "his charming stories, his dramatic recitation of scraps of verse, and clever comments on men, women and books."[13]

One observer looked about the room at the number of cripples in it—young men with arms and legs missing, surrounded by fluttering belles—and wrote bitterly in her diary, "Cupid has crutches."[14]

The older women, wives of generals and high officials, gathered at parties of this sort and seemed to imitate the attitudes of their husbands. Some of them acted like faded belles who had not easily made the adjustment to new responsibilities.

"I hear she buys from the black market," Mrs. Lydia Johnston, the wife of General Joseph Johnston, wrote about Varina in a letter to a friend. "She lives like Queen Varina in her palace," Mrs. Johnston continued, "while the rest of us suffer."[15]

Mrs. Henry Foote echoed criticism of Varina with home state vigor: "She is not even pretty, dresses badly and in no taste. She takes little notice of her children because she had public affairs to

attend and they go about with their clothes tossed on in any and every style."[16]

The wife of the Adjutant General was heard to remark, "Well, if you ask me, she's just a squaw."[17]

Everybody in Richmond talked about "Crazy Bet," the old hag who wore a young belle's clothes like a rag doll—a torn bonnet, a dirty dress. It was rumored she was a spy who harbored escaping Northern prisoners in a secret attic in her house. Once she even came to the White House to ask for protection from the threats the rumors brought to her house. But Varina liked her and even had taken her advice on hiring a free slave woman for the White House.

One night, during a typical party at the White House, someone smelled a trace of smoke. When the door to the cellar was opened, a thick cloud of white smoke poured into the room. Guests helped with the bucket brigade—men in dress uniform and formal clothes and women in long dresses—with the President barking instructions to the group. There was evidence of arson in the basement: wood shavings that only because of dampness produced smoke but little flame.

That night, Mary Elizabeth Bowser, the free black servant recommended to Varina by "Crazy Bet," ran off to the North with the Davis's most loyal male house-servant.

In late February 1864, Union Colonel Ulric Dahlgren's daring cavalry raid into Richmond to free the prisoners in Libby Prison dramatized an issue that had been raging throughout the war. The raid was a total failure, and Dahlgren himself was killed. What had occasioned the raid was the condition of prisoners exchanged during the previous three years of the war.

In Fitzhugh Lee's account, President Davis did not take the raid or its implications seriously and even used it to tease his Secretary of State:

> Upon one of Kilpatrick's officers—Colonel Ulric Dahlgren, who was killed—some remarkable papers were found, including a sort of an address to the soldiers to burn Richmond, kill Jeff Davis and Cabinet, and do many other horrible things. The United States Government promptly disclaimed any knowledge of such orders, and so did Meade. Dahlgren was a daring, dashing young fellow, but was too enthusiastic. It is certain the papers published at the time were taken from his person. The Southern President laughed as he read over the originals in his office, and turning to Mr.

> Benjamin, his Secretary of State, who was with him, said, when he reached the word Cabinet, "That is intended for you, Mr. Benjamin."[18]

For Benjamin, the lesson of Dahlgren's raid was clear enough: If the Union was capable of launching a behind-the-lines attack to free prisoners in the South, why shouldn't the Confederates try the same thing in the North? But the plan Benjamin discussed with Davis was much more grandiose: a well-funded secret service mission would be set up in Canada to (1) conduct raids across the Great Lakes into the prison camps and free Confederate prisoners; (2) make contact and common purpose with the thousands of Confederate sympathizers or copperheads along the Canadian border who either belonged to or gave comfort to the Knights of the Golden circle and the Sons of Liberty; and (3) seize U.S. arsenals to arm this fantasy army of freed prisoners, copperheads, and antiwar fanatics and build them into such a significant force that they might foment a revolution or march South. At a minimum they could disrupt the elections of 1864 and help the Democrats oust Lincoln. Perhaps, also, they might sabotage the bridges and supply lines in the North; stir up more riots against Lincoln's conscription laws in the cities; and perhaps even create such concern in Washington about Canada that the Union might do something foolish and move troops onto Canadian soil, thus forcing Britain to enter the war to protect Canada from American conquest.

Davis flinched at the wild whimsy of such a scheme, and his answer indicated the roots of his doubts: "Find me a West Point man," he said to Benjamin. But a respected military man would not take the job. Instead, after a number of others turned it down, Jacob Thompson, former Governor of Mississippi and former Secretary of the Interior under Buchanan, was persuaded to try the Canadian mission. Thompson, the man Davis had defeated by one vote in his reelection to the Senate in 1858, was approved by the President, though with reservations since he was not a West Point graduate. Benjamin arranged the funding, $900,000 in a combination of gold and English pounds through the sale of 25,000 bales of cotton abroad and a drawing account on Canadian banks (and no accountability except his honor). Thompson was given the broadest possible charge in a letter from Davis on April 27:

> Confiding special trust in your zeal, discretion, and patriotism, I hereby direct you to proceed at once to Canada, there to carry out such instructions as you have received from me verbally,

> in such manner as shall seem most likely to conduce the furtherance of interests of the Confederate States of America which have been instructed to you.[19]

In order to alert Slidell to his latest moves, Benjamin notified him of part of the plan in the "hope of aiding the disruption between the Eastern and Western states in the approaching election in the North. It is supposed that much good can be done by the purchase of some of the principal presses, especially in the Northwest."[20]

15

The Confederate Emancipation Proclamation

The "mud truce" of the winter 1863–64 was over, and Grant began to implement his plan, which Sherman later was able to put into very few words: "He was to go for Lee and I was to go for Joe Johnston. That was his plan."

Grant moved out into the field, where he concentrated 120,000 troops to develop maximum fighting strength and firepower against his Virginia opponent. He brought "Beast" Butler up from New Orleans to join Meade. Their instructions indicated that this was not to be just another "On to Richmond" campaign. "Lee's army will be your objective point," his orders said to his generals. "Wherever Lee goes, you will go also."[1]

In the West, Sherman's orders were to "move against Johnston's army, to break it up, and to go into the interior of the enemy's country as far as he could, inflicting all the damage he could upon their war resources." Atlanta would be Sherman's objective, Richmond would be Grant's and whoever conquered first would turn to help the other toward "speedy termination."[2]

Grant's plan was to attack Lee from three sides. Lincoln characterized it as "those not skinning can hold a leg."[3]

Because of Grant's tenacity and determination to gain position, the Union army marched extensively at night, and the sky lit up with night fighting in the tangled undergrowth of the Wilderness

area of Virginia. For twelve days the armies battled at Spotsylvania, until Grant decided on an all-out assault.

Six thousand Union soldiers were killed or wounded in one hour, but within weeks Grant had fresh men to replace them.

In the meantime, Grant decided to send "Little Phil" Sheridan on a cavalry raid behind the lines to Richmond, which Lee countered with the prize of the Confederate cavalry, Jeb Stuart. Stuart now rode with a banjo player at his side, because the strumming of the music and the singing stirred him to do battle. The purpose now was not to engage, however, but to avoid a confrontation. Sheridan, outnumbering Stuart by better than three to one, kept trying to draw the Confederates into a head-to-head battle, but Stuart refused to oblige him.

Eventually Stuart had to meet Sheridan in heavy hand-to-hand combat with pistols, sabers, bayonets, and fists. Jeb Stuart, in his red-lined cape and plumed hat, kept urging his men on, riding to the heat of battle, motioning with one hand and firing his silver-plated pistol in the other. "Go back, General, go back," one of his men screamed, but it was too late. Almost a year to the day after Stonewall's death, Lee lost his "eyes" and the South lost the dashing Jeb Stuart to a single gunshot fired from 30 feet away.[4]

Grant took advantage of the blindness. In eight hours, 101 pontoons were laid across a supposedly uncrossable 2,100-foot-wide point of the James River, and Grant marched his army to Petersburg, 23 miles south of Richmond, to destroy Lee's supply source.

Lee intercepted him just outside Petersburg. Through June the armies battled in the extensive trenches surrounding the city. On June 25, 1864, a division of Union miners spent one month digging a long tunnel under the Confederates lines, which they blew up on July 30 with four tons of powder, making a crater 170 feet long, 60 feet wide, and 25 feet deep. The Union soldiers, apparently as stunned by the blast as the Confederates, did not follow up vigorously. Bungling their greatest opportunity, Grant's army again and again tried various assaults, until Grant finally settled for the same strategy that eventually won him Vicksburg. The ten-month seige of Petersburg began.

When Andrew Johnson, the Governor of Tennessee, received the nomination for Vice President to run on the Lincoln ticket in 1864, it stimulated the memory of Rabbi Isaac Wise, the founder of Hebrew Union College and the leading Reform Jewish leader in the country. Wise, who was also editor of the *Israelite,* asked his literary editor,

H. M. Moos, whose former service as a guide for Federal troops in Tennessee gave him proven Union party credentials, to write a letter to Johnson about a remark Johnson had made in 1860. Johnson had been lashing out at a number of Southern senators for dividing the Union. "Mr. Benjamin, of Louisiana," he had said, "—one that understands something about the idea of dividing garments; who belongs to that tribe that parted the garments of our Savior, and for this venture cast lots—went out of this body [U.S. Senate] and was made attorney general, to show his patriotism and disinterestness."[5]

Moos wrote Johnson, "I cannot believe that you . . . could have said that Benjamin was of that cursed race which stoned the prophets and crucified the redeemer of the world &c &c, leaving an impression upon the ignorant mass, calculated to have a baleful influence on those who are already too much prejudiced against my people." Moos also complained about the remark of Governor John Brough of Ohio, who declared in a 1864 campaign speech that Benjamin was not very trustworthy because "he is a Jew by birth and a politician by trade." Moos complained that "loose and uncalled for remarks against my race . . . will deprive us in the coming election of ten thousands of votes. . . ."[6]

It was significant that Benjamin was being defended by one of the most noted Jewish journals of the day and that its editors considered anti-Semitic slurs against him to be aimed at all Jews in America, North and South. They even suggested to a probable Vice President of the United States that such remarks might cost the Lincoln ticket a substantial number of votes.

The campaign caused feelings about Jews to run high. The Hudson, New York, *Gazette* claimed that Jews were prepared to "crucify Abraham Lincoln as they had crucified the Savior."[7]

While Grant was moving on Lee at Petersburg, the red-bearded General Sherman began his pursuit of Joe Johnston and the prize of Atlanta.

Outnumbered by Sherman by 110,000 to 45,000, Johnston was true to his history, this time more than ever out of necessity. He kept retreating, hoping to catch his opponent in a mistake, postponing the battle for Atlanta as long as he could in the expectation that the longer the war went on, the stronger would grow the opposition to Lincoln in this fourth spring of fighting. Sherman stalked him, carefully forgoing the prize of Atlanta for the moment. The destruction

of Johnston's army was his immediate purpose. For two months they shadow-boxed, Sherman flanking, Johnston retreating, a Union feint to the left, a Confederate step back. The Confederate army fell back as if in a giant waltz with Sherman, all the way from Tennessee, just as it had in that second year of the war when McClellan stalked Johnston back toward Richmond. During the retreat, the temper of the population of Georgia rose to a boiling point, because each place that Johnston abandoned would end up in ashes a few days later.

Johnston crossed the Chatahoochee River in front of Atlanta, destroyed the bridges, and paused to take stock. The two armies, like giant crabs measuring each other, had come three-fourths of the way to Atlanta and had still not fought a major battle. Years later, Judah Benjamin sized up Johnston crisply to Jefferson Davis: "From a close observation of his career," Benjamin wrote in 1879, "I became persuaded that his nervous dread of *losing a battle* would prevent at all times his ability to cope with an enemy of nearly equal strength, and that opportunities would thus constantly be lost."[8]

Varina's birth screams shook the White House. The President sat in the downstairs parlor waiting the delivery of the child.

The President had reason to worry deeply about her. Varina was now thirty-seven, her black hair showing traces of gray. Mourning the death of one child had sapped her energy just when she needed the strength to bear another. Davis began to pace nervously, the cries upstairs of Varina alerting him to the closeness of birth.

Suddenly the sound of a baby wailing came from the room, and a voice called for him. Varina lay in the bed, drawn and white, holding a girl in her arms as it cried softly. Davis smiled at the bundle, all red-faced and healthy, and bent down to kiss Varina.

They called the baby Varina Ann and nicknamed her "Winnie," Davis's pet name for Varina herself. Winnie would always be known as the daughter of the Confederacy. The sounds of another baby crying must have added a tragic reminder to the White House of the two sons who had died as children.

The bad news from every corner emboldened Representative Duncan Kenner of Louisiana to consider moving politically against slavery on a public front. He had been exploring with friends and with contacts in England and France ways in which the South could entice either country into the war. He felt that foreign intervention was

the South's only chance now and that England was disposed to help. England, after all, had lost two wars to the United States government and wanted to see two governments on the North American continent. But England would never come into the war on the side of slavery. Since the fall of New Orleans in 1862, Kenner had concluded that emancipation was the only hope of staving off defeat.

Kenner planned to move in Congress that a special commission be sent to Europe with a proposal for the English and French governments: If they would acknowledge the Southern Confederacy, the South would abolish slavery. If the commission received a positive sign, he believed, Jefferson Davis should issue an Emancipation Proclamation, freeing the slaves at some future date. That would be followed immediately by formal recognition from Britain and France and a call by them for a sixty-day truce, and insistence on the lifting of the blockade.

Kenner agreed with Benjamin that if the Union won the war, the slaves would be free anyway, and that everything the South had been fighting for—freedom, nationhood, slavery—would be lost under the boot of Federal authorities. He wanted Davis to move immediately, to shift the moral burden of the war away from the South and onto the North, to show the world that this was not a war against slavery but a war to preserve Union wealth and dominance over the South. The bold stroke would do it, he felt. The North would be hypocritical to fight on after such a step by Davis, and if it did, England and France would not stand for it. In one instant, he said, the South could pull the rug out from under Lincoln and shift the burden of explaining the war to the North. Kenner asked for Benjamin's help. He asked Benjamin to convince the President that slavery was over anyway now—not only had England abolished it in 1833, but slavery was in retreat as an outmoded institution all over the world and could not survive no matter what the South did.

Benjamin saw that Kenner had arrived at a conclusion similar to his own and could be useful. He would be an excellent schemer in the Congress, but Benjamin had to play his cards with care. The impetus must come from the military and must not surprise the President. That would be a complicated hand to play.

Benjamin knew that neither Jefferson Davis nor the Congress would even consider emancipation unless it looked like the only way to avoid defeat. Even then, Benjamin wasn't sure that they would not rather lose the war.

It was ironic that Benjamin, who had once owned slaves, and Duncan Kenner, who had owned even more slaves until Grant conquered Louisiana, would be planning to discuss emancipation with a slaveowning President of the Confederacy. Benjamin knew that Davis would be shocked at the suggestion and worried about the desperation Kenner's introduction of such a resolution might reveal, as well as concerned with the morale of the troops should such a debate occur in the middle of the war. He also knew that Davis would dismiss Kenner as a former slaveowner with nothing more to lose. But Benjamin thought it good for the President to hear the proposal as groundwork for his own plans.

While Sherman marched on Atlanta, the Thompson mission to Canada turned into a comic opera. By August 29, 1864, Thompson had spent tens of thousands of dollars on a plan to bring thousands of copperheads to Chicago for demonstrations during the Democratic Convention. The theory propounded by Tom Hines, who had been one of Joe Morgan's Raiders, was that at least a hundred thousand peace party sympathizers would be in Chicago. They would join five hundred armed men calling for a revolution and would storm the prison, Camp Douglas, then the federal arsenal, and "by dawn" the Northern cities would be aflame. An informer notified authorities, who called for three thousand troops; Federal agents confiscated, in boxes marked "Sunday School Books," more than four thousand revolvers and 135,000 rounds of ammunition. Only twenty-five volunteers had answered the call for five hundred. Three of the Confederate planners were arrested, and Thompson had to foot the bill for round-trip tickets for several hundred "demonstrators."

In September, a Confederate soldier of fortune named John Yates Beall persuaded Thompson to try a scheme that had been rejected for at least eighteen months by Secretary of the Navy Mallory. The idea was to capture the *USS Michigan,* the only Federal gunboat patrolling the Great Lakes and—"by dawn" again—to "raze the lake shore cities," "storm the Johnson Island prison," and "capture the federal arsenal at Sandusky and start the revolution." A former Confederate cavalryman named Cole would give a dinner in honor of the captain and mates aboard the *Michigan,* serve them drugged champagne, and send up flares to signal the waiting marauders after the crew had passed out.

Beall and twenty others first seized a steamer ferrying passengers between Detroit and Sandusky. They then pulled up alongside another

ferry, threw grappling hooks onto its deck, and boarded. Beall kicked open the wheelhouse and dramatically announced, "This ship is a prize of the Confederate States of America. I warn you not to resist."

The captain did not even stand up or stop smoking his pipe. Almost casually he replied, "The ship is yours." Beall put the passengers and crew ashore, towed the ferry to the middle of the lake, and scuttled it. He then awaited the flare that never came. Cole had been arrested on a tip by an informer from Beall's own ranks. The men of the raiding party, having learned that they had been found out, demanded to be put ashore on the Canadian side of the lake (Beall forced them to sign a statement saying it was their decision, not his). Once ashore, they turned the captured steamship back with no one aboard and watched it burn in the gray dawn.

Beall was later arrested for trying to wreck a passenger train and rob an express office to finance further operations. He was convicted of "guerrilla warfare against the United States Government" and hanged.[9]

Thompson and his entourage in Canada decided on more daring measures after the fizzles in Chicago and on the lakes. Under the leadership of a Bible-quoting Confederate lieutenant named Bennett Young, a handful of men (fewer than twenty) were dispatched to the sleepy town of St. Albans, Vermont, just on the other side of the Canadian border. They arrived in pairs over successive days, during which time Young spent his time discussing theology with a pretty girl he met in the town's hotel. On the agreed-upon day, they walked into the town square wearing heavy overcoats, which, once in position, they all flung off, revealing Confederate uniforms. Young announced from the steps of the hotel, "This city is now in the possession of the Confederate States of America!"

Local farmers, dozing in their wagons, thought they had not heard right. Then four horsemen, also in uniform, pranced their horses at the head of the main street and, with a wild rebel yell, dashed down the street brandishing revolvers as other horses in town reared in fright and the townsfolk scattered. The invaders robbed three banks and made off with $175,000, but not without considerable ceremony and delay. First an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy and Jefferson Davis was administered to the bank presidents and the tellers. Then the stolen bags of gold were found to be too heavy to drag out of the banks, so the booty was divided into smaller sacks. The robbers sat down with a Mr. Armington, who regularly visited the town to buy gold, and calmly negotiated a deal for their loot based on the

prices quoted in the financial columns of the St. Albans *Messenger.* When the invaders' horses still could not stand up under the load across their saddles, they emptied out the less valuable silver in the street and rode to the livery stables to steal more horses.

By then the townspeople had gotten guns and had started to open fire. The stable owner aimed at Lieutenant Young and pulled the trigger three times, but each time all he got was a "click." He threw down his pistol and went back to the stable.

The Confederates tore up and down the main street tossing forty bottles of Greek fire, a phosphorus-based hand grenade, into the doorways of the hotel and the stores, and with a whoosh the street was in flames. The townspeople turned their attention to forming a bucket brigade. Then the raiders galloped out of town, split up, and eluded the St. Albans posse, which had trouble rounding up horses for the pursuit.

The headlines on a special issue of the local paper, the *Messenger,* said, "St. Albans Has Been Surprised and Excited Today." The Governor called out the militia, which crossed the border and captured Young and seven of his men. But the British garrison refused to let the prisoners be taken back to the United States. It held them for two weeks despite demands from Seward for their extradition. The Confederates were tried in Montreal in a festive, pro-Confederate atmosphere. Their lawyer sent them chilled wine and sliced chicken every day in jail in the hands of pretty sympathizers.[10]

Back in Richmond, Benjamin and the President met to discuss the Thompson mission. The President complained that because Thompson was no military man, he was merely playing spy games in Canada. St. Albans was not exactly Benjamin's idea of a "secret" service mission either, with uniforms, speeches, daylight bank robberies, and rebel yells. However, the court in Montreal was calling for signed orders from Richmond, without which Young and the others would be charged with a felony, extradited, and probably hanged.

Benjamin wrote out an indignant complaint to Thompson and entrusted it, with the required military orders, to the most reliable courier to Canada, John Surratt, "Little Johnny," so called because he was six-foot-three but could slip in and out of any place in a variety of disguises. Johnny enjoyed the secrecy and the excitement of the life of a high-level secret courier; he was familiar with all the backwaters and knew the men with rowboats, rafts, or oyster boats who for a few dollars would help. He could smuggle himself

into Washington and then travel by train to Canada. He knew the Union capital and its countryside well, because he and his mother lived there in a boardinghouse that catered to Confederate sympathizers.

Little Johnny would get through. He always did.

The judge in the St. Albans trial, thanks to the evidence offered by the defense in the form of orders from the Confederate Secretary of State, ruled that the raid had been "a hostile expedition by the Confederate States against the United States" and not a felony, hence not extraditable. The raiders were rearrested for violating Canadian neutrality; in three weeks they were found not guilty and freed.

Young wrote a letter to the manager of the hotel in St. Albans asking that his regards be given to the president and teller of one of the banks. "We have heard nothing from the old gent. . . . I presume he is still faithful to the pledge and is fixed in that old armchair. If so, tell the old 'boozer' his term of sentence is now expired. . . . Please remember me to the lady next door whose good opinion I had the good fortune to win, on account of our theological proclivities. Make to her your best bow."[11]

"Let us destroy Atlanta," Sherman said, "and make it a desolation."[12]

Davis had replaced Johnston with General John B. Hood, a hard-driving bulldog who had lost an arm and a leg in battle and had to be strapped into the saddle.

But Hood could not hold off Sherman. On the night of September 2, after Hood's withdrawal toward Tennessee, enormous explosions shook the city of Atlanta as the rebels burned and exploded eighty-one carloads of ammunition and five locomotives. Fire and looting struck the abandoned city, and refugees crowded the roads leading out.

The South wanted to deny the invaders their spoils and leave Atlanta in ashes, but what was left standing, Sherman finished. Black smoke arose over the ruined city. "All the verbal descriptions of hell I have ever seen," a Union major wrote, "never gave me half so vivid an idea of it as this flame-wrapped city tonight."[13]

With Hood fleeing northward, the entire south Georgia countryside lay before Sherman's eyes, defenseless and ripe, sloping down to Savannah and the coast.

"I propose that we break up the railroad," he had written to Grant when he began, "from Chattanooga forward. . . . Until we can repopu-

late Georgia, it is useless for us to occupy it; but the utter destruction of its roads, houses, and people will cripple their military resources. . . . I can make Georgia howl."[14]

On November 12, William Tecumseh Sherman began his infamous March to the Sea.

The fall of Atlanta assured Lincoln's reelection and stirred Benjamin to make his move at last. Regardless of Davis's exhortations to victory, only Lee's starving army, trapped in the siege of Petersburg, stood between the misery of the present and the inevitable fall of Richmond. The oncoming winter of 1864 would bring terrible suffering to the army, more than half its men without shoes, but it was a gift of time. Benjamin calculated that the South had five months to win the war with a last-minute grand gesture.

The news was growing worse. Sherman was massing overwhelming superiority to assault Georgia all the way to Savannah. Lincoln had moved Grant to Virginia to confront Lee. It would be a painful autumn, but it was time for Benjamin to implement his plan.

Varina must have been stunned the first time she heard of it. For more than two years, the South had kept in reserve the one step that could turn the whole war upside down overnight. It would be shocking to many and stunning to the enemy, but Benjamin had come to the conclusion that this step was their only chance. He wanted the President to agree to issue a Confederate Emancipation Proclamation.

His plan consisted of two steps: First, the Confederacy would send Duncan Kenner to London with an offer to exchange emancipation for British entry. Only if the South received firm and absolute guarantees would the President issue the edict. The Senate would scream at first, but if the British came in and broke the blockade, and if Grant was forced to pull back to protect Washington from a foreign invasion, ultimately the South would come to see the President as a far-seeing leader who had saved them.

There were few things Davis and Benjamin, as leaders, could now do. The truths were no longer in their principles but on the battlefield, where it would all end if they did not act. Benjamin wanted Varina to talk to the President, to help persuade him to send Kenner to Europe in the name of the Confederacy. If the British and the French showed enthusiasm, Confederate leaders could decide their next step, based on the President's judgment of the situation.

Desertion and sickness rates were depleting Lee's army to the

point where his men had to fight twice their numbers. Benjamin wanted Davis to permit slaves to fight for the South in exchange for their freedom. The key to success was getting Lee to request it.

Lee had already supported the impressment of slaves as haulers, cooks, teamsters, and blacksmiths. Fighting as soldiers was the natural next step. If Lee agreed to write a letter of support, then Varina and Benjamin would have to convince the President to back it. The President would only be doing what was right, that is, complying with the request of his best general in the field.

Without Lee, the politicians who already hated Davis would all turn on Benjamin and Davis with fresh vehemence. But if Lee agreed, the fire-eaters would find themselves outflanked, opposing a request of their best general. All Davis would have to say was, "If Lee wants it, so be it."

Varina must have seen the problem most clearly from Davis's point of view. Would the President have to make a speech in favor of emancipation? It was a shrewd question. Perhaps if it were too humiliating for Davis to speak out, that would be a problem. What is more, he was probably incapable of making the kind of speech that would carry the day. Benjamin suggested an answer.

He agreed that he, as Secretary of State, would make the presentation at an open meeting of the Congress and other interested people.

He wanted to move forward right away, sending Kenner to London. It would take at least a month for Kenner to get there, for an audience to be requested and granted, and for the British to answer—a month, if they were lucky. The blockade could make it longer, and British timidity, still longer. While the South waited for that answer, the government would proceed immediately with the debate on enlistment and emancipation.

The card player in Benjamin had learned to assess risks. If the Confederacy did nothing, the slaves would be freed anyway. The Yankees were using Negro troops against them, many of them born in the South and recently dressed in blue uniforms. They called it "liberation." The Yankees burned plantations, then took the liberated slaves and outfitted them as soldiers to burn more.

"If the enemy burn and forage corn in our route," Sherman said at the beginning of his march to the sea, "houses, barns, and cotton gins must also be burned to keep them company."[15]

Sixty-two thousand men began the march from Atlanta, singing "Glory, Glory Hallelujah" and "We'll hang Jeff Davis from a sour

apple tree," with orders from Sherman to "forage liberally" among the squealing pigs, fatted hens, and stuffed corncribs in the rich Georgia countryside, so far untouched by the war because the Governor had been saving its provisions for Georgia soldiers.

It was crazy. Lee was starving because the Virginia farms were trampled, and Georgia believed in a version of states rights that kept the cornucopia to itself and demanded that Georgia boys be taken from Lee's army to defend their homes. After all, Governor Brown asked, "Isn't this a war to defend states' rights?"

Sherman's intention was clear: to visit a "devastation more or less relentless." Though the written orders asked for restraint and respect of private property, the troops were not disciplined against violations of honor. They pillaged, robbed, and burned plantations, gleefully brushing aside the mothers and daughters whose men were off fighting. When officers were not with them, parties of foragers would do worse. The only resistance to the blue marauders lay in squads of old men and young boys, roughly assembled in the hundreds as militia and easily slaughtered in the skirmishes that passed for battles in the eyes of the locals.

Twenty-five thousand slaves joined the march behind Sherman, but the general suggested to their ministers that they be sent home, not wanting to be "loaded down with useless mouths." When the army crossed a river, it burned the bridge. Hundreds of blacks drowned in the crunch of eager paraders. In Milledgeville, the state capital, the army ransacked the state house, tossing books out the window. Soldiers held a mock session "in the spirit of mischief" in the Hall of Representatives, repealing the articles of secession. Two hundred miles of railway were transformed into "Sherman's neckties"—twisted steel tracks standing in the air like bows.

Finally the Union forces reached Savannah. A soldier looked back at what they had done. "The destruction could hardly have been worse," he wrote in his diary, "if Atlanta had been a volcano in eruption and the molten lava had flowed in a stream 60 miles wide and five times as long."[16]

THE NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE
NOVEMBER 27, 1864
Attempt to Burn City
Discovery of Vast Rebel Conspiracy
Twelve Hotels Fired by Torpedoes and Phosphorus
Prompt Frustration of the Scheme
Arrest of Four of the Principals

GREAT PANIC AT BARNUM'S MUSEUM

The Perpetrators to be Tried by Court Martial
and Hanged Immediately
Full Development of the Plot

It was a twenty-eight-column story in the New York *Herald Tribune* that revealed the full details of the "rebel conspiracy": A small group of men had arrived in New York with suitcases containing 140 firebombs. They had rendezvoused and had set a specific time for the simultaneous burnings that they hoped would engulf the whole city. The details, the paper said, were revealed by an informer who sat in on the meetings in Toronto with Confederate Commissioner Jacob Thompson and the men involved. The paper also noted that the informer had been paid $70,000 in gold for the information.

Most of the story told of the reactions in the hotels and the dramatic events at P. T. Barnum's Museum, where elephants trumpeted, tigers roared, and a giant 7-foot woman went berserk, requiring twelve men to subdue her. When the fugitives who were not yet caught read about the plot in the paper, complete with details about themselves right down to the color of their eyes and clothes, they immediately took a train to Albany and crossed over into Canada, past dozens of police searching for them. They were eager to report the details to Thompson. The truth was that the attack was another fizzle—smoke in some hotels, less than a thousand dollars' damage in others, one big fire—just enough to make New Yorkers furious, but not enough to hurt anything.

The incident aroused nationwide speculation as to whether such widespread destruction of civilian property was now official Confederate policy, in retribution for Sherman's march.

L. Q. Washington, the private secretary to Benjamin during the war, wrote to Lawley:

> I was present at the time when Mr. Thompson received his instructions from Mr. Benjamin. They were oral and largely suggestive and informal. Much was left to his discretion and wisely; for he was an experienced and conservative man. But there was not a word or a thought that looked to any violations of the rules of war, as they exist, among civilized nations. As a matter of fact, Mr. Davis, Mr. Benjamin, General Lee and the other leaders of the Confederacy believed to the last that it was not merely right,

> but the wisest and best policy to maintain and respect every one of the humane restrictions in the conduct of war which are upheld by the publicists.[17]

Benjamin was embarrassed and furious about the mission. The damage done, or lack of it, did not matter—after all, look what Sherman was doing in Georgia. But once more it was hideously bungled: full stories in the newspaper, lack of discretion in choosing the parties to the plot, and the selection of targets, as if hotels were military installations. The most the raid could accomplish was to create excitement, stirring up vast numbers of people against the South without destroying crucial supply depots, military trains, or arsenals to make the mission worthwhile. It made the papers without making any difference.

The President had lost his patience. He felt that Thompson was just throwing away money in Canada; there were rumors that any deserter could get a couple of thousand dollars by just saying he wanted to organize a Sons of Liberty operation somewhere.

Benjamin agreed. Thompson had asked to come home, but he was in the middle of a campaign to induce thousands of Yankees to exchange their paper for gold and to hoard it as protection against the collapse of the North. Benjamin would instruct him to see that episode through, to wrap up other activities, and to shut down as soon as he felt it was possible.

Thompson's gold plan was also meaningless and ill-conceived. He handed $100,000 out of his Confederate accounts to a Nashville banker to spend in New York in an attempt at creating a run on the gold market. Not only did the propaganda campaign fail to create panic, but it was naive to suppose such a small purchase of gold would have any impact on the market at all.

The truth was that at this stage of the war, the financial crisis lay in the empty shell of the Confederate dollar, not in the stability of Yankee greenbacks.

The Confederate spies, facing ridicule for their cavalcade of bungled operations, began to try more bizarre capers to recoup their reputations. In late December they tried to derail a train with the aim of freeing a group of high-ranking Confederate prisoners and taking them to Canada. Apparently it never occurred to them that all the captive generals and colonels could be killed in a successful derailment. Because it was snowing, the rescue group traveled in sleighs. When they reached the site chosen for the derailing, they discovered

they had forgotten to bring a crowbar. Unable to pull up the tracks, they simply laid a small iron rail across them and waited in the shadows to pounce on the guards when the train jumped the tracks.

They watched the one-eyed colossus come barreling through the night. As it passed the ambush point, it merely brushed the rail aside like a toothpick and continued down the tracks. The disgusted Confederates climbed into their sleighs and returned home.

The spies, still more panicked after yet another failure, began to freelance more, with less and less control by Thompson. Two Confederates came up with the idea of kidnapping Vice President Andrew Johnson and demanding as ransom the release of all Confederate prisoners "by dawn." The Vice President was visiting Louisville, Kentucky, and the would-be kidnappers mulled over their elaborate plan: One would engage Johnson in conversation in his room about a possible job. The other would burst in through the door, left unlocked by the first man, and would get the drop on the Vice President with a pistol. The two would tie him up and gag him, place his coat over his head and shoulders, and pretend they were taking a sick friend to the hospital.

The plotters hired a closed carriage for the job but had to postpone the abduction the first night because no driver showed up. On the second night, all signs were positive. The pair stealthily crept down the hall to the Vice President's door. They knocked. Everything was perfectly planned, except that the Vice President had left for Cincinnati after lunch that day.

Lee meanwhile agreed to the "Negro enlistment" plan, but he felt that whatever had to be done should be done at once; it would take time to "organize and discipline the Negroes."[18]

Lee did not specifically mention the nature of immediate reward for the Negroes in his letter, but he did say that he could see no way of attracting the large numbers the South needed without some promise of postwar emancipation. He suggested that the government initially use 40,000 Negroes in the army as workers and not consider arming them except in dire necessity. That would give him the discretion to issue arms. If Benjamin and the President ended up advocating emancipation as a reward for service, he agreed to support them publicly during the debates.

Lee was motivated by the condition of his army. His soldiers were shivering like children in the snow—no overcoats, no shoes, living on a pint of cornmeal a day, so many weevils in it, they could

barely stomach it, and an ounce of rancid bacon. The riflemen were limited to eighteen caps a day, while the Federals were getting bruised shoulders from squeezing off a hundred rounds a day. So the men scavenged for shells and metal scraps after dark, risking death, because Lee would reward them with furloughs if they were successful.

The Yankees were so close that Lee's men sometimes could smell their food cooking. Some of the boys deserted for food, a blanket, and some boots.

Lee's hair and moustache were totally gray now. Although he had aged, his face was ruddy and his eyes clear. His own diet was no more than some boiled cabbage. Each day he rode out among his troops, always an inspiration to them. They would end up fighting with sticks and stones if something were not done soon.

In November 1864, the President's annual message to the Congress contained words written by Benjamin that paved the way for the Secretary of State's proposal by advocating "a radical modification in the theory of law" that treated slaves "merely as property," subject to impressment like a horse or a wagon. The new theory, stated to the Congress, was that "the slave bears another relationship to the state—that of a person" and that "emancipation should be held out to him as a reward for faithful service."[19] That was an extraordinary change in principle, but the speech portrayed such a step as a mere extension of the law already in existence, which enabled the short-term impressment of slaves to serve as cooks, as teamsters, or for work on fortifications and in hospitals. Benjamin's "modification" would enable the government to use slaves for longer periods in more responsible positions, working as engineer laborers, constructing camps, driving and parking supply wagons—without compensating the masters.

Davis would not endorse Benjamin's entire proposition. He was adamant against "immediate manumission" or "arming the slaves for the duty of soldiers." He asserted that "until our white population prove insufficient for the armies we require and can afford to keep in the field, to employ as a soldier, the negro, who has merely been trained to labor, and as a laborer [to] the white man, accustomed from his youth to the use of firearms, would scarcely be wise or advantageous." The long-term goal, he said, was the "fulfillment of the tasks so happily begun—that of Christianizing and improving the conditions of the Africans, who have, by the will of Providence, been placed in our charge."[20]

No record exists of the crucial meeting that occurred between

Benjamin and Davis in which Benjamin laid out the details of his plan to emancipate the slaves in exchange for European intervention in the war. Kenner had expressed willingness to undertake the mission for the Confederacy. He would work through Mason and Slidell in Paris and would go to London and Paris in person for direct talks.

Davis balked. He would not agree to free them all at once, just like that, as Lincoln had. He wanted to ensure a fair and reasonable adjustment on both sides. If the British and French wanted to hear more, Benjamin could tell Kenner to say that Davis would go to Congress with a bill to let the slaves go free if they would fight for the South.

At least Kenner would have a chance.

Benjamin hurried over to Kenner's office in the Capitol with the word from the President. Kenner was to sound them out as to what effect emancipation would have—"not suddenly and all at once, but so far as to insure abolition in a fair and reasonable time."

It was, at least, a final gamble at saving the South.

16

The Speech to Free the Slaves

In the dark days, the social set in Richmond looked forward to weddings, which provided the only genuine excuse for parties and celebration. The churches stayed open and lighted through the night to accommodate the young couples. Whatever the tomorrows would bring, no one admitted the risks or spoke of them aloud, and the weddings took on the gay colors and sounds of happier times. Parents scrimped before and after each ceremony to provide a bountiful table of fresh bread, butter, apple toddies, and wild turkeys and venison. Only for the most special occasions would a family use extra ammunition for hunting.

To newcomers to Richmond, the costumes for weddings might have appeared somewhat bizarre: At one wedding the bridesmaids wore black and the bride a gray homespun she had worn all winter long.

No wedding of the season created greater anticipation than that of the beautiful Hetty Cary to young General John Pegram. Many a beau had sought her hand, but she had finally yielded to the son of one of Richmond's finest families. Friends recalled the string of unsettling omens on her wedding day: A mirror was accidentally broken on the bride's dressing table; horses balked and refused to draw the wedding carriage; and the bride stepped on her ivory-white wedding veil and tore it as she entered Saint Paul's Church.

Hetty rode as far as Petersburg on the train for the honeymoon. Three weeks later she accompanied her husband's body back to

Saint Paul's for his funeral. This time she wore a widow's veil at the altar, standing on just the spot where she had been married.

"Old Man" Francis Blair had known every U.S. President since Andrew Jackson. Because he was one of the few common friends of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis, his letter to Davis in early January of 1865, asking for an audience "to unbosom my heart frankly and without reserve [as to] the state of affairs of our country," had to be taken seriously.[1]

The timing was bad, however. There was a solid bloc in Congress demanding some settlement, and the leaders in Georgia were virtually conducting their own negotiations. Blair's visit from Washington was a chance to regain the initiative, to tell the turntails in the Confederate Congress that Davis had talked to him and that the Yankees were still pressing unconditional surrender.

Blair was an old friend of Davis's Washington days, and Varina resolved to greet him warmly and with spirits high. Still, the Richmond *Examiner* could complain "it is impossible to conceive of any two Yankees in all the North more unlikely to have an honest errand in coming to Richmond at this day: any given couple of Hebrew blockade-runners would be much more welcome visitors."[2]

Blair's plan or, as he called it, his "suggestions," were fanciful, involving a cessation of hostilities for as long as it would take to drive Emperor Maximillian and the French out of Mexico, with an expeditionary force led by none other than Jefferson Davis: "After the Monroe Doctrine is restored to the continent, the two governments could sit down in common victory to work out a peace."[3]

Davis and Benjamin conferred alone and agreed to send Blair back to Washington with a letter saying they would send a commission to a peace conference if one were arranged. In four days, Lincoln agreed by return letter. For the first time in four years, Benjamin and the President conferred with their Vice President, who was to lead the Hampton Roads commission, Alexander Stephens of Georgia.

The prickly, dwarflike Vice President arrived in Richmond for a no-frills, down-to-earth meeting, with no mention of his troublemaking in Georgia with Governor Joseph Brown. Stephens, deeply chagrined over Sherman's march, was in no mood to object to anything that might stop the destruction at home. Davis appointed Stephens and two others known as "submissionists" to see Lincoln on a ship docked at Hampton Roads, Virginia.

After Stephens retired for the night, Benjamin and Davis conferred. Benjamin carefully drafted the instructions: "In conformity with the

letter of Mr. Lincoln . . . you are requested to proceed to Washington City for a conference with him upon the subject to which the letter relates."

He slid the paper across the table for Davis to read. It was difficult to know how to instruct the commission, so Benjamin had left the wording as general as possible. Davis scribbled on the paper with his head bowed in concentration.

He handed the document back to Benjamin, who scanned it quickly: ". . . you are requested to proceed to Washington City for an informal conference with him upon the issues involved in the existing war, and for the purpose of securing peace to the *two countries*."[4]

Benjamin surely understood what those last two words would mean to the mission, for Lincoln's letter had used the phrase, "with the view of securing peace to the people of our one common country."

Davis had scuttled the peace mission before the emissaries had even left Richmond.

Benjamin worked behind the scenes to rally support in the slave states for the idea of emancipation. To a former classmate in Charleston, he wrote in December 1864 that "for a year past I have seen that the period was fast approaching when we should be compelled to use every resource at our command for the defense of our liberties . . . it appears to me enough to say that the negroes will certainly be made to fight against us if not armed for our defense. . . . I further agree with you that if they are to fight for our freedom, they are entitled to their own."

He was writing with uncustomary bluntness to an old and trusted friend, laying out steps to "modify and ameliorate the existing condition of that inferior race by providing for it certain rights of property, a certain degree of personal liberty, and legal protection for the marital and parental relations, as to relieve our institutions from much that is not only unjust and impolitic in itself, but calculated to draw upon us the odium and reprobation of civilized man."

He suggested a specific strategy, almost dictating a statement for his friend to place as "articles in your papers, always urging this point as the true issue, viz, is it better for the negro to fight for us or against us? The action of our people on this point will be of more value to us abroad than any diplomacy or treaty-making."[5]

Duncan Kenner made his way under an assumed name and in disguise to New York, where he was smuggled through the blockade to Paris. Mason and Slidell were waiting for him, the latter with a

warm greeting for his old Louisiana friend. "I am directed to show my instructions to both of you and no one else,"[6] Kenner said formally to underscore the absolute confidentiality of his mission. Reassured of loyalty in the office, he gave his instructions to Slidell's clerk, who translated them by using the key to the Confederate code.

Mason and Slidell were both astonished at the text as Kenner unfolded the details. Mason huffed a plantation sneer, but Slidell knew from Kenner's quick reply that Benjamin meant for the instructions to be carried out to the letter. Benjamin had expected Mason to balk, and Kenner answered him matter-of-factly that if he refused to help, Mason would be immediately suspended.

The reactions from Napoleon III were predictable. The Emperor said slyly that slavery was never the issue for France anyway, but he would recognize the Confederacy if England did so.

Kenner and a grumbling Mason then returned to London and sounded out the Prime Minister. He did not waver: Under no circumstances, including Confederate emancipation, would Her Majesty's Government recognize the Confederacy. When the envoys asked a Tory leader friendly to the South to take soundings in the Parliament, he returned in a few days with the results. "The time," he said, "has gone by."[7]

Now the only question for Benjamin was what uses could be made of slaves in the trenches at Petersburg. Armed with a second letter from Lee, which went further than the first, Benjamin made a careful proposition to Davis.

"We must decide," Lee had written, "whether slavery shall be extinguished by our enemies and the slaves used against us, or use them ourselves at the risk of the effects which may be produced upon our social institutions. My own opinion is that we should employ them without delay. I believe that with proper regulation they can be made efficient soldiers."[8]

Benjamin predicted as divisive and stormy a public debate as the government had ever witnessed. For that reason, he suggested that Davis allow him to make the speech advocating the emancipation measure. That way, the President's capacity to lead would not be impaired.

Benjamin stressed the urgency of an immediate decision so that the slaves could be trained and organized. His plan was to go all out—to offer the slaves freedom in exchange for military service. The President asked for Benjamin's timetable.

According to Pierce Butler, Varina, out of sight but nearby, listened

in on the crucial Cabinet meeting. "Mrs. Davis writes me (October 12, 1904) that she was an auditor in an adjoining room, when the Cabinet met . . . and that it was Benjamin who suggested and insisted on a public meeting 'to feel the pulse of the people.' "[9]

Benjamin proposed holding a mass rally at the African Church on February 9 to ask the people to sacrifice and redouble their efforts. The word would be passed ahead of time that important new government initiatives would be introduced and that the President and others would speak. In the meantime, Benjamin would leak the news of the specific proposal with the rest of General Lee's letter, so that Lee's feelings would be known before reaction set in.

His eventual performance at the African Church gives ample evidence to support the view that Benjamin must have ached for a return to the limelight. Having been cooped up in his office too long, he was itching to climb onto the center stage and hurl some lightning bolts. By God, he would give them a speech they would never forget. When it was over they would know for certain that Judah P. Benjamin was back in the thick of the public arena.

The farcical attack at St. Albans and the pursuit of the Confederates by American troops back into Canada focused unwanted attention on the Confederate spy mission in Toronto. From Benjamin's point of view, the expedition had been a diplomatic disaster, leaving aside its military inconsequence and the public ridicule it inspired.

In self-defense, the Canadian Parliament passed an Alien Act, requiring that foreigners suspected of warlike acts be heavily fined, expelled, and all arms and ships bound for them be seized. Now the Confederate spies were almost outlaws; their main achievement had been to turn a friendly government north of the Union into an anxious enemy, worried about Yankee reprisals if it harbored the Confederates beyond the reach of Union action.

Benjamin quickly took the steps on March 2, 1865, that he knew he should have taken months before. He shut down the mission and ordered Thompson to return to Virginia after making sure that all agents had the funds to escape back to the South or to other assignments that the secret service might conceive for them.

Benjamin must have sighed with relief. At least he would not be embarrassed in front of the President any more.

Benjamin would also be spared the barbs of his most caustic critic. Henry Foote had objected to the measure to compensate captors

of soldiers who were absent without leave because "the Jew extortioners, the greatest nuisance on earth, would take advantage of it to make money."[10] In January Foote was arrested with his wife trying to cross the Potomac. He denied that he was merely trying to save his own hide and announced that he was on his way to Washington to sue for peace. When he was sent back, a vote to expel him from the House failed to gain two-thirds, so he promptly left again, this time for Canada, where no authorities would take him seriously. He sailed for London and drafted a thirty-page pamphlet asking his constituents to secede from the Confederacy and rejoin the Union.

The African Church, just off Capitol Square, had the largest auditorium in the city, but even it could not accommodate the more than 10,000 people who turned out for the mass meeting on February 9, 1865. The overflow crowded inside and outside the building; they sat in windows and poked their heads through the doors; two-thirds could not see or hear anything, but those peeking through windows reported to those behind them what was happening on the platform. A small posse of police, now more respectful since the government had sent Winder's "plug-uglies" to Georgia to act as prison guards, cleared a small aisle so that the speakers could reach the platform.

The meeting was scheduled for high noon, but hundreds of ladies had arrived early in the morning to get good seats. The crowd buzzed with anticipation as the bells of St. Paul's tolled the appointed hour and the procession from the Governor's mansion proceeded to the church. The Armory band occupied the choir gallery. As the speakers and dignitaries entered the hall and edged their way to the speaker's stand, the band struck up the Marseillaise Hymn.

Richmond and the "submissionists" like Vice President Stephens were shocked by the results of the Hampton Roads conference—Lincoln would not negotiate an honorable peace but would consider terms only after an unconditional surrender, when there was a restored union without slavery, meaning total submission to Federal law. He had stung Southern pride and stirred chivalrous Southern blood. Mass meetings like this one were being held all over the South, with the spirit and intensity of revival meetings.

The Reverend Moses Drury Hoge of the local Presbyterian Church opened the meeting with a prayer. Just after the "amens," a thin figure in worn gray homespun appeared in the back of the hall, walked through the doorway, and made his way down the aisle.

Jefferson Davis received a ten-minute thundering ovation with hats sailing in the air, whistles, and rebel yells. He stood quietly at the lectern acknowledging the cheering throng, the lights shifting on his feeble, stricken face.

The President, almost a specter of pain, gathered himself to make a speech of "surpassing eloquence," the best of his career, some said, drawing strength from the warm response of the crowd. He talked for more than an hour. "Old man eloquent," one reporter called him. When his health warned him he might be attempting too much and he paused, the crowd cried "go on, go on!" and he continued, in an even voice, spare of gestures.

He condemned Lincoln, "who wanted us back as a conquered people, submitting to all legislation including the abolition clause." He would have "no common country with the Yankees," for his life was "bound up with the Confederacy" and he would "live and die with it." He asked for the absentees to return to Lee's army "to teach Grant a lesson" and said that Sherman's march through Georgia "will be his last." He railed at one of Lincoln's Cabinet members for gloating over a Yankee cartoon that showed "a long procession of public men of the Confederacy moving toward the gallows to expiate the crime of 'rebellion.' " He called out to the people: "Let us unite our hands and our hearts; lock our shields together, and . . . before another summer solstice falls upon us, it will be the enemy who will be asking *us* for conferences . . . to make known *our* demands."[11]

There was a thunder of applause and cheering, again and again.

Benjamin clapped vigorously and began to revise his notes. There was a certain irony to his addressing the subject of emancipation to an almost all-white audience in a black church. In view of the speech he was about to give, he must have cringed when he heard Senator Robert Hunter of Virginia, one of the three peace commissioners, report on the Hampton Roads conference: "[I]f we go back to the bonds of the Union, we go back [with] three million slaves loosed in the midst of Southern society; we ourselves slaves, and our slaves freedmen."[12] It was not the speech he would have selected to precede his own.

Benjamin rose firmly to assume the lectern. He would mince no words today.

"The number of persons composing this meeting," he began, "and the cheers with which I hear you greet every expression of patriotic sentiment, shows the defiance with which your breasts are swelling,

and the hot flush which all feel, at the thought of the ignominy which an arrogant government has proposed to you."[13]

He lashed out at the real meaning of Lincoln's demands, "that you should bend the knee, bow the neck, and meekly submit to the conqueror's yoke; and all give assurance that the fire of freedom burns unquenchably in your souls."

He looked back at the mood of the Confederacy before the Hampton Roads conference and contrasted it with the spirit of revival he said was sweeping the South, which now understood there was no negotiable resolution:

> How different from one week ago! It seems an age, so magic has been the change. Then, despondency and hope deferred oppressed and weighed upon; men were querulous, and asking if it were true that no honorable peace were attainable except by continued warfare. Then, it was said it was our perverse indisposition to negotiate that led to the arrogance of the invader. . . .
>
> Now, cheerful voices are heard all around, and hope beams on every countenance. Now, the resolute and war-worn soldier is nerved anew. . . .
>
> What then is the cause of this change? It is the knowledge that has come home to the understanding and the hearts of the people. We now know, in the core of our hearts, that this people must conquer its freedom or die.

The crowd burst into cheering, and Benjamin could feel the people moving with him.

"The people know, as one man, the path which they must tread or perish. . . .

"What is our present duty?

"We want means. Are they in this country? If so they belong to the country, and not to the man who chances to hold them now. They belong either to the Yankees or to the Confederate States."

Benjamin was edging closer to the subject, but first he needed to stoke the fires of sacrifice: "I would take every bale of cotton in the land. I have a few bales left in my distant Southern home, which is a free gift to my country. . . . I now ask, has any man the right to hold a bale of cotton from his country?"

The crowd responded to the sound of his voice with a resounding "No!"

"I say the same thing in regard to tobacco. Take all the cotton

and tobacco and make it the basis of means, without which we cannot go on."

A burst of applause interrupted him again, and he became more sweeping in his demands.

"I want more. I want all the bacon—everything which can feed the soldiers—and I want it as a free gift to the country. Talk of rights! What rights do the arrogant invaders leave you!"

"Nothing," someone shouted, and the crowd bubbled with anger at the mention of the Yankees.

"I want one other thing. War is a game that cannot be played without men."

The crowd cheered wildly at the mention of the soldiers. With their minds focused on them, Benjamin expanded on that theme:

"Where are the men? I am going to open my whole heart to you. Look to the trenches below Richmond. Is it not a shame that men who have sacrificed all in our defense should not be reinforced by all the means in our power? Is it any time now for antiquated patriotism to argue a refusal to send them aid, be it white or black?"

Someone caught his meaning and shouted from the audience, "Put in the niggers." The crowd cheered him hoarsely. Benjamin painted in the picture with the facts, to show the odds against them.

"I will now call your attention to some figures, which I wish you to seriously ponder. In 1860 the South had 1,664,000 arms-bearing men. How many men have the Yankees sent against us? In 1861, 654,000; in 1862, 740,000; in 1863, 700,000; in 1864 they called out 1,500,000. Here you have figures that they brought out 3,000,000 men against 1,644,000 Confederates, who lived at the beginning of the war to draw sword in their country's service."

His voice was rising, and he wanted to point the figures in the direction of the slaves.

"Our resources of white population have greatly diminished; but you had 680,000 black men of the same ages; and could Divine prophecy have told us of the fierceness of the enemy's death grapple at our throats—could we have known what we now know, that Lincoln has confessed, that without 200,000 Negroes which he stole from us, he would be compelled to give up the contest, should we have entertained any doubts upon the subject?"

"We will make him give it up yet," another voice shouted from the audience at the mention of Lincoln's name.

Benjamin seized the issue by the throat and asserted flatly that the slaves should be emancipated and armed to fight.

"Let us say to every Negro who wishes to go into the ranks on condition of being made free—'Go and fight; you are free.' If we impress them, they will go against us. We know that everyone who could fight for his freedom has had no chance. The only side that has had the advantage of this element is the Yankee—a people that can beat us to the end of the year in making bargains. Let us imitate them in this. I would imitate them in nothing else."

Some of the crowd suddenly shifted on him, and he was caught in a cacophony of conflicting sounds: "No! Never!" one man shouted, and others took up the cry of fury, like a giant growling beast.

Benjamin charged on to override the hatred in the hall, to play to the applause and the support he was getting from the rest of the audience. Being attacked personally, he reacted personally.

"My own negroes have been to me and said: 'Master, set us free, and we will fight for you; we had rather fight for you than for the Yankees.' But suppose it should not be so—there is no harm in trying."

Someone shouted again, "Send in the slaves." Benjamin sensed the crowd shifting back to him and against those yelling epithets at him. He continued to emphasize his own support of slavery, his ownership of slaves and his respect for state sovereignty on the issue.

"With all my early attachments and prejudices, I would give it all up. It can only be done by the States separately."

Feeling the need to involve the audience with him, he took up a sequence of rhetorical questions to bring them to his position.

"What states will lead off in this thing?"

A voice cried out, "Virginia," and the crowd cheered in answer.

Benjamin picked up on the reply: "South Carolina, I know, will follow Virginia, as well as every other Southern state, if she but gives the lead.

"When shall it be done?" he asked.

Voices filled the hall with the response, "Now," and Benjamin could feel himself carrying the day. He needed to show them the way to action.

"Now," he echoed. "Let your legislature pass the necessary laws, and we will soon have twenty thousand men down in those trenches fighting for the country. You must make up your minds to try that, or see your army withdrawn from before your town. I came here to say disagreeable things. I tell you, you are in danger unless some radical measures are taken."[14]

Varina wrote, "Never was he more eloquent or inspiring than when . . . Mr. Benjamin made a speech to the people in the African Church which was thronged with officers and men who had ridden in from the front to hear what had happened. He sent those who had come discouraged and desperate knowing as they did the overwhelming forces which confronted them back to camp full of hope and ardour, and I think made the most successful effort of his life."[15]

J. B. Jones recorded in his diary: "There is much excitement among the slaveowners, caused by Mr. B.'s speech. They must either fight themselves or let the slaves fight." A series of resolutions were introduced in the Confederate Congress that "the views of Secretary Benjamin [were] derogatory to his position as a high public functionary of the Confederate Government . . . and an insult to public opinion." But the resolutions were tabled.[16]

Benjamin had achieved his purpose. He had advocated a radical position in front of Virginia's Governor "Extra Billy" Smith and dozens of members of the Virginia Legislature and the Confederate Congress. If they could see this large a crowd accepting the message that Benjamin had laid out without being tarred and feathered or booed off the stage, perhaps they would have the courage to respond to Lee's needs and give him the black troops he required. Nothing less could save Petersburg. And Richmond.

Buoyed by the reaction to his speech, Benjamin wrote two days later directly to Robert E. Lee that "you may perhaps have seen at the public meeting Thursday I spoke of the necessity of instant reinforcement for your army. In order to disarm opposition as far as possible and to produce prompt action, I proposed that those slaves only who might volunteer to fight for their freedom should be at once sent to the trenches . . . some of the opponents of the measure are producing a strong impression against it by asserting it would disband the army by reason of the violent aversion of troops to have Negroes in the field with them. . . . If we could get from the army an expression of its desire to be reinforced by such Negroes as for the boon of freedom will volunteer to go to the front, the measure will pass without further delay. . . . If this suggestion meets your approval, the different divisions ought at once to make themselves heard, and there will be no further effective opposition in any of our legislative bodies, State or Confederate."[17]

Davis was making use of Benjamin for another of his most unpleasant tasks. It had been evident for some years that Benjamin was not so committed on slavery that he could not abandon it in favor

of what he considered to be the higher purpose of winning the war.

Davis must have thought that men like Benjamin, who always searched for the common ground, essentially favored expediency over principle. When the issue was whether to seek a negotiated surrender or fight to the end, the President was always more focused on honor than result. And it was not the honor of rationality based on reality, which would lead to saving lives or stopping needless bloodshed when the end was near; it was the honor of the proud soldier, ready to sacrifice all, make the last stand, and keep faith with those who had fought and died for the cause.

But Benjamin was ever the pragmatist, as lawyers have to be, and when a lawyer cannot win in the courtroom he looks for a settlement in order to obtain the best result for his client. He was the only person around Davis trying to sort out the options for a dying dream.

The President's four-year muzzle on the talented voice of Judah Benjamin was not a policy applied to other members of the Cabinet. They defended policy publicly; Benjamin rarely did so. Benjamin seemed to be aware of Davis's jealousy of any around him who received public acclaim. For him, the President's trust was more important than anything else. Policy statements by Benjamin, as a public personage known to be close to the President and speaking in the President's name, would have risked stirring up bitterness without winning adherents to his point of view.

But at that point Davis suddenly needed Benjamin as a public figure, a man to float the trial balloon of a controversial proposal in order to reassure General Lee's supporters that the President was behind him and yet allow him to keep his distance himself from the proposal just enough to be protected from the diehard wing of the Senate. Benjamin had been involved in the question of Confederate emancipation for several years, playing a dangerous game of manipulation of the President and of the political forces in the country. He had counseled outsiders, recruited adherents, and planted stories as he had never done on any other issue, especially one with so much domestic volatility. He came to believe that Confederate emancipation was the single action that could win the war. He was therefore willing to risk his safety by becoming its most persuasive advocate, knowing that it was up to him to make the proposal if the idea was to have any chance at all.

The Confederate sympathizers who gathered at Mary Surratt's boarding house in Washington found a warm camaraderie with each other, and agents from Canada, such as Lewis Powell and David Herold, met there often. Little Johnny Surratt often met with them, carrying the gold pieces he had picked up from Secretary of State Benjamin's office for delivering messages from Canada.

But tonight two other men were joining them: George Atzerodt, a friend of Surratt who ran a ferry boat service down on the Maryland peninsula over to Virginia, which Surratt and other couriers often used, and an out-of-work actor named John Wilkes Booth, who had recently returned from Canada, where he had performed in a number of plays. The conversation turned to guerrillas like Quantrell and Mosby in the Virginia valley and John Morgan's raiders in Ohio, men who hid and struck and then retreated only to strike again. Booth, inspired by the Kentucky kidnapping plot that had failed earlier, had dreamed up a lunatic scheme of his own. He knew that Lincoln often went to the Soldier's Home to rest and at those times was rarely guarded. Booth thought it would be a good idea to kidnap the President.

The group agreed, and for several weeks they tested disguises. Booth seemed to have the whole operation figured out: kidnap Lincoln, take him on George Atzerodt's boat across into Virginia, follow Johnny's route back to Richmond, where Lincoln would be held hostage for all the Confederate prisoners in the North—all the veterans held in prison from Jackson's Foot Cavalry, Lee's rout at Fredericksburg, and the Tennessee campaigns. Booth envisioned that he and his comrades would be heroes, all of them heralded by history for winning the war with one bold, singular stroke.

Weeks later, the conspirators hid by a road for hours waiting for the gold-inlaid carriage drawn by a single horse. When they saw it, curtains drawn across the windows, they couldn't believe their luck—no guards! How easy could it be?

They pulled their pistols, spurred their horses, bounded out into the road, to surround the carriage. One of them opened its door in breathless anticipation and saw—Chief Justice Salmon Chase, out for a ride in the President's carriage. They slammed the door, jumped on their horses, dashed away cursing, and returned in anger to the boarding house. It was as if any plans hatched among anyone who had been in Canada were doomed to a comic outcome.

"If we are right in passing this measure," Robert M. T. Hunter of Virginia argued to the Senate a few days after Benjamin's speech, "we were wrong in denying the old government the right to interfere with the institution of slavery and to emancipate slaves."[18]

Howell Cobb, the former Governor of Georgia, wrote from Georgia: "Use all the Negroes you can get, for the purpose for which you need—but don't arm them. The day you make soldiers out of them is the beginning of the end of the revolution. If slaves will make good soldiers our whole theory of slavery is wrong."[19]

Robert Toombs also wrote from his Georgia plantation, even in the face of Sherman, that "the worst calamity that could befall us would be to gain our independence by the valor of our slaves. . . . The day that the army of Virginia allows a Negro regiment to enter their lines as soldiers they will be degraded, ruined and disgraced."[20]

On the streets of Richmond, the people said, "If the Negro was fit to be a soldier, he was not fit to be a slave."

In just four days, the Senate gave Davis and Benjamin their answers. The Senators were divided on a resolution that stated: "Judah P. Benjamin is not a wise and prudent Secretary of State and lacks the confidence of the country."[21] A week later, Benjamin sat down to compose a letter offering his resignation to the President. He held it for a few days and then, after watching the furor grow in intensity, sent it to the President's office.

Department of State
Richmond 21 February 1865

Confidential

My Dear Sir
I have been recently disturbed in mind on a subject which I can no longer refrain from placing frankly before you.

It is unnecessary to remind you that I accepted office with reluctance and have retained it solely from a sense of duty. Separated from my family for nearly five years past, my eager desire to see them has been repressed by the belief that my services were not without value to you. . . .

For some months past, however, I have doubted whether my withdrawal from office would not rather promote the success of your administration than deprive you of useful assistance. It has been apparent that I have been the object of concerted and incessant assault by those who are inimical to me personally, as well

as by all in Congress and the press that are hostile to you. . . . If our affairs were in a more prosperous condition, I should tender my resignation unconditionally. But in the present juncture I shrink from giving Color for an instant to the suspicion of a desire to shield myself from danger or responsibility by abandonment of duty.

I must therefore beg you to let me know your own conclusion with entire unreserve. Will your administration be strengthened or any opposition to it disarmed by substituting another in my place in the Cabinet? If so, I will at once seek to return to your assistance in the Legislative Department of the Government, in which I know I can be serviceable in sustaining you in this great struggle. If not, I shall cheerfully continue the sacrifice of private inclination and family affection to the call of duty, at all hazards, and under all responsibilities—

I am with entire regard and respect

Your friend and obedient servant,
Judah P. Benjamin[22]

There was every reason for Davis to accept his resignation. Foreign affairs, after all, Benjamin's main responsibility in the Cabinet, had ceased to be relevant. Davis needed the cooperation of elements inside the Congress who hated Benjamin and would be relieved if the President were to dismiss his controversial Secretary. Lastly, Davis knew that Benjamin would stay anyway as an adviser if the President asked him to, even without the title. Benjamin had written the letter because of the resolution; the Senate had given him no other option. The truth was that he could see no real reason for the President to keep him except that they had come so far together, like two soldiers in the same foxhole. Besides, lately he could never really predict what the President might do on a given day—he could be meek one minute, explosive the next, and vacant a minute after that. Benjamin was reconciled to whatever the decision might be, based on the President's mood of the moment.

Davis quickly turned aside the letter and the Senate resolution. He would stand by his friends and loyal colleagues, and he needed Benjamin to get him through this wilderness. They shook hands to renew their bond. Then Davis launched into the business at hand.

Davis did not like losing on something Lee wanted. It would be disloyal to rebuff his greatest general, so they would fight for the enlistment bill and give Lee the black soldiers he needed to hold

on in Petersburg. If he could not beat the Georgia trio of Stephens, Cobb, and Toombs, when the state was already out of the fighting while Virginia was facing life and death, then he just did not know politics any more. If the Union could use Negro troops for subjugation, then the South could use them for self-defense.

For two more weeks the Congress wrangled over the Negro enlistment bill. Finally, in early March, the Congress passed it. It fell far short of Benjamin's hopes: The slaves had to be volunteers "patriotically rendered by their masters"; the President could receive only one-fourth of the male slaves between eighteen and forty-five years old from a single state; and though they were to get equal pay and rations, there was no mention of emancipation in the final bill.[23]

Only a handful of blacks straggled into Capitol Square a few weeks later. Benjamin watched from the window as they marched in a drill ceremony. Some were in new uniforms—a strange sight even for whites these days—and small boys jeered and splashed mud and threw rocks at them as they paraded. Like so many steps Benjamin had tried, this idea had collapsed, too.

17

Escape

Grant had been poking at Lee's lines outside Petersburg for weeks. The news from there was growing more ominous. The railroad stations in Richmond were crowded again with the wealthy and the powerful, as even members of Congress were beginning to abandon the city.

The President ordered Varina to take the children south with as little public stir as possible. He might be moving his headquarters to the field, he said, and his family's presence would "embarrass and grieve me instead of giving comfort." Varina begged him to let her stay, but he would not hear of it. "You can do this but one way," he said, "by going yourself and taking the children to a place of safety. If I live, you can come to me when the struggle is ended."[1]

Varina acquiesced, then began to worry about their silver and other valuables. The President refused to let her burden their friends with the silver for fear that Yankees might discover and harm whoever was hiding it. Instead, they sent it out to auction. When she asked the servants to take two barrels of flour with them to help withstand a possible siege, the President told her that "you can't take anything in the shape of food from here." With flour at $1,500 a barrel, he would not have his own family "acting like hoarders."[2]

To her shock, he then handed her a small Colt pistol, gave her cartridges, and showed her how to load and fire it. "You can at least," he said, "if reduced to the last extremity, force your assailants to kill you."[3]

"Grant has the bear by the hind legs while Sherman takes off the hide,"[4] Lincoln said as Sherman's avenging demons turned from Georgia and headed north to South Carolina.

Sherman's army relished this moment, because South Carolina had been the first state to secede. "Having sown the wind, she shall reap the whirlwind,"[5] one infantryman wrote home. Wisconsin soldiers ran past blazing buildings yelling, "This is the nest where the first secession egg was hatched—let her burn!"[6]

The Sherman legend had spread all over the South, for he had achieved his purpose: Darken the day with black smoke, show no mercy, and there will be panic in your path. The Southern "bummers" would often loot some little hamlet, beating him to the booty before he arrived. Anarchy had broken out to do his bidding for him. In Sherman's words, casual and jocular, "Make a smoke like Indians do on the plains. . . . I hope you will burn all cotton and save us the trouble."[7] So the veterans sang as they marched right through the inpenetrable swamps to the state capital:

> Hail, Columbia, happy land
> If I don't burn you, I'll be damned.[8]

And burn they did, 84 of the state capital's 124 blocks, some of them with the help of Southern loyalists, who were burning just ahead of the soldiers to keep supplies out of Sherman's hands. It was as mighty a conflagration as the South had seen, as Sherman's troops, drunk from an afternoon of consuming confiscated liquor, joined with the local population to make good on their pledge to the frightened people who had surrendered under a white flag: "You'll catch hell tonight."

After Columbia, Sherman ordered his army north, heading for Richmond to join his army of 60,000 men with Grant's 110,000 for the final conquest. Lee, having been confirmed as general-in-chief by the Congress, called General Joe Johnston out of retirement to lead the scattered Confederate army in the North Carolina Piedmont area. There was no more fantasy in Richmond: The South was now staring into the burning fires of hell.

"I mean to end this business here," Grant wrote in late March as he spread his men along a 53-mile front so that Lee's line protecting Petersburg, in Lee's own words, would be "stretched until it has broken."[9] Assaults on both ends of the line left the middle vulnerable, and Grant stormed it along a 12-mile front, 60,000 Federals against

fewer than 15,000 Confederates. The ten-month seige at Petersburg ended. On a Sunday morning, after dawn, as shells were bursting all around him tearing the guts out of horses and men, Lee could see the blueclads several hundred yards away. He ordered a quick retreat toward Appomattox and hurried off wires to Richmond telling the President and the Secretary of War that the capital city was now endangered and should be evacuated by nightfall. Petersburg gone and Richmond abandoned—Lee's only worry now was the survival of his army.

At 10:40 A.M. on Sunday, April 2, Secretary of War Seddon received the wire from General Lee advising the evacuation of Richmond. A messenger rushed to St. Paul's Church, where the President was occupying his usual pew, and gave him a sealed envelope. Davis rose and unsteadily made his way up the aisle as uneasy whispers rippled through the congregation.

As word spread through the city, groups gathered at street corners, children ran about with the news, and then, like animals before a brush fire, the evacuation of Richmond began.

Judah P. Benjamin rushed to his office to destroy all secret correspondence. With his clerks, he packed documents all day, making ready to leave in the early evening with the rest of the Cabinet on the train that was taking the government to Danville, Virginia.

The French Consul, Alfred Paul, was summoned to Secretary of State Benjamin's office at 2:00 P.M. on April 2 for a handshake of farewell, since he had helped Benjamin to stay in touch with Natalie during the war.

"I found him extremely agitated," Paul later reported to the Foreign Ministry in Paris, "his hands shaking, wanting and trying to do and say everything at once. He was preparing to leave at five o'clock with the President and his other colleagues. . . .

"Mr. Benjamin said to me in a trembling voice, 'I have nothing in particular to say to you, but I wanted to be sure to shake your hand before my departure. We are going to Danville. I hope that the railroad will not have been captured at the Burkeville Junction and that we will be able to pass through. General Lee insists on the immediate evacuation of the city by the government. It is simply a measure of prudence. I hope that we will return in a few weeks.'

" 'Really?' I cried, carefully watching Mr. Benjamin to try to discern if he was motivated by a persisting illusion or by a lack of sincerity, two things which characterize this statesman. 'Do you think you will be able to return?' "

Benjamin, keeping up pretenses, told Paul he was not "sure" the army would evacuate that night. But Paul wrote that "all well-informed people had been sure for an hour. . . . Mr. Benjamin is a very reticent man."[10]

Benjamin had already been preparing for this emergency by sending his clerk southward to Charlotte, North Carolina, several days earlier with trunks, other baggage, and six boxes of State Department papers. He was not alone in such preparation; for several weeks, others in the government, forseeing an evacuation, had been packing to move south. On April 1, Benjamin and other officials were issued treasury warrants; Benjamin's funds were issued from the Secret Service account for $1,500 in gold.

Judah P. Benjamin was thus being far-sighted, looking beyond the immediate departure from Richmond. He was making sure that he had options no matter what dark events lay beyond the horizon, and one of those options would surely be the possibility of having to flee alone.

The excited crowds passed, the men carrying what baggage they could; the women and children also loaded with such goods as they could snatch from the burning factories and stores being looted by the frenzied mob.

Elizabeth Van Lew, her disguise as "Crazy Bet" now made unnecessary by her invitation to General Grant to have tea (an invitation he would accept), wrote: "The constant explosion of shells, the blowing up of gunboats, and of the powder magazine, seemed to jar, to shake the earth and lend a mighty language to the scene. All nature trembled at the work of arbitrary powers, the consummation of the wrong of years . . . the burning bridges, the roaring flames added to the wild grandeur of the scene."[11]

Sallie Ann Brock Putnam, a friend of Varina, described in her diary that day on which "thousands of citizens determined to evacuate the city with the government. Vehicles commanded any price in any currency possessed by the individual desiring to escape from the doomed capital. The streets were filled with excited crowds hurrying to the different avenues for transportation, inter-mingled with the porters carrying huge loads, and wagons piled up with incongruous heaps of baggage, of all sorts and descriptions. The banks were all open and depositors were busily and anxiously collecting their specie deposits, and directors were busily engaged in getting off their bullion. Millions of dollars in paper money, both State and Confederate, were carried to the Capitol Square and burned."[12]

John M. Daniel, who had predicted the collapse of the Confederacy,

died three days before it occurred. His brother wrote later: "The *Examiner* shared the fate of the Confederacy . . . it was destroyed in the conflagration of Richmond . . . and the last number of the *Examiner* printed on the day preceding the evacuation of Richmond, contained the announcement of his death."[13]

The President ordered the mansion spotlessly cleaned, cleared his desk neatly of its remaining items, then rode with dignity, head high and eyes forward, on his horse, Kentucky, through this scene of chaos, panic, and random fires and looting. "Night came on . . . confusion worse confounded reigned, and grim terror spread in wild contagion."[14]

Davis had given special instructions to the Treasury Department to box up all the gold and silver on hand—coins, bricks, ingots, even Mexican silver, about $528,000 worth—and place it aboard a special train to be guarded by sixty midshipmen from the academy training vessel, which had been scuttled with all other vessels on the James River.

The two trains, one with the gold and the other bearing the President and the Cabinet, pulled out at midnight. Diaries described hearing the train blow its whistle with a mournful sound of sorrow that some would remember the rest of their lives. When it had passed the bridge over the James River, the people watching saw the bridge burst into flames as the Confederate army tried to seal off the train from hot pursuit. Then the arsenal exploded with an earthshaking blast, and suddenly it was calm.

It was a clear April night in Virginia, and the stars were so close that the black waters of the river sparkled with their light. But few slept or could sleep. Families guarded their own worldly goods from looters, and the wagons continued to roll out of the city. Torturously, the night passed, as Richmond awaited the arrival of the Union army.

A trip ordinarily a few hours long took more than sixteen, with crowds standing along the tracks through the night hoping for the President to pause and address them.

Navy Secretary Mallory, depressed by the frantic turn of events, commented that Benjamin's "dark complexion had become a shade darker within the last twenty-four hours." He described Benjamin's confident spirit, writing that his "Epicurean philosophy was ever at command . . . with a 'never-give-up-the-ship' sort of air, he referred to other great national causes which had been redeemed from far gloomier reverses than ours."[15] He had brought Jules with him for

the trip to an unknown destiny, and assuring his safety was one more problem to deal with.

But no amount of brave talk among the officials on the train could hide the truth from the people gathered at each stop. The Confederate government was now in flight. Tonight its capital was Danville. Soon, it would be on the tracks heading south.

Once in Danville, Benjamin was offered a room at the house of a friend of Dr. Moses Drury Hoge, the minister of Richmond's Presbyterian Church, who personally had shepherded more than 300,000 Bibles from England through the blockade. There is no report of Jules's presence, so presumably other arrangements were made.

Hoge reported that he and Benjamin had had a friendly argument about the place Tennyson would occupy in history. Benjamin was a "passionate admirer of Tennyson," Hoge said, and ranked him above all English poets, "Shakespeare, of course, excepted." When Hoge suggested that Tennyson "had never written anything comparable to *Comus,* or *Il Penseroso,* or *L'Allegro* or to Dryden"—Benjamin was always ready with a reference to some passage of Tennyson to refute Hoge's assertions. Hoge was amazed that Benjamin seemed to be "as familiar with literature as with law." Among public men he could not recall one who was a "more accomplished belles lettres scholar."[16]

While Benjamin awoke the next morning to a good breakfast and a proud reception at Danville, Richmond trembled at the arrival of the Union troops.

A woman who wished to remain anonymous wrote to a friend the story of the morning after the government's departure from Richmond:

"All was commotion in the street and agitation in the hotel. The city government had dragged hogsheads of liquor from the shops, knocked in their heads, and poured the spirits in the gutters. They ran with brandy, whiskey and rum and men, women, and boys rushed out with buckets, pails, pitchers and in the lower streets, hats and boots to be filled. Before eight o'clock, many public buildings were in flames, and a great conflagration was evidently imminent. The flames swept up Main Street where the stores quickly burned, and then roared down the side streets almost to Franklin.

"The doors of all the government bakeries were thrown open and food was given to all who asked it. Women and children walked in and helped themselves."[17]

Nellie Grey did not flee. She wrote about the next morning: "Exactly at eight o'clock the Confederate Flag that fluttered above the Capitol came down and the Stars and Stripes were run up. We knew what that meant! The song 'On to Richmond!' was ended—Richmond was in the hands of the Federals. We covered our faces and cried aloud. All through the house was the sound of sobbing. It was the house of mourning, the house of death.

"Soon the streets were full of Federal troops, marching quietly along. The beautiful sunlight flashed back everywhere from Yankee bayonets. I saw Negroes run out into the street and falling on their knees before the invaders to hail them as their deliverers, embracing the knees of the horses, and almost preventing the troops from moving ahead."[18]

Another eyewitness took up the story: "Through throngs of sullen spectators; along the line of fire; in the midst of the horrors of a conflagration, increased by the explosion of shells left by the retreating army; through the curtains of smoke; through the vast aerial auditorium convulsed with the commotion of frightful sounds, moved the garish procession of the Grand Army, with brave music, and bright banners and wild cheers. A regiment of Negro cavalry swept by the hotel. As they turned the street corner they drew their sabers with savage shouts, and the blood mounted even in my woman's heart with quick throbs of defiance."[19]

The story continued: "Drunken men shouted and reeled through the streets, a black cloud from the burning city hung like a pall over us, a black sea of faces . . . from the ten thousand Negro troops . . . cheered by the Negroes on the streets."

Against the warnings of Seward and the misgivings of Admiral Porter, who accompanied him, Abraham Lincoln himself arrived by ship in Richmond.[20] When he stepped on the wharf, a dozen joyous Negroes flung themselves at his feet, one white-haired old man exclaiming, "Bless the Lord, the great Messiah!" Lincoln, embarrassed but controlled, replied "Don't kneel to me. That is not right. You must kneel to God only, and thank Him for the liberty you will enjoy hereafter."[21] They rose and answered with the hymn, "All Ye People, Clap Yo' Hands." Lincoln waited before proceeding on the 2-mile walk to the Davis mansion.

Blacks and whites draped over the limbs of trees and lined the streets to watch this tall stringbean of a man, taller in his stovepipe, stride through Richmond. He swept without pause into the mansion and across Varina's beautiful blue rug to the presidential desk and

slipped wearily into his rival's chair. "I wonder if I could get a glass of water?" he asked.[22]

After lunch, he climbed into a carriage and with a squad of two dozen soldiers toured the city.

"About four in the afternoon," a Southern woman wrote to her daughter, "a salute of thirty-four guns was fired. A company of mounted dragoons advanced up the street, escorting an open carriage drawn by four horses in which Mr. Lincoln sat and a naval officer, followed by an escort of cavalry. They drove straight to Mr. Davis's house, cheered all the way by Negroes, and returned the way they came. I had a good look at Mr. Lincoln. He seemed tired and old—and I must say, with due respect to the President of the United States, I thought him to be the ugliest man I had ever seen."[23]

A general turned to Lincoln and asked how he should treat the people of the city. "If I were in your place," he answered, "I'd let 'em up easy; let 'em up easy."[24]

In Danville for a few days, Benjamin turned himself into an ideal house guest. He was never late for morning prayers and arranged his retiring for the night and rising to cause the least inconvenience to his hosts. He even attended Sunday church services with the family instead of staying at home or choosing to accompany Jefferson Davis and the Cabinet to religious services.

On April 5 he climbed the rickety stairs of the Danville *Register* and personally delivered to its editor a proclamation written in the President's name after a long Cabinet meeting. The editor reported that Benjamin showed no anxiety and that the proclamation was written by Benjamin on very poor quality paper. However eloquently phrased, its ideas were pure Jefferson Davis:

> We have now entered a new phase of a struggle the memory of which is to endure for all ages. . . . Relieved from the necessity of guarding cities and particular points, important but not vital to your defense, with an army free to move from point to point and strike in detail detachments and garrisons of the enemy, operating on the interior of our own country, where supplies are more accessible, and where the foe will be far removed from his own base and cut off from all succor in case of reverses, nothing is now needed to render our triumph certain but the exhibition of our own unquenchable resolve. Let us but will it, and we are free.[25]

Lee's retreat from Petersburg west toward the Appomattox Courthouse turned into a race between Grant and starvation. The siege had stripped the countryside surrounding Petersburg of all foodstuffs, and the provisions Lee had ordered from Richmond never came, for his message requesting them had arrived after the last trains had departed going South and the storehouses had been sacked.

For three days, without food, his scarecrow army of 20,000 men dwindling daily through exhaustion, collapse, and desertion, Lee maneuvered against the inevitable. When a bedraggled North Carolina straggler was accosted by a Federal soldier and ordered to throw down his rifle, he cursed and said, "You've got me and a helluva git you got."

On April 9, Palm Sunday, Lee asked Grant for an "interview" to discuss "the surrender of this army." Before dawn he rose and slipped into a clean new gray uniform, a pressed white shirt, and freshly shined boots and tied a red sash around his waist to which he buckled an ornate sword and scabbard. With his glittering gold buttons and silver beard, he looked so splendid that an aide expressed astonishment. He answered, "I have probably to be General Grant's prisoner, and I thought I must make my best appearance."[26]

Grant arrived in muddied boots, splattered trousers, and rumpled uniform. On seeing his foe, he immediately apologized for his dress and explained that his baggage had been misplaced. Lee excused him: "I am very glad you did it that way."

Grant's terms, considering his reputation, were generous: the laying down of their arms, paroles based on pledges not to take up arms against the Government, and, at Lee's request, permission for those who owned horses and mules to return to their farms with them. In addition, Grant sent rations for 25,000 to the Confederates.

Lee rode back through his men, who were lined up to receive him with cheers and sporadic rebel yells despite their weariness and hunger, hands reaching out to touch him and touch Traveller, muttering, "I love you just as well as ever, General Lee." The news spread, and the roads were packed with troops, some with caps off and heads bowed, hands reaching and passing gently over Traveller's flanks, some too choked to speak, others saying "Goodbye" and "God bless you, General," while Lee rode with tears trickling into his beard, his hat off and his body erect, looking neither left nor right.

On April 12, the day set for formal surrender, the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia marched onto the field in front of the Appomattox Courthouse and "by divisions and parts of divisions

deployed into line, stacked their arms, folded their colors, and walked empty handed to find their distant, blighted homes."

The news of Lee's surrender struck the Cabinet and especially Judah P. Benjamin with devastating impact. Benjamin returned to the home of his hosts in Danville and after a cheerful greeting, because ladies were present, he summoned Dr. Hoge to a room upstairs.

Hoge wrote Lawley about that moment, when Benjamin said to him, "I did not have the heart to tell those good ladies what I have just learned. General Lee has surrendered and I fear the Confederate cause is lost."[27]

Hoge asked him what he would do, and he replied that he would accompany the Cabinet to Greensboro. How would he escape capture, traveling with a group of top Confederate officials?

"I will never forget the expression of his countenance or the pitiless smile which accompanied his words when he said, 'I'll never be taken alive.' "[28]

Butler in his Benjamin biography felt it necessary to add: "Since various stories of theatrical effect, hinting at suicide by pistol (this more in keeping with the Mephistophelian or Borgian character ascribed to him at the North) [or] the concealed poison of a ring, have been circulated, it may be well to add that Dr. Hoge distinctly states there was no such puerility in his calm statement of his determination."[29]

With Lee's surrender, Davis ordered the Government and its treasure train to move southward to Greensboro, where he convened a council of war of the Cabinet with Generals Beauregard and Johnston. The generals had been summoned from the field, where they were outnumbered 350,000 to 25,000, to discuss what they thought was termination, but the President babbled as if in a mad dream about raising a large army of deserters and conscripting men who had previously escaped the draft. The generals pointed out that men who desert when times are difficult do not return when times are critical. The meeting broke up for a day until a complete report could be obtained of the details of Lee's surrender.

The next morning, knowing the details of Lee's laying down of arms, Johnston pressed his case: "My views are, sir, that our people are tired of war, feel themselves whipped and will not fight. . . . My men are daily deserting in large numbers. Since Lee's defeat they regard the war as at an end."[30] He declared there was no choice but total surrender.

Benjamin was the only Cabinet member to support the President in his foolhardy determination to continue the fighting. General Joe Johnston reported that Benjamin "made a speech for war much like that of Sempronius in Addison's play."[31] The speech Johnston referred to reads:

> *My voice is still for war*
> *Gods! can a Roman senate long debate*
> *Which of the two to choose, slavery or death!*
> *No, let us arise at once, gird our swords,*
> *And, at the head of our remaining troops,*
> *Attack the foe, break through the thick array*
> *Of his thronged legions and charge home upon him.*

It must have seemed an astounding performance to the Cabinet; to make such a speech in front of Beauregard and Johnston, especially when they would have to do the fighting, must have struck them as the height of grandiosity and self-delusion. What is more, it did not, as we know from his earlier conversation with Hoge, represent Benjamin's own view of the situation. It can be explained only in terms of loyalty to the President. Perhaps he feared the effect of isolation on Davis at that moment or felt that the time was not yet right to urge a dignified surrender and that Davis needed Varina around him to bring him to his senses. In a few days Benjamin would side with the rest of the Cabinet in recommending the terms of surrender. But not now.

Davis pushed the Cabinet on to Charlotte, where he was to meet Varina. He was belligerent and determined to press on with his escape, ultimately to lead a resurrected South from bases in Texas and Mexico.

On April 14, 1865, just after the Confederate Cabinet arrived in Charlotte, Lincoln was assassinated in Ford's Theater by a man well known to the audience, the actor John Wilkes Booth. The assassin was traced to the house of a Mrs. Mary Surratt in Washington, the mother of the Confederate courier John Surratt, and then pursued into the Virginia countryside.

The papers reported a simultaneous attack on Secretary of State Seward in his own bedroom by a man who slashed the Secretary's cheek with a bowie knife. Seward survived, but the simultaneity of the attacks suggested a coordinated assault, a conspiracy with political, not personal, motives.

It was much more politically useful for Union Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and the rest of the Federal leadership to imagine a high-level Confederate conspiracy than to think that the men involved had acted on their own. On April 20, 1865, General George S. Boutwell, later to be a radical Republican Representative and U.S. Senator from Massachusetts, wrote to General Benjamin Butler: "If there be evidence connecting any of the rebel leaders with the plot to assassinate the President, indictments should be found that we may follow them to other countries. It is not unlikely that Davis, Breckinridge and Benjamin had a hand in the business."[32]

Stanton moved ruthlessly, "like a dictator," an associate said, determined to lay the blame for the assassination at the feet of the leaders of the Confederacy.

At 4:44 A.M., while Lincoln was sinking toward death, Stanton wired Major General Dix, commander of the Union army in Maryland: "It appears from a letter found in Booth's trunk that the murder was planned before the fourth of March, but fell through then because the accomplices backed out until 'Richmond could be heard from.' "[33]

The trunk he referred to was in Booth's room at the National Hotel. At the bottom was a cipher code identical to the official Confederate ciphers found by U.S. Assistant War Secretary Dana at Richmond on April 6 in the offices of Judah P. Benjamin.

Lincoln died at 7:22 A.M. Within a few hours, Stanton wired Charles Francis Adams, the U.S. Minister to England: "The murderer of the President has been discovered, and evidence obtained that these horrible crimes were committed in execution of a conspiracy deliberately planned and set foot by rebels, under pretense of avenging the South and aiding the rebel cause."[34]

The day Lincoln died, a U.S. War Department official was told that "the President is dead and Mr. Stanton directs you to arrest Jacob Thompson," the leader of the Canadian spy ring.[35] Ten days after Lincoln's death, an indictment in the form of a Presidential proclamation was issued "for combining, confederating, and conspiring with one John H. Surratt, John Wilkes Booth, Jefferson Davis," and seven Canadian spies, including Jacob Thompson, "to kill and murder . . . Abraham Lincoln, late, and William H. Seward, Secretary of State."[36] Benjamin was not mentioned but the names of Surratt and Thompson were clear signals to him that he was a possible suspect.

The assassination occurred on Good Friday. On the following Sunday, memorable in American history as "Black Easter," thousands

of ministers and other speakers all over the nation delivered sermons on the event. Almost every one of them drew parallels between the assassination and the crucifixion. One declaimed: "Jesus Christ died for the world; Abraham Lincoln died for his country."[37]

The timing and circumstances of his death were elevating Lincoln into American sainthood, a martyr to his struggling country, who sacrificed his life for its victory. Edward Everett Hale in Boston said that Lee's surrender at Appomattox and the assassination were like "the divine contrast between the triumph of Palm Sunday and the wretchedness and glory of the crucifixion."[38]

"Now he belongs to the ages," Stanton is supposed to have said as Lincoln breathed his last. He had been the first President whose photograph had been circulated nationwide, and people tacked it to the walls of their homes. They felt attached in a deeply personal way to his somber visage. The sacrifice of thousands of families would now be embodied in Lincoln's death, his blood mingled with their own, his death like a story in a New Testament of America's struggle for nationhood.

Even Southerners understood the impact. Mary Chesnut wrote: "That mad man who killed him. Now he will be Saint Abe for all time, saint and martyr."[39]

The New York *Times* on May 1, 1865, denounced the New York *Tribune's* pleas for amnesty and stated that Davis, Benjamin, and Confederate Secretary of War Breckinridge "should die . . . the most disgraceful death on the gallows."[40] Andrew Johnson was reported to be pacing in his room when he heard the news, wringing his hands and saying, "They shall suffer for this, they shall suffer for this."[41] General Grant recalled that Johnson "seemed to be anxious to get at the leaders to punish them. He would say that the leaders of the rebellion must be punished, and that treason must be made odious."[42] Even before the assassination, Johnson was vengeful. When he had spoken a few weeks earlier at a huge rally in Washington, he had mentioned Jefferson Davis's name and the crowd had shouted, "Hang him! Hang him!" Others, like Davis, he continued, were "infamous in character, diabolical in motive . . . and when you ask me what I would do, my reply is—I would arrest them, I would try them, I would convict them, and I would hang them."[43] This speech was reprinted widely after the assassination, including in one of Benjamin's hometown newspapers, the New Orleans *Tribune,* on April 21, 1865. The paper reported that the speech had a "double interest and meaning . . . since the terms laid down in it will undoubtedly be the policy of the new president."[44]

The mixed references to Christianity, patriotism, and judgment were a fundamental part of Johnson's rhetoric. The new President had previously spoken in the U.S. Senate and had said: "I trust in God that the time will come, and that before long, when these traitors can be overtaken in the aggregate and we may mete out to them condign punishment, such as their offense deserves." He then caught the flavor of another aspect of the holy war: "Let us look forward to the time when we can take the flag, the glorious flag of our country, and nail it below the cross, and there let it wave as waved in olden time, and let us gather round it, and inscribe as our motto, 'Liberty and Union, one and inseparable, now and forever.' Let us gather round it, and while it hangs floating beneath the cross, let us exclaim, 'Christ first, our country next.' "[45]

And he had several times spoken of Jews in the same view: "I might take you to Jerusalem, and tell of the persecution by the Jews of Christ, and his crucifixion upon the cross, and now their dispersion to all parts of the globe. I will not assume that it was the interposition of Divine Providence, or the result of a general law, but it is a great fact, and the Jews have been dispersed and rebuked."[46]

General George Custer, too, expressed the universally bitter reaction of the Union Army when he wrote, "Extermination is the only true policy we can adopt toward the political leaders of the rebellion, and at the same time do justice to ourselves and posterity."[47]

There is some testimony that Jefferson Davis was determined to face his accusers. Edward Pollard reported Davis's reaction to the news of the assassination of President Lincoln: The "event, [Davis] declared, confirmed his resolution not to leave the country. He inferred from the newspapers that he was accused as an accomplice in the crime, and he remarked to one of his staff officers that he 'would prefer death to the dishonor of leaving the country under such an imputation.' "[48]

On the other hand, the proclamation filled Benjamin with alarm, as revealed in a letter he wrote to his sister from Nassau several months later during his escape: "I heard . . . of the proclamation in which a large reward was offered for the capture of the President, who was most outrageously accused of having connived at the assassination of President Lincoln. Everything satisfied me of the savage cruelty with which the hostile government would treat any Confederate leader who might happen to fall into their hands, and I preferred death in attempting to escape, to such captivity as awaited me, if I became their prisoner."[49]

Benjamin was not overdramatizing. According to former Speaker of the House James G. Blaine, Senator Ben Wade of Ohio met with Andrew Johnson to discuss the treatment of Confederate leaders, when and if caught. It would never do, he said, to hang a large number. "I think if you could give me time, I could name thirteen that stand at the head in the work of the rebellion. I think we would all agree on Jeff Davis, Toombs, Benjamin, Slidell, Mason and Howell Cobb."[50] Blaine reflected the mood of the times, calling Benjamin the "Mephistopheles of the Rebellion, the brilliant, learned, sinister Secretary of State."[51]

Benjamin was being realistic. A year later in England, when asked "what the Northerners would have done to him if they had caught him," Benjamin said that they would have "probably put him to death."[52]

Benjamin must surely have remembered the time in the U.S. Senate when Andrew Johnson called Florida's Senator David Yulee "that contemptible Jew"[53] and added "there's another Jew—that miserable Benjamin!" He had to sense that Andrew Johnson would personally relish the hanging of Judah P. Benjamin. But there was another explanation for Johnson's extreme reaction, stemming from one of the oddest of John Wilkes Booth's actions on the day of the assassination. Before going to Ford's Theater that night, Booth dropped by the Kirkwood Hotel and sent a signed card up to the secretary of the then Vice President Andrew Johnson. It said simply, "Don't wish to disturb you. Are you at home?" Booth had planted a time bomb of suspicion at the door of the new President.[54]

When the newspaper stories blaming the Confederate leadership reached Benjamin, he had to have been deeply shaken: Lincoln dead, Johnson now President, and Jacob Thompson and John Surratt accused! Now Benjamin was no longer just another member of a fleeing Cabinet. His escape was now mandatory, for if Thompson and Surratt could be linked to Booth, they could certainly be linked to him. Benjamin would be blamed and hanged with them if caught. The Yankees could link him to the Canadian spies easily by his own messenger. In this hysteria, a fair trial? Never. The ancient blood ritual hung heavily in the air. If he went on trial, Lincoln would become Christ crucified, and he would be transformed into the guilty Christ-killer. No Jew would have a chance in such a spectacle of revenge and hatred. The search for an American Judas had an element of fundamentalist instinct; the assassin was Booth, but how much

more thrilling for the mob if it could blame Benjamin, the Jew in the Confederate Cabinet.

Lincoln had been the South's only hope for mercy, amnesty, and reconciliation. Now, thousands of brave Confederate soldiers would suffer for this wild act of insanity. Vengeance would surely rule.

England would be Benjamin's refuge. He was a British subject by birth, and there were Confederate sympathizers there. He had to get to England.

To relieve his saddle sores, Benjamin rode in an ambulance at the rear of the Cabinet in flight. Heavy April showers caused the ambulance to get stuck in the oozing red clay as nightfall crept in, and he made camp with a former presidential assistant, Burton Harrison, who set down his memories of the Secretary of State in this moment of despair: "I could see from afar the occasional glow of Benjamin's cigar. While the others of the party were perfectly silent, Benjamin's silvery voice was presently heard as he rhythmically intoned, for their comfort, verse after verse of Tennyson's 'Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington.' "[55]

While on the road, Benjamin concentrated his whole physical being on his escape, but his mind was able to transport him to other worlds:

> *Lead out the pageant; sad and slow*
> *As fits an universal woe.*
> *Let the long, long procession go . . .*
> *All is over and done.*
> *Let the bell be toll'd*
> *And a deeper knell in the heart be knoll'd*
> *. . . We are a people yet.*
> *Tho' all men else their nobler dreams forgot.*

Those lines of Tennyson had given him much consolation through his life; never had he needed them as desperately as he did now.

By the time the train reached Charlotte, Varina had fled ahead of it, fearful of marauders and leaving a note for the President. "Why not cut loose from your escort?" it said. "Go swiftly and alone with the exception of two or three. . . . May God keep you, my old and only love."[56]

Fearful of reprisals, few in Charlotte would give the Cabinet homes to rest in; finally Benjamin and Jules were provided a place in the

home of Abram Weill, a prominent Jew and an admirer who earlier had given a place to Varina. Only one man would house the President, a bachelor who ran "a sort of open house" with lots of liquor; locals called him "a graceless scamp." In gratitude for the Weill family's courage and hospitality, Benjamin presented them with a beautiful gold-headed cane, which, he said, had been on one side of him with his pistol on the other when he made his final speech to the U.S. Senate. The cane may have been an invented souvenir—since no one ever reported such an accoutrement during his speech—but Benjamin was in the mood for dramatics and wanted the Weill family to remember the gift.

Between April 13 and 18, General Johnston met with Sherman to discuss surrender terms. Sherman, the South's most hated adversary, who inflicted pitiless desolation on entire states and cities, unpredictably offered exceedingly generous terms for surrender. Out of touch with the turmoil of Washington, Sherman thought that Lincoln's policies were still in place and that the war should end on a note of reconciliation.

President Davis requested that each Cabinet member respond in writing, and on April 22, Benjamin wrote his last official document, a long and under the circumstances quite blunt memorandum, declaring that the terms offered to General Johnston were "the best and most favorable that we could hope to obtain by a continuance of the struggle." He defined it "as an agreement that if the Confederate states will cease to wage war for the purpose of establishing a separate government, the United States will receive the several states back into the Union with their state governments unimpaired, with all their Constitutional rights recognized, with protection for the persons and property of the people and with a general amnesty." As always, he analyzed the facts, pointing out that Johnston's army had dwindled from 70,000 to 20,000 and added: "We could not at the present moment gather together an army of 30,000 men, by concentration of all our forces east of the Mississippi. . . . We have lost possession in Virginia and North Carolina of our chief resources for the supply of powder and lead. We can obtain no aid from the Trans-Mississippi Department, from which we are cut off by the fleet of gunboats that patrol the river. We have not a supply of arms sufficient for into the field even 10,000 additional men if the men themselves were forthcoming." Guerrilla warfare, he wrote, "would entail far more suffering on our own people than it would cause damage to the enemy."

Benjamin then, with no equivocation, urged acceptance and recommended a series of steps: "The President should by proclamation inform the states and the people of the Confederacy of the facts above recited; should ratify the convention so far as he has the authority to act as commander-in-chief, and . . . should declare his inability with the means remaining at his disposal to defend the Confederacy or maintain its independence, and should resign."[57]

Davis never had a chance to respond. Stanton and the Union Cabinet sternly overruled Sherman, insisting that any surrender be accepted only on the same terms as Lee. Johnston promptly surrendered at Bennett Place near Durham Station, North Carolina on April 26, 1865, the same day that John Wilkes Booth died in Virginia.

On April 23, a week after "Black Easter," Davis attended church in Charlotte with other members of the Cabinet. Benjamin had attended church in Danville and may have done so again. The congregation heard the Episcopal minister deliver an angry condemnation of the assassination of Lincoln as "a blot on civilization . . . topping off a fountain of blood, which, unchecked, will burst forth and flow onward through the South as well as the North, and bear on its gory bosom a reign of terror." He urged "every Christian to set his face against it."

As Davis left the church, he turned to Burton Harrison and said smiling, "I think the preacher directed his remarks at me; and he really seems to fancy I had something to do with the assassination."[58]

At Abbeville, South Carolina, the President and Benjamin met alone for a private talk. Davis intended to convene the Cabinet the next day for a formal discussion to lay out a future course for the Confederacy in view of Johnston's surrender, but Benjamin had conceived a special mission for himself.

It was Benjamin's suggestion that he should separate himself from the presidential party, using a logic that appeared to maintain his support for Davis's fanciful strategy. He wrote later:

> Early in May . . . I proposed to the President that, as we could not communicate with our agents abroad in any other way, I should leave him to pursue his journey across the country to the Trans-Mississippi and proceed myself to the Florida Coast, cross to the Islands, give the necessary orders and instructions to all our foreign agents, and rejoin him in Texas, *via* Matamoras. The plan was highly approved . . . with no one in on the secret

of my purpose except the President and Cabinet. To this prudent precaution I owe my safety.[59]

Davis pursued with new determination his vision of a new Confederacy rising from the ashes. He predicted that thousands would see the reborn Confederacy dart and strike against the foe, and thousands more would hear of their exploits and come to join him. Benjamin had constructed a plan that met the President's need for contact with Confederate agents in Europe to purchase arms, gunpowder, and cannons. But Benjamin inwardly must have realized that a reinvigorated cause was still another of the President's delusions. Benjamin volunteered to be Davis's European contact only because he knew full well that such a promise was futile. He would be loyal to the last and leave it to events to deliver the final blow.

The next morning, the President called together the Cabinet and, in the parlor of the large house where he had spent the night, addressed them, his jaunty spirits contrasting with the somber faces of the group. "Even if the troops now with me be all that I can for the present rely on," he declared, "3,000 brave men are enough for a nucleus around which the whole people will rally when the panic which now afflicts them has passed away."

An awkward silence fell over the room. Then each member of the Cabinet spoke in turn, except Benjamin, expressing unanimous disagreement with the President.

What the country was now undergoing, they said, was not panic but exhaustion. They all agreed that the Confederacy no longer had the means to prolong the war. To do so would be a cruel injustice to the people of the South and to the remaining soldiers with them, since if the troops persisted in a conflict so hopeless, they would be treated as brigands and would forfeit all chance of returning to their homes.

Another silence descended. The President looked at each of them as if searching for a way out of checkmate. He protested: "Then why, if all hope is exhausted, are they still in the field? Answer me that."[60]

The response was calm and matter of fact:

The troops were here to assist the President and the rest of the Cabinet in an escape. They would risk their lives in battle for that purpose. But the generals and officers had told the Cabinet privately that though they would follow President Davis until his safety was assured, they would not fire another shot in an effort to continue hostilities.

A number of eyewitness accounts tell of Davis's reaction. It was as if they had slapped the President with the back of their hands. His cheeks were flushed, and he sat in stunned silence.

Davis waited for a response, for pledges of fresh support and renewed commitment. But no one spoke. The silence drained him white with the realization that the end had come. The lines around his eyes and mouth dropped with dismay. "Then all is indeed lost," he muttered.[61]

He rose to leave the room, his legs so unsteady that a general had to help him to the door.

The Cabinet approved the division of the gold remaining in the treasury—$39,000 to Johnston's troops ($1.15 each); $108,000 to pay the soldiers accompanying them ($26.25 each); $35,000 reserved for the President and the members of the Cabinet; the remainder stored in secrecy for safekeeping, either in trunks to finance the rest of the flight or in the false bottom of a carriage to be sent to Charleston and then smuggled to England for future guerrilla action from the West. About $230,000 in worthless securities would be returned to the Richmond banks that owned them.

Hard riding lay ahead for the Presidential party, and Benjamin was neither an accomplished rider nor an old soldier. He wanted to go alone, and his saddle sores would be a convenient excuse. In any event, the party did not want to be encumbered by a plump rider unused to long hours on horseback.

It was time for Benjamin and the President to part. Three other Cabinet members had already left to be with their families. The President had said so many goodbyes that even this one was without special character. He said only that they would meet again some day west of the Mississippi. Benjamin confessed to John Reagan, now Secretary of the Treasury, that he was going "to the farthest place from the United States . . . if it takes me to the middle of China."[62] The remark suggested not just escape but the anonymity of a faraway land, far from the reach of the U.S. Government. Reagan was the first member of the Cabinet to hear of Benjamin's plan to disguise himself for an escape. "He had a trunk in the carriage with his initials, J. P. B., plainly marked on it. I imagined whether that might betray him. 'No,' he replied, 'there is a Frenchman traveling in the Southern states who has the same initials, and I can speak broken English like a Frenchman.' "

Years later, Varina wrote of the details of Benjamin and Davis's parting, which she presumably heard from her husband:

> Mr. Davis then decided to make his way on horseback to Texas followed by a few officers. This involved great risk and still greater fatigue and Mr. Benjamin came to him and said, "I could not bear the fatigue of riding as you do, and as I can serve our people no more just now, will you consent to my making an effort to escape through Florida? If you should be in a condition to require me again I will answer your call at once." This was his considerate manner of saying all was lost in his opinion; like Samson's lion after his strength was spent, he sent "forth sweetness."[63]

She summarized the nature of their relationship as they bade each other farewell: "Thus these two master minds which seemed to be the complement of each other parted with mutual respect and affectionate esteem as well as a hearty appreciation of the virtues and gifts his friend possessed, after breasting as one man the heavy storm which beat upon them for five bitter years."[64]

They separated, Davis on horseback with about twenty men, and Benjamin into an ambulance pulled by a pair of broken-down old grays. He assumed a calculated disguise, which Colonel John Taylor Wood, an aide to Davis (and incidentally the nephew of Sarah Knox Taylor), noted in his diary: "With goggles on, his beard grown, a hat well over his face, and a large cloak hiding his figure, no one would have recognized him as the late secretary of state of the Confederacy."[65] Benjamin traveled under false documents as a Frenchman named M. M. Bonfals, who spoke no English to strangers. The name itself showed a kind of bravado—probably a play on the Cajun French for "a good falsification" or "a good disguise." It must have given him a certain pleasure to tease his pursuers with a Cajun word-game.[66]

In Charlotte, the group had been joined by a Colonel Henry Leovy of New Orleans, who offered to accompany Benjamin southward and translate for "M. M. Bonfals." With regard to Jules, Benjamin decided that it would be safer for him to travel alone than to risk capture with a fugitive. He mentioned Jules in a subsequent letter to Varina, writing that "he was made prisoner at Montgomery and paroled, and then went to N.O. where he spent some weeks with my sister, in joint solicitude about me, both believing from my long disappearance that I must have perished." He wrote his sister that "in passing through Georgia, I left with a friend nine hundred dollars in gold" to be sent to his younger sisters at La Grange, Georgia, for passage back to New Orleans. Through money and good fortune, he managed to reunite his family.[67]

The portrayal of Benjamin by others during the escape from Richmond has an element of the grotesque about it. His demeanor was like no one else's around him, so different that every aide and Cabinet member who wrote about the trip remarked upon it. At a time of deepening desperation and hopelessness, he was reciting poetry, discussing literature, and smoking a cigar calmly by the campfire. It was as if, in his heart, he had already assumed a psychological disguise, distancing himself from the tragedy about him.

Perhaps he was responding to Davis's despair, as he had throughout the war, worried that the President was on the edge of collapse and needed counterbalancing personal and emotional support at the darkest hour. His attitude was showy, public, openly calm, almost as if he were aware he was being watched and would be written about. In that dire circumstance, one can assume, the self-confidence and nonchalance described in the accounts was the way he wanted to be perceived, not the way he was. That was further evidence of a man who could control his personality and, as time passed, the considered persona of a man who was calculating his chances and had already decided that he was going to flee.

Judah P. Benjamin, dressed in rags, rattled his wagon onto the roads where thousands of men, wounded and exhausted, were straggling home in dazed defeat. The war was over, his country lay in ruins, and he was fleeing for his life. Jefferson Davis, Robert E. Lee, Robert Toombs, and Judah P. Benjamin—all outlaws, when just a short time ago they were recognized the world over as leaders of the Confederate nation.

Benjamin had always been able to see himself from a distance. How ironic for him to be in disguise, sitting in the Georgia mud and trying to avoid the name Judah P. Benjamin, when he had spent a lifetime building it.

His life was in a strange period of suspension, having neither past nor future. Stripped of office and identity, his status resembled that of a runaway slave. It was his body they sought. It was so physical, so elemental, so base, like the relationship of terrain to a pursued animal. He had to be conscious of rivers and inlets, of forests and pathways, of sounds and signs, of weather and time of day. He had to cross his devastated land dressed in another man's rags, like a prince in the guise of a pauper. Before, if he had wanted to reach out to common people and tell them personally of their bravery, he was separated from them by his own notoriety and heritage. Now he was part of their bone and their blood, but separated by

his anonymity. Although he stood in the ranks of the defeated, the straggling Confederates along the road viewed him as a wandering Frenchman untouched by their tragedy. In some way, there was no difference: By whatever name—Judah P. Benjamin or M. M. Bonfals—he was an observer of this painful aftermath.

Benjamin traveled ever southward, using Captain Leovy to pretend to interpret for a French-speaking refugee. Once in Florida, he changed his disguise to that of a destitute farmer, in search of land on which to settle with some friends who wanted to move from South Carolina. A Southern farmer's wife made him some homespun clothes just like her husband's. He bought for his horse the commonest and roughest tack he could find, and he journeyed as far as possible on backroads, always passing around towns and keeping in the least inhabited districts.

His progress was necessarily slow, about 30 miles a day, until he reached central Florida. Everywhere were posters offering a large reward for Jefferson Davis and Jacob Thompson for the assassination of President Lincoln. In one author's words, it was a "time of rage, horror, dread and wild rumor."[68]

He was not the only refugee on the roads heading South. The roads were swollen with returning veterans and burned-out families searching for husbands and fathers. The women stopped every hobbling cripple along the way with questions. Released Yankee prisoners on the road looked as bedraggled and hungry as the Southerners. Bands of marauders stole everything in sight. The freed slaves rushed in exhilaration and panic toward who knew what fate. Freedom to many of them meant no more work, and they were flocking to the cities, to the new paradise. It was a Southern nightmare come true.

After two weeks on the road, Benjamin was alarmed by the sound of a galloping horse overtaking him. He recognized Colonel John Taylor Wood from the President's entourage. "Mr. Secretary," the Colonel gasped as he reined in his lathered horse beside the wagon, "the President has been captured."[69]

The President had heard that Varina and the children were in danger of being attacked by disbanded Union soldiers, Wood explained, and Davis had ridden night and day on his exhausted mounts to reach her. Two regiments of Union cavalry closed in on their camp at sunrise on May 2. Davis grabbed for a raincoat and inadvertently picked up Varina's shawl in the dawn light. When Varina saw a soldier draw a point-blank bead on her husband, she ran toward

him with a cry and flung her arms about his neck. Soon they were surrounded by dozens of cavalrymen in a circle around them, all with carbines pointed at the two figures clinging to each other in the center. Only Wood had escaped by bribing one of the soldiers he found rifling through the President's personal trunks looking for gold. Varina recorded Davis's words when he realized it had ended: "God's will be done."[70]

A newspaper showed a cartoon of the President fleeing through the woods in a hooped calico dress, brandishing a bowie knife. The caption contained the quote from the officer who captured the President: "Jefferson Davis, surprised by the dawn attack, hastily put on one of Mrs. Davis's dresses and started for the woods, closely pursued by our men, who at first thought him a woman, but seeing his boots while running, suspected his sex at once. The race was a short one and the rebel President was soon brought to bay."[71]

It was a lie that would follow Davis through history in cartoon and legend. P. T. Barnum offered the government $500 for the dress and, though he could not obtain what did not exist, had Davis portrayed in a hoop skirt in his shows.

Wood galloped off toward the southern horizon. Colonel Leovy and Benjamin were left alone again in their meandering wagon. A letter he wrote to Varina several months later (which will be examined in another context), suggests that Benjamin's mind dwelled on the final scene of capture, on the ridicule and humiliation heaped on the proud figure of the President, of Varina alone after he was taken.

Benjamin needed to hasten his escape. It was time to part from Colonel Leovy, who would return to New Orleans. Leovy subsequently wrote that Benjamin never appeared "so great as during the time of adversity. Traveling in disguise, sleeping at night in log huts, living on the plainest fare, subjected to all the discomforts of such a journey, with all his plans shattered and without definite hope for the future, his superb confidence and courage raised him above all, and he was the great, confident, cheerful leader that he had been in the days of highest prosperity."[72]

The imprisonment of Davis at that moment could not have offered a greater contrast. A newspaper reported that Davis was in a "living tomb" and "buried alive" in Fort Monroe.[73] He was in chains and under watch twenty-four hours a day.

Now events would test Varina's capacity to improvise in hours of danger. Jefferson Davis's humiliation was her disgrace as well.

She and the President must pass through this fire as symbols for the rest of the South. If only Lincoln had lived; Lincoln spoke for a goodness in the spirit of both countries that was now buried with him, his policy of reconciliation a victim of the false allegation of a Confederate plot.

Though outwardly cheerful, subsequent letters reveal that Benjamin's heart was heavy at the prospect that Jefferson Davis should spend his days languishing in prison. If events had gone differently at Gettysburg or Antietam and if the assassination had not intervened, would Lincoln and Seward be fleeing now in fear of being hanged? Davis was no criminal. He was a leader of a proud people, but the new leaders would not be kind to a prisoner accused of treason and assassination. The President was much more frail than they knew. Only Varina could keep him alive through his despair.

Twelve days after the assassination, John Wilkes Booth was shot to death by pursuing Union soldiers on a farm in Virginia.

On July 6, 1865, after a trial that many said was too hasty, four people, including Mrs. Mary Surratt, the mother of John Surratt, were hanged for the conspiracy to murder President Lincoln. Mrs. Surratt was the first woman hanged in American history. A storm of controversy broke out after her death over the scanty evidence used to convict her. It was widely assumed that she was being held as bait to lure her son back from his escape in order to trace a link to the Confederacy. Years later, in 1873, former President Andrew Johnson charged that Judge Joseph Holt, who presided over the military commission that tried the conspirators, withheld and suppressed the recommendation of mercy for Mrs. Surratt, which had been signed by five members of the nine-member military commission that convicted her. Holt claimed that President Johnson had examined and read the recommendation in his presence before deciding not to grant clemency. As Lewis Powell, one of the convicted co-conspirators, walked to the gallows, he insisted that Mrs. Surratt had not known of the plot to which he had confessed. Mrs. Surratt's last words to her priest were, "Father, I wish to say something . . . that I am innocent."[74]

As Lincoln's funeral train wound its way north and then west for more than two weeks, at the same time as the Confederate entourage made its way south, the myth of Lincoln gathered strength. Millions of people saw the body, ordinary people lining the railroad tracks

or, when it stopped for orations and prayers, filing past as Lincoln lay in state in Washington, Philadelphia, New York, Cleveland, and Chicago. The canonization of Lincoln was beginning. The people were acting out an ancient myth: mourning the figure of the "dying god," more humane and understanding than mere mortals, suffering through his travail for mankind's sake, and taken from his people just as he completed his mission.[75] Lincoln had sacrificed his life so that the country could live in peace; he was its just king and its patriarch. "We are coming, Father Abraham," the song went and the nation was seized by one of mankind's most powerful urges—revenge for the murder of the father. Blood lust was in the air, and someone had to pay for the "Black Easter" murder of Lincoln.

While Benjamin was fleeing southward, a nation of Christ-haunted people searched instinctively for the Jewish scapegoat who would make the myth complete. The Easter sermons mourning Lincoln would define Benjamin in the legend, should he be captured. The phrase "Christ-killer" had to be lodged in Benjamin's soul as a latent childhood memory. As the Jew in the South who had risen the highest, he now was in danger of falling the farthest. In a world filled with vengeance and hatred, he was facing the nightmare of his darkest dream: the trial of Judah P. Benjamin, the Jew. Lincoln's transformation into a crucified Christ figure was almost complete, his resurrection into sainthood only a matter of time and history. The people still clung to his lifeless body in an act of deification. Shot on April 14, he would not be buried in Springfield, Illinois, until May 4.

The dilemma for Judah Benjamin was painful and impossible. He had placed himself completely in the service of the Confederacy and its President; they had been his life and his purpose. He had held back nothing and had earned the deepest trust of his Commander-in-Chief. But there was no way Jefferson Davis could understand the Jew in Judah Benjamin, and Benjamin barely recognized it in himself. His lifelong habits of response took over: He was experiencing all over again the disgrace of Yale and the humiliation of Charleston. The patterns of guilt and reaction were repeating themselves: the urge to flee to somewhere new, to start over and seek out another enormous challenge, to replay the triumph of New Orleans and Louisiana in a new country.

The President, who preferred "death to the dishonor of leaving the country" under the cloud of the assassination, could well have

seen Benjamin's decision to leave him after four years as evidence of a lack of courage. Davis could not help but feel abandoned—by his people, by his Cabinet, by his military escort, and now by his closest associate. Unwillingness to face the final accounting represented in Jefferson Davis's scheme of values a fundamental flaw, an absence of honor. Still more disappointing, that flaw was appearing in the man he trusted most, Judah P. Benjamin.

Benjamin knew the Union soldiers would be combing the countryside for him. He hid during the day and traveled by night. His escape was almost fictional, as miracles seemed to light his way.

Early one morning he became confused as to which of two roads to take. Since daytime was upon him, he decided to tether his mule and rest for a while in some brambles just off the road.

During his sleep he heard a shrill, high-pitched voice say, "Hi, for Jeff." He thought he was dreaming and dozed off again, until he heard it again: "Hi, for Jeff." He looked up and saw a parrot talking away among some other birds. He knew the parrot had to belong to a Southern sympathizer, for who else would to teach such a greeting to a bird? He threw a stone at the bird and followed his colorful flying guide to a farmhouse. There he found Confederate friends, who allowed him to stay for several days to rest and plan his next steps. They were raided once by a Yankee search party, but Benjamin ran out the back door and hid in a thicket. While hiding he had to clutch the muzzle of the family's yelping dog, which had followed him out the back door. He asked the farmer's wife to sew pleats in the back of his vest and waistband to carry gold. Now he was plump with gold pieces and the overweight target of every swindler, turncoat, and thief from North Carolina to the Florida keys.[76]

Since a substantial reward was being offered for him, he hesitated to tell anyone his true identity. But he confessed it to his new friends. One of them was an ex-Confederate officer named Captain Tresca, who offered to take him by boat, since there were too many Federals on the land routes.

He subsisted on turtle eggs, fish, and coconut milk. When a Federal gunboat was sighted, Captain Tresca ordered Benjamin to don a cook's apron and a skull cap, to go down to the galley and smear himself with soot and grease, and to pose as the boat's Jewish cook. It was the impulse of a rural Southerner to disguise the Jewish Secre-

tary of State in such a demeaning, but successful, way. One of the Yankees searching the boat remarked he had never before remembered a Jew performing common labor.[77]

About July 7, the day Mrs. Surratt and the other conspirators, none of whom had been named in the original accusation, were hanged in Washington, Benjamin reached Knight's Key at the southern end of the Florida coast. He set sail for Bimini in a small boat, with a plan to catch larger ships for Nassau, Havana, and finally Southampton in England.

In a letter to his sister, he described the dramatic story of his hazardous escape, caught between the pursuit of the Federals and the dangers of the sea.

He had set sail in a "little boat at sea" with two guides to try to reach Bimini: "I had never seen a water-spout, and often expressed a desire to be witness of so striking a phenomenon. I got, however, more than I bargained for." Suddenly, while riding out several squalls, "a very heavy, lurid cloud in the west dipped down toward the sea, and in a single minute two large water-spouts were formed, and the wind began blowing furiously directly toward us, bringing the water spouts in a straight line for our boat." The two spouts created "long waving column[s] that swayed about in the breeze and extended from the ocean up into a cloud. . . . We would have been swamped in a second, but before they reached us the main squall was upon us with such a tremendous blast of wind and rain combined that it was impossible to face the drops of water which were driven into our eyes with such violence as to compel us instantly to turn our backs to it." The account continued:

> On turning our backs to this tremendous squall, judge of our dismay on seeing another water-spout formed in another squall in the east, also traveling directly towards us . . . we had scarcely caught sight of this new danger, when the two spouts first seen passed our boat at a distance of about one hundred yards . . . tearing up the whole surface of the sea as they passed, and whirling furiously into the clouds, with a roar such as is heard at the foot of Niagara Falls. The western blast soon reached the spout that had been coming toward us from the east. . . . It wavered and broke and the two other spouts continued their awful race across the ocean until we lost sight of them in the blackness of the horizon. A quarter of an hour after, all was calm and still, and

> our boat was lazily heaving and setting on the long swell of the Bahama Sea. It was a scene and picture that has become photographed into my brain and that I can never forget.[78]

H. A. McLeod, one of Benjamin's companions, interviewed some years later, reported that after the "squalls and the water spouts and the tropical storms came near finishing us," the boat was filled with water. In the calm of the sea just after the storm, Benjamin, who was bailing desperately with his hat while his companions used tin pans, said with a smile, "McLeod, this is sure not like being Secretary of State." McLeod described him as "an awfully nervy man."[79]

At Bimini Benjamin boarded a small sloop stuffed with a cargo of tightly pressed wet sponges. When the sponges started to dry and harden, the boat burst apart at its seams and sank so quickly that Benjamin barely had time to jump into a skiff with three Negroes. The craft was so crowded that only 5 inches of it were out of the water. Though 35 miles at sea with only a pot of rice and a single oar, the four managed to scull a course toward land for eight hours. After avoiding "rescue" by two Yankee steamers, they were finally picked up by a local yacht. Benjamin chartered a second boat for Nassau, which ran into storms and headwinds and took six days to make the trip. From Nassau, he boarded a schooner for Havana, then a steamer bound for Southampton, England, but "after being nine hours at sea, a fire broke out . . . at about ten o'clock at night. . . . By almost superhuman effort, the flames were kept under control till we reached St. Thomas with seven feet of water in the forehold that had been pumped by hand . . . without however extinguishing the fire." Several crews in the harbor helped put out the fire. After three more days the steamer was in "ship-shape," and he set sail again for England.[80]

He was penniless for the moment. Safe passage, bribery, and gratitude had cost him $1,500, almost all of his remaining gold, but somehow he liked the drama of his destitution. A man was not his possessions or his office but his brains, talent, energy, and his capacity for improvisation and adaptation. To lose all could be oddly exhilarating, if one had risked all.

He could stand as a metaphor for the South itself: broke and bent but determined, by sheer will and faith, to overcome the odds and start all over again.

We know something of what was on his mind because of a chance

meeting on the ship to England. William Preston, another fleeing Confederate, talked with him during the voyage and wrote Varina of their conversation: "I met Mr. Benjamin," he wrote, "who had made a wonderful escape. . . . Mr. Benjamin told me he feared you were destitute, and could not give me any satisfactory answer till we reached Europe, but manifested the most friendly interest and purpose in your behalf. . . . I left Mr. Benjamin in Europe. He does not intend to return to America."[81]

Benjamin felt an enormous surge of relief not only at surviving a harrowing trip but at having cheated the Yankees of a prize. He wrote to Senator Bayard of Delaware, an old friend from his Senate days, that he arrived in Southampton "on the 30th of August, nearly four months after my separation from the President, during which time I had spent twenty-three days seated in the thwart of an open boat, exposed to the tropical sun in June and July, utterly without shelter or change of clothes. I never, however, had one minute's indisposition nor despondency but was rather pleased by the feeling of triumph in disappointing the malice of my enemies."[82] The escape seemed to reinforce his belief that he was being reserved for a special destiny.

He would try vainly to put events behind him. With John Surratt still at large and the most wanted man in the world, the tragedy of the last days of the Confederacy was on the front page of every newspaper. Reminders were everywhere during his escape: a glimpse of newspapers that announced the progress of Lincoln's funeral train back to Illinois; the swearing in of Andrew Johnson; the photographs of the four hooded bodies dangling from the gallows, one of them in a long black dress. All of history would be changed by Booth's rash act. Brutus, after all, was a colleague in Caesar's Roman Senate; Booth was just a random fanatic. No future leader would be safe from an assassin's bullet, perhaps neither were the Confederate leaders, like Jefferson Davis and himself, accused in the plot. The rules of civilized warfare had been violated; the assassins would turn the Yankees into jackals bent on vengeance and dictatorial victors seeking utter domination of the South.

The spies in Canada had been Benjamin's idea, but he had never envisioned the kind of desperation that would drive them to those evil outrages. Were the spies guilty? If so, what part of the fault indirectly could be his? Those men were sustained by Confederate dollars for too long a period, and he had approved the master plan for the borders, then had been too self-confident to weigh the irra-

tional, to sense that their failures would drive them to more reckless measures like attempting to kidnap the President or burn down New York. He should have foreseen that they would ultimately go too far and should have ended it much earlier. Thompson was honorable, he knew, but what of the others? Even if the Canadian spies were innocent, he had to be appalled that fate had chosen a young messenger whose mother would be accused of plotting with Booth and hanged. The death of Lincoln would cast a shadow over his whole previous life. It would leave a deep scar across his own memories of the war, his earnest but largely hopeless efforts and now this bitter, disgusting aftermath.

"Your country is desolate," saith Isaiah. "Your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence . . . the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint."

He had never meant to unleash such havoc on his South or such brutality on Lincoln and Seward. Surely, in the last accounting, intent would matter.

The war had been a giant chess game for him, an intellectual exercise, a personal achievement even in defeat. Now he was caught up in its final horror. There was no escape except to go far from the source of the memory. He wanted to find solace in a quiet old age, away from power and public controversy.

If God would just grant him the grace to put behind the suffering landscape that was now the South, he would burn all shreds of it from his memory and never speak of it again.

4

REFUGEE FROM THE LOST CAUSE

1865–1884

18

England: *From Law Student to Queen's Counsel*

The England that awaited Judah P. Benjamin in 1865 had only recently abolished the shackles of restrictions against Jews. It had been a liberating century. By the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815, Jews had begun to win acceptance at all levels of English society: They could settle freely, own businesses, purchase land, and vote in parliamentary elections. But as late as the 1850s political representation was still barred to Jews. No Jew could sit in Parliament or in a municipal council. No Jew could hold any office under the crown. The oath of office entailed swearing loyalty "on the true faith of a Christian." Even in the early part of the century, when two acts of Parliament granted Catholics and "Nonconformists" the right to sit in Parliament, Jews were pointedly excluded.[1]

Then, in 1847, just as Judah P. Benjamin was emerging in the politics of Louisiana, the city of London elected the distinguished banker Lionel Rothschild on the Whig ticket as its member of the House of Commons. When he refused to pronounce the oath, there was a bruising debate over the Jewish Disabilities Bill. One member of Parliament described the underlying issue: "This Jew Question is a terrible annoyance. I never saw anything like the prejudice which exists against them."[2] During the days of debate, the focus

of attention was Benjamin Disraeli, a Jew by birth and a Christian by religion, who broke with the leaders of the party he aspired to lead in one of his most memorable speeches.

"Where is your Christianity if you do not believe in their Judaism?" he asked. "They are, humanly speaking, the authors of your religion. . . . On every sacred day, you read to the people the exploits of Jewish heroes, the proofs of Jewish devotion, the brilliant annals of past Jewish magnificence." He warned the majority that "you are influenced by the darkest superstitions of the darkest ages that ever existed in this country. . . . Whatever may be the consequences on the seat I hold . . . it is as a Christian that I will not take upon me the awful responsibility of excluding from the legislature those who are of the religion in the bosom of which my Lord and Saviour was born."[3]

Parliament rejected Disraeli's plea, voted to retain the oath, and refused to seat Rothschild. However, for the next ten years the middle-class voters in London proceeded to reelect Rothschild to the same seat. Each term, he would reenact a pantomime designed to embarrass the conservatives—approach his seat, sigh audibly, turn, and walk out. The Tories persisted in upholding the oath, reflecting the attitudes of the aristocrats, the squires, and the Anglican bishops, who feared the rise of the middle class. "The rabble of London," a puzzled Henry Drummond asserted after Rothschild's reelection in 1857, "partly out of love of mischief, partly out of contempt for the House of Commons, and partly from a desire to give a slap in the face to Christianity, elected a Jew."[4] In 1858, after the Tory leadership became convinced that Jewish restrictions were becoming an embarrassment, an act was finally passed that allowed each house of Parliament to establish its own rules of oath-taking, and Lionel Rothschild was seated. That was the year Judah P. Benjamin was elected to his second term in the United States Senate. Even with the victory in Parliament, it was not until 1871 that Parliament authorized Oxford and Cambridge to award degrees to Jews, thereby lifting the last remaining legal restrictions on Jews in the country, a full six years after Benjamin landed in England from his perilous voyage of escape from the American Civil War.

From Southampton, where he landed on August 30, 1865, Benjamin went immediately to London for a week to assist Mason in winding up the affairs of the consulate. Then he hurried to Paris to see his wife and daughter for the first time in five years. He wrote to his sister not of Natalie but of his joy at seeing Ninette, who looked

"as blooming as a rose."[5] He was also happy to hear that Jules St. Martin had safely made his way back from the war. "I also found letters from Jules giving an account of his visit to New Orleans and of his seeing you all, and he even committed the gross flattery of writing to my wife that 'Ben's sister is charming.' "[6]

Old friends begged him to stay in Paris. John Slidell arranged for him to meet a number of French bankers, who told him that "it would be easy to obtain an honorable and lucrative position in financial circles." An old New Orleans friend, Madame de Pontalba, was "imperious in her urgency" and promised aid should he remain in Paris. But Benjamin had different plans: "Nothing is more independent, nor offers a more promising future, than admission as a barrister to the bar of London."[7]

On the surface, Paris would have been a safer short-term choice. The emancipation of the Jews that had swept Europe decades earlier had begun in France, the home of the celebrated Revolution and of fraternity and equality. Jews had sat in the French Chamber of Deputies since 1834, and Benjamin's New Orleans and Confederate connections would have given him access to influential clients. But France was also the home of Napoleon III and of a strong Catholic Church that had resisted Jewish advance. Anti-Semitic feelings smoldered just beneath the surface of fine manners at the royal court. To join a banking firm would have placed limits on his opportunities. More importantly, as he pointed out, it would have forced him to give up the independence of a law practice. With the enmity of the U.S. Government facing him in the person of Secretary of State Seward, any banking firm could be influenced to control him, not welcome him in international negotiations, or perhaps drop him altogether as a price in some international arrangement. He would be vulnerable. On the other hand, as a barrister in England he would have many clients and sources of income and not be dominated by the views and demands of a single institution. He wrote to his former law partner in New Orleans that "when called to the bar I shall take the Northern Circuit which includes Liverpool where I hope to get my first start with the aid of some of our old clients there."[8] Liverpool was home to the largest number of Confederate sympathizers—shipping firms and mercantile institutions whose owners had supported the South during the war and, having known Benjamin from his days as the South's reigning international lawyer, would welcome his services once again. They would be the core clients of a profitable practice.

England was an island nation of traders with aspirations for an even more expansive colonial empire. Perhaps he was already framing for himself a role in such a grandiose future. He spoke its language elegantly and was welcomed in its highest councils; he carried English citizenship and was always at home psychologically in English culture. He had risen fast in one port city in America, and he would start over in a second port city in England. Liverpool and then London would reward his experience both in law and in politics; a nation that exchanged goods for raw materials and exotic luxuries all over the world required just the kind of legal practice he relished. He spoke French and Spanish and knew the laws and cultures of other countries. He also knew that if he could regain his reputation—through clients, books, articles, and successful cases—as a master of international law, his future in the nation of traders was assured.

There were, of course, personal considerations in choosing England over France. Seeing Natalie again in Paris—her Paris—must have confirmed Benjamin's decision. They had largely lived apart for twenty-one years, except for the short disaster in Washington during his time in the Senate. Her infidelities had humiliated him then, and Richmond whispered of the other men in her life during the time she was without her husband in Paris. The court of Napoleon III was not known for its high moral fiber, and she possessed an intriguing combination of beauty and access to the powerful. He would not build another castle of respectability only to have it end again in ruins, leaving him a second time to retreat in shame. He had learned his lesson in Washington. England, separated from her waywardness but close enough to visit on his own timetable, would be his choice.

Natalie's life was comfortable, while his would be a struggle. He was once asked by the daughter of an old friend why he was living apart from his family. She reported his answer "that he can't have them with him in London because he cannot afford to keep them in the style they should be."[9] Natalie now had roots in Paris and knew his prodigious work habits. If given the choice, she would surely remain in Paris living in the "style" to which she had become accustomed even if he was living a student's life in London.

But as a fugitive, how would he be treated in his adopted England? Many Southern expatriates lived abroad, but he was the most notorious expatriate of them all. In his letters to his sisters, however, he seemed genuinely surprised at his reception and reassured them that he was being treated with "great kindness and distinction" and

"would be called on by a large number of public men." He wrote that "Mr. D'Israeli [sic] also wrote a friend of mine expressing the desire of being useful to me when he would arrive in town, and I have been promised a dinner at which I am to be introduced to Gladstone and Tennyson as soon as the season opens."[10]

When James Bayard, a Senator from Delaware and an old friend with whom he corresponded for decades, offered financial aid, Benjamin declined and reassured Bayard that he was not penniless. He wrote that he had arrived in England with little more than a few months' support for himself and his family but had soon received a hundred bales of cotton that had "escaped Yankee vigilance." That was all that had gotten through of the six hundred bales he had purchased before he fled. He reported to Bayard that "the price here is so high that it has given me $20,000." He was able to add $10,000 more by using "information furnished by a kind friend in relation to the affairs of a financial institution, in which I invested my little fortune" from the cotton. "So you see I am not quite a beggar," he wrote. Aware that he was in far better circumstances than his compatriots in the South, among them Jefferson Davis, he wrote that he was "as cheerful and as happy as possible for me to be while my unfortunate friends are in such cruel confinement and my unhappy country in so deplorable a condition."[11]

Initially, Lincoln's Inn, which controlled the practice of law, would not relax its three-year requirement for admission to the bar. As Benjamin studied English law, he kept up with events in the South and was depressed by what he heard. "The news from the other side fills me with alarm and concern," he wrote to his sisters, "and I cannot penetrate into the dark future that seems to await my unhappy country. The unholy passions of the wretched Northern fanatics seem to require no fresh fuel in order to burn with fiercer intensity: and until the mass of people hurl them from power, God knows what excesses they will commit."[12]

He was beginning to circulate among the powerful of England, and he wrote to his sisters in New Orleans proudly that "I have made some valuable acquaintances here and shall have many more as soon as Parliament assembles. I have dined with Mr. Gladstone and was greatly pleased with him."

On a three-day outing "in the midst of the proverbial splendor and comfort of an English gentleman's country seat, and with a crowd of titled and fashionable guests, I found their tone, manners, and customs just what I would have expected—quiet, easy, courteous,

and agreeable. The style, of course, exceeds anything seen on our side of the water. I was very hospitably received and warmly pressed to prolong my visit but I have no time to yield to pleasures, till I have secured some lucrative business."[13]

He had heard terrible rumors of the South, paralyzed without its freed slaves, and tales of woe associated with Reconstruction. "I confess that I have always looked with the utmost dread and distrust on the experiment of emancipation so suddenly enforced on the South by the event of the war. God knows how it will all end!"[14]

Eight months after he arrived in London, an English banking firm failed, sweeping away with its demise much of Benjamin's accumulated capital. He was concerned about money again, but even so wanted to share whatever he had with his family in New Orleans. He assured his sister of his ability to help his other sisters "Sis and Hatty" if they were "the least in want." He had sent them $900 in gold before he fled "as they must have suffered if they had none but confederate notes," and he assured them that he could always spare a few hundred dollars and had no fear of his ability "to make a handsome competence at the bar."[15]

His letters to E. A. Bradford, his old law partner in New Orleans, described in minute detail his struggle to make a new life. His portrayal of his situation to his former law partner was certainly more realistic than the brave face he put forward for the members of his family.

"I am now entered as a student at Lincoln's Inn," he wrote soon after he began his studies on January 13, 1866, "and do not expect to be called to the bar until next fall." His plan was to study for a year before asking for special admission to the bar rather than ask immediately for a waiver or wait the customary three years. He would thereby comply partially with the requirement and at the same time brush away the intellectual cobwebs regarding the intricacies of English law, familiarizing himself with the courts and various institutions in the legal system. "In the meantime, I am making enough to pay my personal expenses by an engagement to contribute one leading article a week to one of the daily papers, for which I am paid 5 pounds a week and am thus enabled to devote the small sum that I was able to save from the wreck to the maintenance of my family till I can obtain some practice at the bar." One cannot know precisely to what money he was referring, but it is reasonable to assume that "the small sum . . . from the wreck" at sea was the small amount of gold that he had sewn into the lining of his clothes for his escape. With the loss of a large amount of his money, he

was living simply. "I have enough with close economy to get through three years and by that time may be able to secure a decent practice," he wrote. He was sending Bradford his power of attorney for handling his affairs in New Orleans regarding his family, and he wanted Bradford to know that he was not desperate. "I could make 600 to 800 pounds a year by consenting to become sub-editor of the daily paper . . . but that would take up nearly all my time and prevent my preparation for the bar."[16] He then listed for Bradford all his expenses associated with Lincoln's Inn and admission to the bar:

> Stamps 25 pounds - 2 - 6. Lectures 5 pounds - 5 - 0. Admission fee 5 pounds - 12 - 6. Printed form 11 pounds - 1 - 0, making a total of 37 pounds - 1 - 0. I had then to deposit 100 pounds as security that I would pay for my dinners. The next step was to enter a barrister's chambers with view to learn the course of practice, and for this the fee was 105 pounds - 0 - 0. I am now in the chambers of Mr. Charles Pollock, son of the Chief Baron of the Exchequer Sir Frederic Pollock.[17]

The Bradfords visited London during this period, and he confessed to them his struggling circumstances, belying the somewhat rosier descriptions in his letters to family and friends in America. He slept in bachelor's quarters at the least expense and dined furtively on occasion, sometimes on bread and cheese, at cheap restaurants "where a barrister would not want to be seen."[18] He took to walking, because again it would have been considered beneath his dignity as a barrister to be seen riding a penny bus. Somehow, he seemed so sure of his ultimate success that he was relishing this moment at the bottom of the ladder and expected to enjoy the climb back to the top that much more.

From his perspective, the social order at Lincoln's Inn for a man of his age and experience was touched with humor. His situation must have unsettled the barristers and judges as well. He described the scene to Bradford, giving a unique insight into his daily life:

> You would be greatly amused to see our dinner at Lincoln's Inn. There are tables at the head of the room for the Benchers, who are the old leaders of the bar. . . . Next come the tables for the barristers, of whom some forty or fifty always are found at dinner. Next, the students to the number of about 150 including your humble servant, all seated at long tables and dressed in stuff gowns, which the waiters throw over us in the ante-chamber before we enter the dining hall.[19]

One can only imagine the lesser tables filled with the young students fresh from Oxford and Cambridge, and sitting among them a portly, fifty-five-year-old man, the former Secretary of State of the fallen Confederacy. He described with detail the social protocols of these dinners and the food:

> To each four persons, who constitute a mess, the waiter serves a dinner composed of soup, one joint, and vegetables, one sweet dish and cheese; a bottle of sherry or port at choice is allowed to each mess (fiery stuff it is) and bitter beer *ad libitum.* The charge for the dinner is two shillings. No one at the mess helps another, but the etiquette is each in turn helps himself, one being the first for soup, the next first for the joint and so on. One dines almost every day with some stranger, but the rule is that all are presumed to be gentlemen and conversation is at once established with entire abandon, as if the parties were old acquaintances.[20]

Benjamin was fortunate, but probably in his case adroit and far-seeing, in having arranged to be apprenticed with Charles Pollock. Pollock had developed a large practice in mercantile law, which was to be Benjamin's specialty. It was eighty-three-year-old Baron Pollock who persuaded his son to take on Benjamin, even though the office already had two students, because the old man argued that Benjamin "had no need to learn law, only to see something of the practice of the English courts and to meet members of the bar."

Charles Pollock later wrote of one of the first cases assigned to Benjamin, dealing with the rights of the police to search suspects in custody before trial or conviction. "Alluding to the *Trent* affair," Pollock said, "here is a case made for you on the right of search." Benjamin quickly researched the case in a single morning and wrote a memorandum, of which Pollock later said: "The only fault to be found was that the learning was too great for the occasion going back to first principles on each point. Many years after, I was told that the opinion was held in high respect and often referred to by the police and at the Home office."[21]

Benjamin's well-known charm worked its magic on the Pollock family, and he was invited for luncheons and weekends at the Baron's estate. Pollock wrote that "he always put forward the amusing side of things" and spoke "with anything like bitterness" of only two injuries inflicted upon him by the Yankees—"they had burnt his law library and drank his cellar of old Madeira, a wine much cherished in New Orleans."[22]

The Benjamin public persona in this new period in his life followed the same formula as it had in Richmond: the constant half-smile, the good humor, the facile turns of phrase, the anecdotal response to trauma, always surprising the listener with his seemingly cavalier reaction to great events. Perhaps he was aware that he was always on stage, that mental notes were being made by whoever was talking to him, and they would be writing about him later. He did not want to appear morose, regretful, sorrowful, or depressed about his past; perhaps he overcompensated by being too cheerful, excessively genial, obviously casual.

But he was capable of lapses; at times the curtains would part slightly to reveal his true feelings. One of Baron Pollock's daughters described a moment of unintended candor on a weekend visit to the Baron's estate: "I had not met Benjamin and had pictured to myself an American of the Jefferson Davis type. To my surprise, when he entered the room I saw a short, stout, genial man, of decidedly Jewish descent with bright, dark eyes, and all the politeness and *bonhomie* of a Frenchman, looking as if he had never had a care in his life."

That was the vintage Benjamin style. If anything, his status as an ex-Confederate leader on the run increased the air of mystery and adventure that surrounded him.

The next morning, Miss Pollock and Benjamin both arrived early for breakfast. He told her "most interesting and thrilling details of his perilous escape." She wrote that "I was most struck by his candor" and "I asked what the Northerners would have done to him if they had caught him." Whether he replied for shock value or in a moment of utter openness with a young woman, she inadvertently became the only person to whom there is any record of a confession of his inner feelings. "He said they probably would have put him to death. When I exclaimed in horror at such an atrocity, he said, apologetically, that as party feeling ran high just then his side might have done the same thing had the circumstances been reversed."[23]

Through the influence of new friends in high places, Benjamin was able to dispense with the usual three-year apprenticeship requirement and was called to the bar on June 6, 1866, just six months after he entered as a student. His petition for admission stated he was a "political exile"; that his parents were both natural-born British subjects of British ancestry and that he, consequently, was a "natural-born subject of Her Majesty." It stated that he had been taken to the United States during his infancy, where during his minority his

father was naturalized and he "thus became entitled to all the rights of a citizen of the United States without abjuring native allegiance."[24]

His estimation of the probable results of his capture was not exaggerated. Four people had been hanged already for the plot to assassinate Lincoln; Jefferson Davis was in prison, and John Surratt was still at large. Though Judah P. Benjamin was facing forward, all his energy and intellect channeled into a new career in a new land, he could not altogether avoid the lengthening shadow of events in the United States.

At a Cabinet meeting in Washington on October 16, 1866, Secretary of State Seward, himself a target of the assassins the night Lincoln was killed, read some papers from the American ambassador in Rome, including a statement from a man named Henri B. Ste. Marie, a private in the Papal Zouaves. Ste. Marie had gone to the American legation in Rome and informed the minister in residence that John Surratt, a member of his regiment, had "admitted his connection with the assassination of the President" and that he had also implicated Jefferson Davis, Judah P. Benjamin, and the rest of the Confederate Cabinet "as being privy to it."[25]

The reactions of President Andrew Johnson's Cabinet to this sensational disclosure were described in the diaries of Orville H. Browning, a former Senator from Illinois and the Secretary of the Interior under Johnson. According to Browning's diary, the report from Rome stated Ste. Marie had testified that "the plot had been discussed at Richmond—that [Surratt] and Booth used to visit Richmond every week and that they had laid the scheme before Mr. Benjamin, that he had presented it to the cabinet, and it had undergone discussion there, and that money had been advanced to further the enterprise."[26] Browning also recorded Seward's response to the letter: "Mr. Seward expressed his belief that Booth and Surratt had conferred with Benjamin upon the subject, and that Benjamin had encouraged and subsidized them; but he did not believe that the matter had ever been under discussion before the Richmond Cabinet or received the countenance of other members of the Cabinet than Benjamin."[27]

The Cabinet responded immediately upon hearing of Ste. Marie's testimony: "Our minister was directed to pay him $250 in gold, and to ascertain from Cardinal Antonelly whether Surratt would be given up on the demand of this government." Later, Ste. Marie received an additional $10,000 reward for the information he had given, even though Secretary Stanton had revoked the reward for John Surratt a year earlier.[28]

A certain note of hysteria crept in as Ste. Marie's statement continued. Because Mary Surratt was a Catholic and her son had been hidden initially by Catholic clergy in Canada and had found his way to the Vatican, the testimony would lead later to conspiracy theories involving the Catholic Church. "I believe," Ste. Marie wrote, "he [Surratt] is protected by the clergy, and that the murder is the result of a deep-laid plot, not only against the life of President Lincoln, but against the republic, as we are aware that priesthood and royalty are and always have been opposed to liberty."[29]

Although the testimony by Ste. Marie was later proved to be false, and another witness who corroborated Surratt's confession of involvement was found guilty of perjury, Secretary of State Seward began to negotiate with the Vatican to arrest Surratt, a complicated problem because there was no extradition treaty with the Vatican. While discussions were under way, the Papal government took action on its own account. Surratt was arrested by Papal guards but he suddenly broke free, leapt over a precipice, and fled to Naples, where he boarded a ship in the harbor. A month later, on November 27, 1866, he was recaptured in Alexandria, Egypt, more than twenty months after the assassination. Now he could be easily extradited.[30]

Historians have noted that after the uproar over the hanging of Mary Surratt, Stanton and the U.S. Government simply did not want to apprehend John Surratt, even when they had the chance to do so.

As early as September 1865, Stanton and Seward were fully aware of Surratt's whereabouts in Liverpool and of Surratt's intention to go to Rome. Yet they refused to have him arrested. Henry Wilding, the Vice Consul in the United States Consulate in Liverpool wired the State Department in Washington on September 30, 1865, one month after Benjamin also landed at Liverpool, that "the supposed Surratt has arrived in Liverpool and is now staying at the oratory of the Roman Catholic Church of the Holy Cross. . . . I can, of course, do nothing further in the matter without Mr. Adams's [U.S. Minister to England] instructions and a warrant. If it be Surratt, such a wretch ought not to escape."[31]

The Vice Consul must have been shocked at the reply from William Hunter, the acting Secretary, on October 13, 1865; "Your dispatches . . . have been received. In reply . . . I have to inform you that, upon a consultation with the Secretary of War and the Judge Advocate General, it is thought advisable that no action be taken in regard to the arrest of the supposed John Surratt at present."[32]

Wilding's informant, the ship's surgeon on the ship that carried

Surratt to Liverpool, was so eager to pick up the $25,000 reward that he took his case to the U.S. Consul in Montreal. That consul wired the State Department on October 25, 1865: "It is Surratt's intention to go to Rome. . . . If an officer could go to England, I have no doubt that Surratt's arrest might be effected, and thus the last of the conspirators against the lives of the President and Secretary of State be brought to justice."[33]

The ship's surgeon, seeing the reward slip away, tried to arouse the government to action by testifying, "Surratt remarked repeatedly that he only wished to live two years longer, in which time he would serve President Johnson as Booth did Mr. Lincoln."[34]

Stanton did make a move, but it was the opposite of what the surgeon expected. On November 24, 1865, he issued an order that "the reward offered for the arrest of John Surratt is hereby revoked."[35] He later explained that since it was known that Surratt was abroad, government officials would be involved in his capture, and they should not be rewarded for performing their duty.

It was clear from the actions of the government that there was no longer any taste for another assassination trial, especially one that would open up the wounds of Mary Surratt's hanging and cause a new look at the evidence that convicted her. The delays continued. Even the gunboat returning John Surratt to the United States from Alexandria took an unusual forty-five days to reach its destination, arriving in late February 1867.

A fictional account of the plot behind the assassination appeared in a dime novel in 1866 with the cumbersome title of *The Great Conspiracy: A Book of Absorbing Interest! Startling Developments, Eminent Persons Implicated, Full Secrets of the Assassination Plot, John H. Surratt and His Mother, with Biographical Sketches of J. B. Booth and John Wilkes Booth, and the Life and Extraordinary Adventures of John H. Surratt, the Conspirator.*

A chapter entitled "Interview with the Rebel Officers" purported to report a conversation between Booth and a Lieutenant Carter Braxton. Booth speaks first:

> "Would it not be possible to provide a messenger to bear the glorious news to Richmond?"
>
> "We could hardly do that, it will however be known in Richmond, soon enough."
>
> "How so?"
>
> "About six weeks ago," replied Braxton, "I went to see Benjamin,

to transact a little business, and he desired me to call in the evening. I . . . was at his office at eight o'clock; we were alone, and after I had done my errand, I rose to go, but he asked me to sit and chat awhile and opened the conversation, by observing that the Fall Campaign had terminated disastrously . . . and that an impeachment was sure to follow; but there was one way to cut this gordian knot."

"And what was that?"

"He would not answer, I repeated the question, and after a short pause, he replied LINCOLN'S DEATH. I was prepared for this, but did not expect such a frank avowal."

"He is right," interrupted Booth, "I expected that he would say so, nothing else, but Lincoln's death will settle this matter. . . ."

"Benjamin then said," resumed the speaker, "that he had hoped someone would spontaneously have undertaken this task and that the Confederacy, secretly, but effectually, would do all that was necessary."

"Did he tell you Davis knew any thing of this?"

"I think that he did."[36]

The sensational dime novels in the 1860s made quick money and took advantage of the biases and preconceptions that already existed in the mind of the public. Though dismissed by historians, they were widely read and are significant not as a source of information—they were often sheer invention—but for what they tell about the dark side of public opinion during that period. For Judah Benjamin, the publication and widespread distribution of *The Great Conspiracy* was an uncomfortable addition to the forces shaping public opinion in America.

As Surratt's gunboat, the *Swatara,* made its way back from Egypt, Washington was awash in new rumors. One of them involved Frederick Seward, the assistant Secretary of State and son of the Secretary of State, and the fear of what Surratt's testimony might be. The Springfield *Daily Republican* stated: "Those who have a taste for the horrible will find satisfaction in a new Washington rumor to the effect that the secret mission of Fred Seward on the steamer 'Gettysburg' is for the purpose of intercepting the 'Swatara' and offering to John Surratt the promise of a pardon from President Johnson if he will not implicate the President in the assassination of Mr. Lincoln. Young Seward is supposed to have a filial motive for wishing

to induce Surratt to keep silence, as it is part of the horrible theory that Secretary Seward was in the assassination plot, and consented to be almost killed in order to disarm suspicion!"[37]

In February 1867, while Surratt awaited a trial that was to begin the following June, former General George H. Sharpe, an investigator from the State Department, arrived in London. The intent of his mission is known from the diaries of Benjamin Moran, the secretary to the American Embassy in London, who had served in various posts in the embassy since the early 1850s. His voluminous journal, kept with scrupulous care from 1857 to 1874, revealed a person with "a grossly exaggerated sense of his own importance" but at the same time gives the reader a sense of the day-to-day happenings in the American Embassy during that period.[38]

On February 11, 1867, Moran reported that "Mr. George H. Sharpe, the detective, has been sent here to hunt up evidence against the persons implicated in the assassination of President Lincoln. He is a bullet-headed person and is determined to catch Benjamin if possible."[39]

A week later, the diary continued on the same subject, reporting that "General George H. Sharpe also called. He thinks he will be able to prove that Judah P. Benjamin was implicated in the assassination of Mr. Lincoln. I hope so."[40] Again on March 14, he wrote that "General Sharpe came up. He is on the track of George McHenry and Benjamin and thinks he will be successful."[41] McHenry had worked as an assistant to Edwin DeLeon, a journalist and propagandist for the Confederacy in Paris from 1862 through 1864.

Moran's diary has a number of other derogatory references to Benjamin, referring to him as "the little Jew,"[42] "the Jew Benjamin,"[43] and "a great scamp who deserves hanging."[44] He even began to get into the chase himself two days later, writing that General Sharpe and he met to visit a hotel "to ascertain if J. P. Benjamin and George McHenry saw John Surratt and supplied him with money after Mr. Lincoln's assassination in London."[45]

The investigation continued for several more days, and Moran reported: "In the afternoon, I went to Fenton's for General Sharpe about Benjamin and Surratt, but could get no reliable information."[46]

The search yielded nothing. Nine months later, in December 1867, after the trial of John Surratt, General Sharpe's report to Secretary of State Seward was made public in a special report to Congress. It was a document so vague in language that one had to know its background to understand its import.

"In the month of January last," Sharpe wrote, "I left for Europe pursuant to instructions from the State Department in which I was told there might be reason to apprehend . . . 'citizens of the United States in Europe other than those who have heretofore been suspected or charged with the offence, were instigators of or concerned in, the assassination of the late President Lincoln, and the attempted assassination of the Secretary of State.' It was deemed proper, in connection with the anticipated trial of John H. Surratt, to make an effort to identify those persons, and it was made my duty to examine any evidence existing abroad, so that the government might judge whether or not it ought to demand the surrender of any persons in Europe."[47]

The report never mentioned names, but Benjamin's reputation in London made it obvious to Seward and the Congress that he was at least one of the targets of Sharpe's investigation.

"A patient investigation," the report continued, "was given to all circumstances tending to throw light on Surratt's connection with rebels known to be in London at that time." He thanked the American consuls in Europe, especially Moran, for "every assistance" and stated that "every fact was inquired into which had any significance under my instruction."

His conclusion was: "This examination failing to disclose any state of facts deemed sufficiently well established or of sufficient importance to bring to the knowledge of the department, attention was turned to the manner in which Surratt entered the Papal States." He left no room for doubt in the final lines of his report:

"Conscious that earnestness was brought to the attempt at identifying the loathsome instigators of the great crime, and that every possible assistance was received, I have to report that, in my opinion, no such legal or reasonable proof exists in Europe of the participation of any persons there, formerly citizens of the United States, as to call for the action of the government."[48]

John Surratt's trial began on June 10, 1867, and was a sensational national event that lasted sixty-two days, involving the questioning of more than two hundred witnesses. Surratt, then twenty-four years old, did not take the stand during the trial but rested his case on his proof that he could not have been in Washington on the day of the assassination. A jury could not reach a verdict, and a judge later reported that eight of the twelve were ready to vote for acquittal.[49]

Three years later, on December 6, 1870, in Rockville, Maryland, Surratt gave a long public lecture to a packed courthouse, telling for the first time his side of the story. He said that he had been a

courier in the Confederate Secret Service Bureau since 1861; he confessed that he had met Booth and plotted with him, but only for the abduction of the President, "rash, perhaps foolish, but honorable." In his role as courier, Surratt said that he had received $200 from Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin on the Friday before the evacuation of Richmond to carry some dispatches from Richmond to Canada. "That was," he said "the only money I ever received from the Confederate government in any shape or form. Booth and I often consulted together as to whether it would not be well to acquaint the authorities in Richmond with our plan, as we were sadly in want of money, our expenses being very heavy. In fact, the question arose among us as to whether, after getting Mr. Lincoln, if we succeeded in our plan, the Confederate authorities would not surrender us to the United States again, because of doing this thing without their knowledge or consent. But we never acquainted them with the plan, and they never had anything in the wide world to do with it. In fact, we were jealous of our undertaking and wanted no outside help. I have not made this statement to defend the officers of the Confederate government. They are perfectly willing to defend themselves. What I have done myself I am not ashamed to let the world know."[50]

He continued describing the dispatches, which he delivered to Montreal, to Confederate General Edwin G. Lee, whom Secretary of State Benjamin had appointed to succeed Jacob Thompson, "to whom the dispatches were directed, and delivered to him. These dispatches we tried to introduce as evidence in my trial, but his Honor Judge Fisher ruled them out, despite the fact that the government had tried to prove that they had relation to the conspiracy to kill Mr. Lincoln. They were only accounts of some money transactions—nothing more or less."[51] Lee, a relative of Robert E. Lee, confirmed the legitimacy of the Surratt mission in testimony at the trial.

Until the trial in June 1867 and the lecture in late 1870, there was no way for Judah P. Benjamin to have known what Surratt's testimony would be. If the U.S. Government had been willing to hang Mary Surratt, in what many considered a cruel miscarriage of justice, to force John Surratt to return to trial, how far could he have assumed Stanton and others would be expected to go to link Judah P. Benjamin and Jefferson Davis to the crime? In the end, Surratt fortunately could prove his whereabouts in New York State on the day of the assassination. But Benjamin could not have known

of Surratt's alibi for twenty months after the deed, nor could he have known the details of Surratt's story until the lecture more than five years after the assassination. Secretary of State Benjamin had used Surratt as a courier and had given him $200 and a mission three weeks before the assassination. Benjamin knew the dispatches to General Edwin Lee in Montreal were of minor consequence, but he also knew that the government would try to link the dispatches to the plot. Even if Benjamin was confident of his own innocence, he could not vouch for Surratt's. Perhaps the young man had been involved. If so, he could choose to implicate high officials to save his neck from a noose. With evidence of funds and papers having passed between them, Benjamin might have thought it wiser to destroy all of his papers and not speak of it again than to risk the distortion of the financial records, and the suggestion of a deeper connection should the papers fall into the hands of men of such "savage cruelty," in his words, as the unscrupulous and ruthlessly South-hating Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. After five years of public attacks on his Jewishness, what chance would he have had before a military tribunal that ordered Mary Surratt hanged and in the hands of a President who allowed the sentence to be executed and had a history of anti-Semitic remarks aimed directly at Benjamin?

The link to the Canadian spies had been tenuous to begin with. Booth had visited Montreal six months before the assassination and had deposited $455 in the Ontario Bank, the same bank in which Thompson kept Confederate funds. That was all the evidence there was in Canada; without a case, Stanton and the government simply held Davis in prison for two years without a trial. Varina wrote that after the President was captured, "he leaned over me in bidding goodbye on the ship, and whispered 'No matter what proof is adduced by the North, remember that my dying testimony was to you that I had nothing to do with the assassination, or causing any other deed unworthy of a soldier, or of our cause.' With this assurance," she wrote, "he bade farewell."[52]

A few hours later, when General James Wilson, the commanding officer of the Union garrison that captured Davis, showed him the proclamation by Andrew Johnson charging the Confederate President in the assassination conspiracy, Davis immediately asserted, "There is one man at least who knows the charge to be false, the man who signed the proclamation, for he well knew that I greatly preferred Lincoln to himself."[53]

Benjamin's rise in the British bar was not instantaneous. It required the cultivation of clients, attention to reputation, and a great deal of hard work. The very fact that the requirements for Lincoln's Inn were waived caused eyebrows to be raised on both sides of the Atlantic—in the South especially, where it was realized that a former high-ranking Confederate official had claimed British citizenship since birth, and in England, where exceptions were rarely made for admission to the bar.

Pollock reported on one of Benjamin's first cases, a complicated challenge permitting only a few days of preparation, requiring him to revise totally the very lengthy rules for an old and established ship insurance company. Two other lawyers had turned the case down because the meeting to approve the new rules was to occur in just forty-eight hours.

"The very next morning," Pollock wrote "commencing after an early breakfast, and never pausing for a midday meal, he worked on steadily, and shortly before eight, the hour at which he usually dined, the rules were complete, written out in his own neat hand . . . with scarce an alteration or correction from beginning to end, as if he had been composing a poem. I doubt if any draughtsmen within the two Temples could have done them so efficiently within the same time."[54]

He was working hard but enjoying it and would prove himself by performance, not prior high office. "I am as much interested in my profession as when I first commenced it as a boy," he wrote Mason, "and am rapidly recovering all that I had partially forgotten in the turmoil of public affairs."[55]

As his record of successful appearances in cases grew, so also did his reputation. Even the *American Law Review* reported in October 1866 that he had won "golden opinions for his text and ability." The *Review* continued: "No one ever questioned Mr. Benjamin's ability. If his moral qualities had been equal to his intellectual, there was no position in his native country beyond his reach. He seems properly to have joined in the Northern circuit and the secessionist sympathizers at Liverpool ought to give him good business."[56]

Legends also began to grow up around him, just as they had in America, giving him a larger-than-life quality. Once, a well-known firm sent him a packet of papers to examine with a request for an opinion, attaching a paltry fee of five guineas. After a few days, when a clerk from the firm appeared asking for them, the papers were still sitting on his desk untouched. The clerk asked if there had been a mistake.

"Not at all," Benjamin replied, "the fee proffered covered taking in the papers, but not examining them."

The clerk reported that exchange to his superiors. Benjamin would not let the legal establishment take advantage of his new practice and devalue his efforts. Twenty-five guineas were dispatched. When the solicitor some years later confessed that his client had insisted on a Benjamin opinion, Benjamin replied, "If you had told me at the time, I should not have looked at the papers for twice the fee."[57]

He attributed part of his struggle to win a significant place at the bar to the favoritism and interrelationships of families and connections among the upper-class jurists practicing with him:

> The growth of business here is so very slow and the competition so severe that the attorneys give their briefs, whenever they possibly can, to barristers who are connected or related with them or their families; and in an old country like England, these family ties are so ramified that there is hardly an attorney who has not in some way a barrister whom it is in his interest to engage. I therefore have but little chance for a brief whenever it *can* be given elsewhere, and this accounts for the difficulty under which anyone in the world must labor, if not connected in some way with the attorneys and their families.[58]

He did not stay idle. He landed on the very same idea that had propelled him to the top of his profession in New Orleans thirty years earlier. Then, with Tom Slidell, he had written a comprehensive guide to Louisiana law. Once again he noticed a gap in the legal literature. What was needed was another comprehensive guide, this time to the law of sales on two continents, encompassing American, French, and English law. It was an enormous task, but on April 17, 1867, he wrote his sisters that "as I have so little to do at the bar compared with former professional life, I am turning author and have in preparation a law work which will be ready for publication I hope in November or December next and will bring me into more prominence with the profession and perhaps secure a more rapid advance in getting me business."[59]

The old warhorse in him, apparently, could not settle down to the easy pace of a gentleman at the bar. His mind was working, his curiosity was ever engaged, and his understanding far outpaced the capacity of a class-bound legal system influenced by blood lines to use his extraordinary talents.

He wrote his sister: "My book is nearly finished, but the nearer I get to the end, the more fastidious I become about correcting, amend-

ing and improving it . . . but who told you it had a jaw-breaking name? It is a simple Treatise on Sale under the English law, which is very different from the law of Louisiana, and the subject quite a difficult and troublesome branch of professional learning here."[60]

The rumors his sisters had heard were not altogether incorrect. His now famous *Treatise on the Law of Sale of Personal Property, with Reference to the American Decisions, to the French Code and Civil Law* was published in August 1868 and became an instant success in Britain, the United States, and the British possessions. Known simply by its shorthand title, *Benjamin on Sales*, it was almost immediately recognized as a legal classic that met a long-felt need of the British bar. It went through three printings over the course of Benjamin's life and became a standard for decades.[61]

One morning soon after publication, when Baron Samuel Martin took his seat on the Bench, he asked a clerk for a copy of the new volume.

"Never heard of it," the young clerk replied.

"Never heard of it!" the Baron bellowed. "Mind that I never take my seat here again without that book at my side."[62]

Benjamin was proud of it and wanted his family at least to see it, even though they would have little understanding of it. "As poor Kitt's article gave you the face-ache," he wrote his sister, "I shall not upset you entirely with my law book; but I suppose some copies of it will reach New Orleans, and you can read the title-page and look at the outside without much risk of serious injury."[63]

The book marked a turning point in Benjamin's career and won him both admirers and clients, just as he had planned.

"If I had not written my book," he remarked in a letter to his sister in New Orleans, "I should be 'nowhere' in the race, but that has done me an immensity of good, and will give me further fruits of business and reputation."[64]

Even as late as February 8, 1870, money worries were still bothering him greatly, and he confessed that "I cannot get along with less than 1,400 pounds, say about $7,000 a year, including my professional expenses at the Temple for rent, clerk-hire, bar-mess, robing room, wigs and gowns, etc, etc, which are endless. I had hoped strongly that by this year at furthest I should be able to make both ends meet, but I have not reached that point."[65]

His reputation was outstripping his income, leading to exaggerated reports of his success in the American press. He was very straightforward and candid with his sisters in New Orleans: "[A]lthough my

success at the bar is absurdly exaggerated in some accounts that I have seen in the newspapers, I have really 'turned the corner' at last, and . . . my receipts for the last twelve months have exceeded ten thousand dollars. . . . I think my reputation at the bar is increasing and I can see my circle of clients is daily widening."[66]

Pollock observed that Benjamin had certain advantages coming from America that enabled him to succeed in England:

> One great and early advantage for Benjamin was . . . that . . . he was educated in the State of Louisiana . . . the law taught and administered within it was that which took its origins in the code of Justinian, and was afterward adopted by the nations of Europe and continued to be the law of France until the code Napoleon. . . . This . . . gave him a distinct position superior to his brother advocates when arguing appeals from the English colonies of French origin.[67]

Moreover, Pollock continued, his experience as an American lawyer gave him a broader perspective, because "the professions and duties of barrister and solicitor, which in England are separate, are discharged by one and the same person. . . . His clients [in New Orleans] were numerous, their business being principally of a mercantile character, and few men had a sounder or wider range of knowledge and experience of the law-merchant, including shipping, insurance, and foreign trading than Benjamin."[68]

Finally, the pinnacle of the English bar came within reach. A letter from Benjamin in August 1872 gave his family in America the exciting news of his elevation to the inner circle of influence through a new appointment.

"I have had high professional promotion lately," he wrote his sisters. "A number of judges united in recommending to the Lord Chancellor that I should have a 'patent of precedence' above all future Queen's Counsel." For a lawyer trained in America, the promotion was unprecedented, just seven years after his arrival, but it also had a theatrical dimension unheard of in his own country. "I have now to wear a full-bottomed wig, with wings falling down my shoulders and knee breeches and black silk stockings and shoes with buckles and in this ridiculous array, in my silk gown, to present myself at the next levee to Her Majesty to return thanks for her gracious kindness. . . . As it is usual to have photographs made of one's self on these occasions I will send some to enable you all to laugh at 'how like a monkey brother looks in that hideous wig.' "[69]

Benjamin was able to write intimate and revealing letters while aware how his explanations of the pomp of the English bar, details of his income, and descriptions of his colleagues might sound like conceit to unsympathetic ears. Sensitive to his enemies in America, he lectured his sisters about showing his letters to others.

"Before I forget it," he wrote, "I must just mention that I don't want anything of this sort that I write for the family to get into the papers, for if it were repeated here, it would be known that such details must have originated with me and I should be suspected, to my great mortification, of writing puffs of myself, than which nothing is deservedly regarded with more contempt."[70]

He did, however, want the New Orleans community and then a wider public to know of his rise to prominence, and he instructed his sisters carefully. "Of course, the *fact* of my promotion being announced could do no harm, but none of the details which can come *only* from *me* must get into the papers."[71]

The photograph was to him such a symbol of his good fortune that he sent it also to his friend James Mason, the former Confederate diplomat now living in Canada, saying "it may be very long, if ever, before I can hope to press your hand." Already he seemed certain he would never return to America. When he informed Mason of the departure from London of Colin McRae, an ex-Confederate friend of both Mason and Benjamin, he called McRae the "last of the Romans" and lamented, "I shall be left alone."[72]

While Benjamin was absorbed in building his law practice, he watched with growing alarm what was happening in America and criticized the extremism of the Northern radicals: "[I]f the Southern states are allowed without interference to regulate the transition of the negro from his former state to that of a freed man," he wrote to Bayard, "they will eventually work out the problem successfully, though with great difficulty and trouble, and I doubt not that the recuperative energy of the people will restore a large share of their former material prosperity much sooner than is generally believed."

He warned of the results of the current policy: "But if they are obstructed and thwarted by the fanatics, and if external influences are brought to bear on the negro and influence his ignorant fancy with wild dreams of social and political equality, I shudder for the bitter future which is in store for my unhappy country."[73]

In October 1866, after Davis had been imprisoned for more than a year, Benjamin wrote Mason that he feared "an additional rigorous season, passed in confinement should prove fatal." He criticized those

who had the power to act but refused out of a misguided sense of retribution: "It is the most shameful outrage that such a thing should be even possible, but I have ceased to hope anything but justice or humanity demands from men who seem now to have uncontrolled power over public affairs in the United States. I believe Johnson would willingly release Mr. Davis, but he is apparently cowed by the overbearing violence of the Radicals and dare not act in accordance with his judgment."[74]

Benjamin's rise to prominence and success abroad created intense jealousies in the South on the part of those suffering at the hands of carpetbaggers and scalawags. So grossly exaggerated were reports of his income that some Americans thought he was living the life of the English gentry. In defense, even to his own family, he began to disclose many details about his actual income. Former Senator Wigfall of Texas, who had been a bitter enemy toward the end of the war, accused him of stealing that part of the Confederate treasury remaining abroad:

"As to Benjamin, he turned out to be an Englishman," Wigfall wrote to Clement Clay from London in 1866, "and he has plenty of money and can attend the clubs, entertain friends, and extend his acquaintance, he found no difficulty in being admitted after six months at the Inns. I have not seen him but saw his name in the list of stock holders of Overand, Gurney and Co. after their bankruptcy for a good round sum of pounds sterling." The cotton money was, in Wigfall's view, possible evidence of Benjamin's speculation while escaping. Benjamin, his letter continued, "had managed somehow or other to accumulate about two hundred bales of cotton at Liverpool and drew his salary after getting here. He also drew from the Confederate agent on the Islands between 3 and 4 hundred pounds on his way here. On his arrival here he reported himself authorized by the President to take charge of financial matters and my own belief is that he and the agents have divided among themselves all that was left of Confederate funds. But enough of this disgusting subject."[75]

Meade heard other stories in his interviews about Benjamin, part of the legend of Judah P. Benjamin repeated through the years, to the effect that somehow he stole the Confederate gold in those final days. The same public charge was made against Davis by none other than former Confederate General Joseph E. Johnston, who suggested in a newspaper interview that Davis stole more than $2 million in gold from the Confederate treasury in the closing days of the war. But in Davis's case, others rose to his defense. Davis

himself was the personification of honor and stoicism; he remained silent, not dignifying the charge with an answer. His accuser was proved wrong by the outraged but careful testimony accounting for the gold by other officials in letters, articles, and speeches, all provided in detail in Varina's memoirs.

The mystery of what happened to some of the Confederate gold may never be known. It has inspired a legend and a literature all its own.[76] Most of the treasure of cash, bonds, bank notes, gold and silver coins, and bullion was accounted for, but in the chaos of the closing days of the war, wagons were looted and many were eager to grab what they could and bury it for later. It is unlikely that any substantial amounts ended up in the hands of the fleeing Judah P. Benjamin, traveling alone, needing to move quickly to avoid capture. And if he managed to hide it somewhere, why did he never return to reclaim it?

But no one ever seemed to rise in defense of Judah Benjamin. The fact that such a charge would stick to Benjamin over the years testifies to the complicated view his contemporaries had of him. Benjamin was the Jewish Confederate, the manipulator, the internationalist. For the Southern psyche, the image of the rapacious stereotype of the Jews gave the charges resonance. Davis braved such insults to character in proud silence; Benjamin remained silent too, perhaps letting the defense of Davis speak for his own innocence as well. When Wigfall visited London, Benjamin wrote to Mason that "he called on everybody but me when he arrived, and it was very agreeable to me not to meet him. I do not know how he continues to exist, but I suppose he must receive remittance from the other side."[77]

19

The Lincoln Assassination: *Lingering Suspicion*

When Judah P. Benjamin arrived in England on August 30, 1865, four months after he had left President Davis, he wrote to Varina within one day of his arrival a particularly heartfelt letter.

"I only arrived here night before last, and my first care yesterday was to relieve as far as possible the anxiety which had been increasing during my whole trip relative to the practicability of aiding myself and your husband in any possible manner." He wanted her to know that Colin McRae, the Confederate business agent in London, at his suggestion had placed the equivalent of $12,500 to her credit, which "I considered . . . was the first and most sacred claim" on the remaining Confederate funds, "being the President's salary up to 30th June last." The letter continues:

> The money now placed at your disposal, my dear Mrs. Davis, is your husband's: it is the money of the government paid to you in his behalf: you are indebted for it to no individual and are under no obligations to any one for it. You can therefore use [it] without any scruple of delicacy. I beg however that you will not apply any of it toward the personal use of Mr. Davis or any expenses of his trial of defence; for I know, I am absolutely certain, that a very large sum, five times as much as will probably be wanted, is already placed in perfectly safe hands, to be used solely for his service, and for the expenses of his defence and that of the other prisoners, until his release from captivity.[1]

The letter is filled with more personal references than any other surviving exchange between them, as well as expressions of Benjamin's loyalty and concern for the President.

> Having thus disposed of pressing business matters, I refer to others which it is impossible to touch upon without the deepest emotion. God knows what I have suffered since my first reception of the horrible news that my beloved and honored friend was in the hands of the enemy. It was in May that I first learned the fact from John Taylor Wood, whom I met in Florida and who had just escaped from the scene of the calamity. I toiled on, night and day, with the vague hope that I could do something to aid him, if I were once beyond the limits of the U.S. I was very unlucky in my efforts.

He wanted her to know that it had been dangerous for him as well, and he was obviously eager to have her understand that he had not simply fled for his life but was serving the President's long-term military plan. Perhaps he was being disingenuous in this regard, but he wanted to assure her he had survived without injury and that he was aware of her plight:

> I will not recount to you the details of my journey nor the scenes through which I have passed. After weeks spent in solitary travel on horseback through the forests and marshes of Florida in constant peril of capture: after passing twenty-three days in an open boat at sea, and crossing the Gulf Stream in a yawl: after being forced to put back to St. Thomas in the Steamer on which I had taken passage for England in consequence of the ship's taking fire at night at sea: after every imaginable contretemps and danger, I reached London on the night of the 30th instant nearly four months after I parted from the President, charged by him to perform certain public duties in Nassau and Havana, and then to rejoin him in Texas. During this whole time, I have been incessantly harassed by the most poignant anxiety both on your account and his. Knowing your devoted love for your husband, I cannot imagine how you have survived the terrible distress which must have overwhelmed you when the extent of the calamity became apparent as revealed by his barbarous treatment, and aggravated by the inhuman refusal to allow you access to him.

He was still ready to serve and wanted her to feel that he was available to perform any request that might help them:

> However, I am here at last, without means, but with unimpaired health and undiminished energies. Can I, my dear friend, do any thing, in any way, by any sacrifice, to aid you or Mr. Davis in this dreadful crisis? If so, command me without scruple. Suggest any idea that occurs to you as opening any chance of benefit to him or yourself and I will leave no effort unemployed to accomplish something. You know me too well to harbor a moment's suspicion that I am making mere profession: you know that I mean all that I say.
>
> There was a foreboding in his words, as if he expected the worst:
>
> Good bye, my dear Mrs. Davis. God bless you and your little ones. I dare not trust myself with the expression of my feelings for your noble husband, for my unhappy friend.
>
> *Ever yours devotedly*
> *J. P. Benjamin*[2]

The news of Jefferson Davis's cruel treatment as a prisoner at Fort Monroe turned him, in the mind of the public in the North, from the leader of the rebellion into a Southern martyr. He was kept in absolute isolation. Not even letters were allowed between him and Varina for three months. He was manacled unnecessarily with leg irons on his second day in prison after a terrific physical struggle with four soldiers in which "the prisoner showed unnatural strength"; being watched every moment in a cell that was lit by a lamp around the clock, thus torturing the sight in his remaining eye. The press reported that Davis suffered terribly from this intentional humiliation. The lack of exercise, the dampness, and the stressful circumstances began to cause a serious deterioration in his health. Varina sent a frantic wire to President Johnson: "Is it possible you will keep me from my dying husband? Can I come to see him?"[3] She received visitation rights but was shocked to see him "patiently, uncomplainingly fading away and [I] cannot help him."[4]

When news of Davis's further decline in health reached England, Benjamin wrote his sister: "We are all in intense anxiety on the subject of our honored and noble chief, Jefferson Davis. By the last accounts there was every probability that those in power at Washington would succeed in getting rid of him by the tortures inflicted on him in prison, and the delay in trying him was intended to give time for this moral assassination. No nobler gentleman, no purer man, no more exalted patriot ever drew breath; and eternal infamy

will blacken the base and savage wretches who are now taking advantage of their brief grasp of power to wreak a cowardly vengeance on his honored head."[5] In the context of the times, it was unusual to find the word "assassination" used to describe the Northern treatment of Jefferson Davis.

Benjamin also wrote a public letter of protest to the London *Times* on September 11, 1865, which was reprinted two weeks later on the front page of the New York *Times.* Because it was one of his two public statements on the war in the nineteen years following it and came at a time when Benjamin had freshly arrived in England while Jefferson Davis was imprisoned, the letter deserves close scrutiny.

Given the fact that he was under suspicion himself, the letter is interesting as much for its omissions as for its stated defense of the imprisoned President. Benjamin chose to defend Davis against "the accusation made by the Federal authorities that prisoners of war were cruelly treated by the Confederates—not merely in exceptional cases by subordinate officials, but systematically, and in conformity with a policy deliberately adopted by President Davis, General Lee and Secretary of War Mr. Seddon." The letter does not mention the other principal charge under which Davis was being held, complicity in the assassination, a subject on which Benjamin presumably could have contributed direct counter-testimony, since the Canadian spy ring, which was his responsibility, was central to the accusation. He chose instead to argue on the narrow question of prisoner treatment and exchanges, but the language he used seems to show he had the larger question in mind:

> As a member of the Cabinet of President Davis from the date of his first inauguration under the Provisional Constitution to the final overthrow of the Confederate Government by force of arms, as a personal friend whose relations with Jefferson Davis have been of the most intimate and confidential nature, I feel it imperatively to be my duty to request your insertion of this letter in vindication of honorable men, who, less fortunate than myself, are now held in close confinement by their enemies, and are unable to utter an indignant word in self-defence.[6]

Looking at the problem from Benjamin's perspective, he could not remain silent in the face of Davis's imprisonment, if for no other reason than that every other Cabinet member and general was protesting the cruelty of the confinement and the unreasonableness of hold-

ing the ex-President without a trial. But to have defended Davis against the charge of complicity in the Lincoln assassination would have looked self-serving, because Benjamin would have had to defend himself as well. In the aftermath, he would surely have called up a chorus of counterattacks upon himself when, as a matter of legal propriety, he had not been officially charged in Andrew Johnson's sweeping proclamation to begin with. Thus, he could only argue by indirection and defend Davis—and himself—obliquely, not by obvious, blunt defense. The letter must be read in that spirit. Moreover, he was writing at the time of the trial of Captain Henry Wirz, the onetime commander of the prison at Andersonville, Georgia. Wirz was brought to trial by Holt's Bureau of Military Justice on August 21, 1865. He was found guilty of mistreating prisoners and hanged on November 10, 1865.

Benjamin complained that the Federals sent back only "sick and disabled prisoners as were incapable of performing military service . . . in a condition so prostrate as to render death certain." He said that "efforts were made in vain to correct this evil."

He denied that the Confederate Government stood in the way of the humanitarian exchange of prisoners. It was in the South's interest to facilitate such exchanges, he pointed out, "in order to recover soldiers whom we could replace from no other source. On the other hand, interest and humanity were at war in their influence on the Federal officials. Others must judge of the humanity and justice of the policy which consigned hundreds of thousands of wretched men to captivity apparently hopeless. . . . I write not to make complaint of it but simply to protest against the attempt of the Federals so to divide the consequences of their own conduct as to throw on us the odium attached to a cruelty plainly injurious to us, obviously beneficial to themselves."

Benjamin then moved to the central question of Davis's character and morality in war, which lay at the center of the assassination charge:

> The sense of duty which prompts this letter would be imperfectly satisfied were I to withhold at this juncture the testimony which none so well as myself can offer in relation to the charge of inhumanity made against President Davis. For the four years during which I have been one of his most trusted advisers, the recipient of his confidence, the sharer to the best of my abilities in his labors and responsibilities, I have learned to know him better, perhaps

> than he is known by any other living man. Neither in private conversation nor in Cabinet council have I ever heard him utter one unworthy thought, one ungenerous sentiment. On repeated occasions, when the savage atrocities of such men as Butler . . . and others were the subject of anxious consideration, and when it was urged upon Jefferson Davis, not only by friends in private letters, but by members of his Cabinet in council, that it was his duty to the people and to the army to endeavor to repress such outrages by retaliation, he was immovable in his resistance to such counsels, insisting that it was repugnant to every sentiment of justice and humanity that the innocent should be made victims for the crimes of such monsters.

He then called on what the Confederate leadership considered the chief example of Northern cruelty—Dahlgren's raid in 1864, an effort late in the war to free Northern prisoners at Libby Prison in Richmond and, according to Southern newspapers, attack the officials of the Confederacy. It was a controversial subject, because Northern military officials claimed that Dahlgren's body had been mutilated and displayed in Richmond. In addition, the Union leadership in Washington had suggested that the Lincoln assassination had been in retaliation for Dahlgren's raid. However, Benjamin used the incident skillfully in his defense of Davis:

> Without betraying the confidence of official intercourse . . . when the notorious expedition of Dahlgren against the City of Richmond had been defeated, and the leader killed in his flight, the papers found upon his body showed that he had been engaged in an attempt to assassinate the President and the heads of the Cabinet, to release the Federal prisoners confined in Richmond, to set fire to the city, and to loose his men and the released prisoners, with full licence to gratify their passions on the helpless inhabitants.
>
> The instructions to his men had been elaborately prepared, and his designs communicated to them in an address; the incendiary materials for firing the town formed part of his equipment. The proof was complete and undeniable. [In] the action in which Dahlgren fell, some of his men were taken prisoners. They were brought to Richmond, and public opinion was unanimous that they were not entitled to be considered as prisoners of war; that they ought to be put on trial as brigands and assassins, and executed if found guilty. In Cabinet Council, the conviction was expressed that these men had acquired no immunity from punishment for their crimes,

> if guilty. . . . A discussion ensued which became so heated as almost to create unfriendly feeling, by reason of the unshaken firmness of Mr. Davis in maintaining that although these men merited a refusal to grant them quarter in the heat of battle, they had been received to mercy by their captors as prisoners of war, and as such were sacred; and that we should be dishonored if harm should overtake them after their surrender, the acceptance of which constituted, in his judgment, a pledge that they should receive the treatment of prisoners of war. To Jefferson Davis alone, and to his constancy of purpose, did these men owe their safety, in spite of hostile public opinion, and in opposition to two-thirds of the Cabinet.

Benjamin ended the letter by calling on "all who are desirous of seeing justice done to the illustrious man of whose present condition I will not trust myself to speak."[7]

His message was plain: Although the North had plotted to assassinate Davis and had sent a secret mission to accomplish it, when the soldiers were captured, Davis protected them and treated them as ordinary prisoners of war. Benjamin pointed out that Davis was not vengeful or brutal; he did not order trials and immediate hangings. Thus, arguing between the lines, it is unwarranted and impossible to believe that the President would then participate in a plot to assassinate Lincoln when he stood so firmly against popular opinion and the Confederate Cabinet in opposing capital punishment for those who were guilty of attempting to assassinate the Confederate president.

When the New York *Times* reprinted the letter two weeks later, it included a rebuttal from a "Commander H. A. Wise, U.S. Navy," who contested Benjamin's view of Dahlgren's motive in the raid and accused the South of planting the assassination plans on his dead body. It must have been a rude awakening for Benjamin to realize that his every interaction with American public opinion on the war would stir up controversy; it may have contributed to his subsequent reticence on the subject.

The intent of his letter and his reaction to the New York *Times* treatment of it were made plain in a subsequent letter to Varina written from Paris on November 16, 1865:

> In relation to your suggestion about my writing something in refutation of the slanders and calumnies relative to the disposal of the public moneys that were on the wagon train, and to the

> alleged cause of the failure of negotiations at Hampton Roads, I have consulted with one or two valued and tried friends, and they all concur with me in opinion that this is not the time to discuss such issues; that it would do more harm than good. You have however seen perhaps the letter I published in the *Times* on the subject of the infamous accusation that Mr. Davis was using cruel treatment towards prisoners of war as matter of public policy. This letter was intended to vindicate him before the public opinion of Europe, and I think had a very good effect that way, but nothing can *at present* be written by *me,* that would do him any good in the U.S. You will comprehend why I have underscored some words. The time will come when even in the U.S. my written Statements will be read and believed in spite of all.[8]

Appeals by Davis's lawyers to obtain a trial were rebuffed. After dozens of letters and appeals to high officials and influential citizens, Varina received permission in May 1866 to see President Andrew Johnson at the White House. The meeting, which received extensive press coverage, was granted because Johnson was clearly on the defensive publicly over the treatment of Davis. Varina described the conversation with him in detail:

> The President was civil, even friendly, and said, "We must wait, our hope is to mollify the public toward him." I told him that the public would not have to be mollified but for his proclamation that Mr. Davis was accessory to the assassination, and added, "I am sure that whatever others believed, *you* did not credit it." He said he did not, but was in the hands of wildly excited people, and must take such measures as would show he was willing to sift the facts. I then responded that there was never the least intercourse between Mr. Davis and Booth, or an effort to establish it . . . , and remarked that "if Booth had left a card for Mr. Davis as he did for you, Mr. President, before the assassination, I fear my husband's life would have paid the forfeit. . . ." I remarked that, having made a proclamation predicated upon the perjury of base men suborned for that purpose, I thought he owed Mr. Davis a retraction as public as his mistake. To my astonishment, he said that he was laboring under the enmity of many in both houses of Congress, and if they could find anything upon which to hinge an impeachment they would degrade him; and with apparent feeling he reiterated, "I would if I could, but I cannot."[9]

Information about efforts on his behalf, whether private or in newspapers, was smuggled regularly into Davis's cell in prison, but it is not known whether he read Judah P. Benjamin's defense of him in the New York *Times.* Davis's prison doctor, Dr. John Craven, spent hours in discussion with the ex-President, giving him news of the outside world and listening to Davis talk on many subjects. In fact, he became so friendly that he was removed from his post. In his book entitled *The Prison Life of Jefferson Davis,* he reported that Davis told him "Benjamin was the ablest and most faithful member of his advisory council; a man who realized that industry is the mistress of success, and who had no personal aspirations, no wishes that were not subordinate to the prosperity of the cause."[10]

In the immediate aftermath of the assassination, the responsibility for the investigation and the collection of evidence fell upon Joseph Holt, Judge Advocate General of the U.S. Army and head of the Bureau of Military Justice. Holt had been born in 1807 into one of Kentucky's leading families and had made his fortune early in the practice of law in Kentucky and Mississippi. He bought a home in Washington and as a Southern Democrat began to rise in social and political circles. President Buchanan named him Postmaster General in 1859. In the final months of Buchanan's administration, when the secessionist members were leaving his Cabinet, Buchanan appointed Holt U.S. Secretary of War and named Edwin Stanton U.S. Attorney General. He thus became close to Stanton, who later appointed him as Judge Advocate of the Union Army in the Lincoln war years and trusted him to carry out Stanton's wishes at the Bureau of Military Justice—nicknamed by the Southern press the "Bureau of (In)justice."

Holt was a cultured Southerner, gracious and polite, solicitous of ladies, distinguished in manner. Although he was a Southerner, he supported the preservation of the Union at all costs and embraced the Union cause with the zeal of the religious convert. Southerners hated him with the special passion reserved for turncoats, and he returned their animosity with what one writer called "the fury of the scorned."[11] He once charged in a public letter that anyone in Kentucky who did not support the Union was either a "maniac or a monster," a charge that included his mother and brother and many other members of his family.[12]

Like Stanton, he was convinced from the night of the assassination on that the murder of Lincoln was part of a plan orchestrated by the Confederate leadership. He would stop at nothing to prove that,

no matter how false or highhanded the allegations. After just a week and a half of wholesale arrests, imprisonments, threatened witnesses, loose application of reward money to buy testimony, mysteriously discovered letters, hearsay, and a wide range of questionable tactics and procedures, Holt got what he wanted. Stanton announced on April 24, 1865, just ten days after the assassination: "This Department has information that the President's murder was organized in Canada and approved in Richmond."[13] Holt supplied the names of the conspirators for the sensational proclamation under which Jefferson Davis and the Canadian spy ring were charged, and Davis was jailed for having "incited, concerted, and procured . . . the atrocious murder of the late President, Abraham Lincoln."[14]

The most incriminating witness was Sanford Conover, who had quit the Confederate War Department in 1863 and made a career as a part-time journalist and spy. He testified that he was intimate with all the Canadian spies mentioned in the proclamation and that Jacob Thompson told him about the assassination plan and even asked him to join in the plot. He also testified that he was in Thompson's office between April 6 and April 9 when John Surratt arrived from Richmond with letters from Davis and Confederate Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin. After reading the letters, Conover said, Thompson tapped them with his hand and said, "This makes the thing all right."[15]

His testimony under oath was supported by other witnesses, supposedly independent. The New York *Tribune* stated: "It is either overwhelmingly conclusive of the complicity of the Confederate leaders in the assassination conspiracy or it is an unmitigated lie from beginning to end."[16]

Almost immediately, it began to look like the latter. A letter turned up from Conover, using his alias, to Thompson, dated March 20, 1865, which began, "Although I have not had the pleasure of your acquaintance. . . ." His long-term "friendship" and intimacy were a fraud.[17]

Still, Conover became Holt's personal agent, combing the country for witnesses. He produced eight of them with sworn depositions, who testified to meetings, dates, and details. One of them broke down under questioning and confessed that Conover had written his testimony word for word and rehearsed him in its delivery in a Washington hotel before escorting him to the courtroom to recite his lines under oath. Holt informed Stanton that "Conover has been guilty of a most atrocious crime."[18] Conover promptly disappeared.

Not until the fall of 1866 was Conover arrested. He stood trial under his real name, Charles A. Dunham, for perjury and suborning of perjury and was sentenced to ten years in prison. He confessed that he had coached the lying witnesses out of a hatred for Davis, who had sentenced him in 1863 to six months in a Richmond prison.[19]

Stanton had already begun to back off the grand conspiracy theory. In November 1865 he withdrew the offer of rewards for John Surratt, Jacob Thompson, and the others named in the original proclamation on the grounds that they were abroad and as fugitives would be arrested by government agents who had no right to a reward. By so doing, however, he was removing an incentive for their arrest.

Anything seemed to be grist for Holt's campaign to convict Davis and Benjamin. In his papers in the Library of Congress is a bogus letter to Jefferson Davis, received on June 9, 1865, by the Charleston *Courier*. Dated May 1, 1865, it reads:

His Excellency Jeff Davis
President of the Confederacy

My Dear Sir—

I received the twenty thousand in gold you sent to me by the hands of our friend the Hon. Judah Benjamin. I think I have done the job exactly according to your instructions. Bob Toombs promised to be on the spot, but I have not seen him. I received my commission signed by the Secretary of War, John C. Breckinridge. Much obliged to you. . . . I am afraid I will soon be a dead dog, and you too.

Yours truly
J. Wilkes Booth
Lieut. Col. C.S.A.[20]

It was a clumsy letter on many counts and an obvious fraud, since Booth died on April 26.[21] The *Courier* never published it, nor is there any account of Holt's ever using it, but it remained in his papers as an example of the mood of the times, the kind of hysteria that had infected the minds of many people in the aftermath of the assassination.

After the collapse of Conover's testimony, Stanton and Holt began to grasp at straws to defend the continued incarceration of Jefferson Davis and pressed the House Judiciary Committee, which they controlled, to exaggerate some insignificant correspondence from the

captured Confederate archives and declare: "These documents are conclusive upon the point that Davis, Benjamin, and Walker, in the years 1861, '62, '63, '64, and '65, received, entertained and considered propositions for the assassination of the chief members of the government of the United States, and thereupon a probability arises that they took steps to accomplish the purpose."[22]

Why had Judah P. Benjamin not been listed in the original proclamation? It was clear that Stanton and Holt initially considered Surratt and the messages from Benjamin as a critical centerpiece of the conspiracy. It was also clear that the U.S. Government would continue to investigate Benjamin in order to establish some connection to Surratt.

The proclamation was not a carefully considered document but was hurriedly thrown together for political impact in the confusion of the times. In all likelihood, Stanton and Holt felt that their primary purpose was to convict Jefferson Davis, and they did not want to complicate the complex task of proving a grand conspiracy by putting anyone in the indictment between Davis and the operational conspiracy. Besides, the audience for the proclamation was in the North, where Benjamin was not well known. They decided to concentrate on the major target rather than a minor one. After all, Benjamin was in England, free and active, while Davis was in prison under their control.

The cipher found in the bottom of Booth's trunk the night of the assassination turned out to be incidental, since evidence was offered that Booth was taught the code by a Confederate agent and a boarder at Mrs. Surratt's house who was close to John Surratt and had access to it. It seemed a more important link at the time than it turned out to be.

In the middle of 1866, according to Chief Justice Shea of the Marine Court, Thaddeus Stevens, one of the leaders of the Radical Republicans in Congress who hated Jefferson Davis and attacked him with vehemence, insisted that Holt allow him to examine the evidence in support of the proclamation. Stevens pronounced it "insufficient in itself and incredible." He continued: "Those men are no friends of mine. They are public enemies and I would treat the South as a conquered country and settle it politically upon the policy best suited for ourselves. But I know these men, sir. They are gentlemen and incapable of being assassins."[23]

However, Davis continued to languish in prison, a prisoner now of the inaction of the government. A year after his capture, in May

1866, because the government could not present convincing evidence of complicity in the Lincoln assassination, new indictments were issued naming Davis, Robert E. Lee, John C. Breckinridge, Judah P. Benjamin, and others on a "lesser" charge of treason, thus shifting the venue to a civil court. The indictment meant that Benjamin was under risk of arrest should he choose to return and that his fate would be bound up with the political effort to free Davis. Meanwhile, for the ex-President there was still no trial. As the year stretched to eighteen months and others were released, Davis became the only "Confederate state prisoner," as high officials were designated, still behind bars.

Varina and the children were living in Savannah, having been officially assigned by Stanton and Holt to a hotel there, where she could be watched and her letters monitored. She was advised to seek the help of prominent Republicans. In desperation she drafted her most defiant and passionate letter to Horace Greeley, the powerful and influential editor of the New York *Tribune*:

> How can honest men and gentlemen of your country stand idly by to see a gentleman maligned, insulted, tortured and denied the right of trial by the usual forms of law? Is his cause so strong that he must be done to death by starvation, confined air, and manacles?
>
> With all the archives of our government in the hands of your government, do they despair of proving him a rogue, falsifier, assassin, and traitor—then they must in addition guard him like a wild beast, and chain him for fear his unarmed hands still in a casemated cell subvert the government? Shame, shame. . . . Is no one among you bold enough to defend him?[24]

When four-year old Billy came home one day singing, "We'll hang Jeff Davis from a sour apple tree," having been taught it by a former Union soldier, Varina, by now free to go where she wished, decided to leave Savannah and move to Canada to be with a community of Confederate sympathizers. It was not the first such incident with the children, and she was worried for their safety.

On the way to Montreal to set up a home, she visited Greeley. Afterward she peppered him with fervent appeals, writing him in one letter, "I am utterly helpless and well-nigh broken hearted. If a nation's tears could wash out venom, then mine ought to have cleansed many a heart filled with the lust for vengeance—and for blood."[25]

Varina was coming into her own as a public figure, as the strong, outspoken, self-confident wife of a silent husband. She became the voice of outrage at injustice and the shaper of public opinion, North and South.

"It used to be said," Dr. John Burgess wrote, "that she and Benjamin ran the machine at Richmond. However that may be, I can testify that she was capable of running that or any other machine, with or without Benjamin or anyone else. She was a personality with the instincts of a sensitive woman and the judgment of the strongest man. She was also endowed with tender feeling and indomitable will. Her powers of conversation and description were superior to those of any other woman I have ever known."[26]

The injustice of the prolonged imprisonment, coupled with what Greeley called the "complete muddle on the subject" by the Congress, President, and Chief Justice, touched Greeley's sense of fairness. Greeley wrote a blistering editorial demanding that President Johnson publicly retract the charge against Davis of complicity in the assassination and that Davis be released. He saw Davis's release in both legal and historical terms: "How and when did Davis become a prisoner of war? He was not arrested as a public enemy, but as a felon officially charged, in the face of the civilized world, with the foulest, most execrable guilt—that of having suborned assassins to murder President Lincoln, a crime the basest and most cowardly known to mankind." He questioned the delay. After all, he pointed out, the President had said in his proclamation that the government had the evidence of "complicity with Wilkes Booth and Co. . . . so there was no need of time to hunt it up."

"It is neither just nor wise to send forth a prisoner of state with the brand of murder on his brow; a naked failure to prosecute is but equivalent to the Scotch verdict, 'Not proven' . . . a great government may deal sternly with offenders, but not meanly; it cannot afford to seem unwilling to repair an obvious wrong. . . . We feel confident that magnanimity toward Davis . . . will powerfully contribute to that juster appreciation of the North at the South which is the first step toward a beneficial and perfect reconciliation."[27]

Greeley's editorial stirred Republican circles. A prominent New York lawyer, Charles O'Conor, volunteered his legal help. Varina, now an object of sympathy pleading for her very ill, unjustly incarcerated husband, visited John W. Garrett, president of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and a close friend of Stanton from the days when the War Secretary had served as counsel for the railroad before

joining Lincoln's Cabinet. Garrett sensed that the continued imprisonment of Davis would undermine the credibility and public trust of the Johnson administration and personally visited Stanton to plead Varina's case. Stanton finally relented and gave his permission to work out the details of Davis's release.

In early May, O'Conor secured a writ of habeas corpus, and Davis was taken from his cell by his former aide Burton Harrison and brought to Richmond, where he would soon appear before a Federal court. As he was driven in an open carriage through the streets of Richmond, crowds watched from windows and rooftops as well as along the street. Varina observed that men "simply and silently uncovered in token of his presence" and women waved white handkerchiefs and cried. He and Varina were taken to the Spotswood Hotel and shown to the same suite they had lived in when they first arrived in Richmond. Varina wrote that her husband said to her, "I feel like an unhappy ghost visiting this much beloved city."[28]

On May 13, 1867, more than two years after his capture, Davis was brought before the Federal court, which was located in a room that had once served as the President's old office. He was accompanied by Harrison and the Reverend Charles Minnegerode, the rector at St. Paul's, who had visited him many times in prison and once had pleaded his case personally before Stanton. After a cut-and-dried, prearranged proceeding, Davis was released on $100,000 bail, which was promptly signed by a number of men, among them Horace Greeley and a representative of Cornelius Vanderbilt.

All present shook Davis's hand, and someone rushed to the window and yelled at the top of his voice, "The President is bailed!" Others relayed the cry from street to street and up and across the hills of Richmond. When Davis came out of the building, he was greeted with triumphant rebel yells. Burton Harrison wrote that "the carriage was beset with a crowd perfectly frantic with enthusiasm, cheering, calling down God's blessing, rushing to catch him by the hand. . . . I shall never see such boisterous profound joy in a crowd again."[29]

A throng of well-wishers awaited Davis at the Spotswood Hotel. When he stepped down from the carriage, a strange silence fell over the crowd. A voice commanded "Hats off, Virginians!" and, in Harrison's words: "Five thousand uncovered men did homage to him who had suffered for them."

Once inside his suite, Davis turned to Varina, Harrison, the Reverend Minnegerode, and others and said, "In my sufferings you have comforted and strengthened me with your prayers. Should we not

now kneel together and return thanks?" Around a center table, all went to their knees and prayed silently, shedding "tears of emotion." Minnegerode later wrote: "There, in deep-felt prayer and thanksgiving, closed the story of Jefferson Davis' prison life."[30]

To preserve his health, the Davises and their friends decided to take a steamer to New York that night. Davis rested for a few days at O'Conor's home in Washington Heights. "He is looking very thin and haggard," Harrison wrote, "and has very little muscular strength. But his spirits are good."[31] From New York they made their way to Montreal to be united with the children. It had been two years of constant fear and worry for Varina and of enormous physical and mental strain for Davis. They were ready to begin the next chapter in their lives.

"We have all been in great jubilee here," Judah P. Benjamin wrote his sister "at the news of our poor President's release from his shameful capture. I have not yet had a letter from him but am expecting one every day, as I am eager to learn how he is, whether his health is improving, and whether his constitution has been undermined by his suffering."[32]

In Canada, Varina referred to their status as "threadbare great folks," since Davis had no employment and could not bring himself even to seek a position. Distressed about his poor health and depression, she reported to friends that "the motion and life about us drove my husband wild with nervousness; he said the voices of people sounded like trumpets in his ears."[33] They moved to a small village to seek a quieter life, and also because "we found housekeeping too expensive and have gone to boarding."[34] They began to visit old friends like James Mason, also living in exile in Canada.

From England, Benjamin wrote to Mason requesting that he forward a letter to "our dear friend whose release from captivity is a source of so much joy among us here." With Davis's release, the U.S. Congress began debating amnesty bills. Many former Confederates living abroad began thinking of returning to their homes. Almost forlornly, as if he were inquiring more for himself than out of friendly interest, Benjamin asked if Mason would find it "consistent with self-respect" to return to Virginia. Benjamin wrote: "There cannot be the least risk of persecution now, and of course no one could expect you to ask for a 'pardon'! God save the mark!"[35]

For the ex-President in Canada, the pressure to find respectable employment was increasing. He had to support not only his wife and four children but also Varina's younger sister, her two brothers

who had fled to Canada also and were jobless in Montreal, and her mother living in Vermont.

Varina suggested that he write his history of the war to bring in some income and relieve the emptiness of his days. They sent for his message books, which had been smuggled into Canada in his daughter's trunks and placed in the Bank of Montreal for safekeeping. For a few days, he just read aimlessly among the messages, but when he came upon the final days of the war, he began to pace the floor nervously. Varina wrote that "all the anguish of that last great struggle came over us as we saw our gaunt, half-clothed and half-starved men . . . mowed down by a countless host of enemies, overcome, broken in health and fortune, moving along the highways of their desolated home." He declared to Varina, "Let us put them by for awhile. I cannot speak of my dead so soon." The war was personal, and he considered the losses "my dead."[36]

Jefferson Davis was notified that he would have to go to Richmond in November 1867 for his long-awaited trial under the "treason" indictment. In planning a trip back to the Southern capital, the Davises decided that they would also return to Mississippi to see his family and to determine if any income could be derived from the Brierfield plantation. They went by boat to avoid the harsh Canadian winter, stopping off in Havana and New Orleans. Judah Benjamin had reported to Varina some two years earlier that funds had been deposited in a Cuban bank for the education of their children.

When Davis arrived in Richmond, Chief Justice Chase did not put in an appearance, and the trial was postponed for six more months to May 1868. The Johnson government, it seemed, was afraid it would be disgraced by the failure of its case against Davis. It was facing a growing storm of controversy, and it seemed possible, for a number of larger political issues in Congress, that President Andrew Johnson would face impeachment. The government had clearly trapped itself: It could not try Davis under the indictment, because under the Constitution secession was not treason. The case would collapse, and Stanton and Johnson would be humiliated.

Varina and Davis set sail for Havana, where they stayed in a hotel owned by a Southern woman. Their hostess entertained them lavishly in her parlors with a steady stream of Southern sympathizers from among the Spanish population. Davis withdrew the modest sums left for him in the bank and proceeded to New Orleans for another round of receptions with old friends. Then he went back to his plantation home in Mississippi, where he came upon a dispiriting

scene. "We found our property all destroyed,"[37] Varina recalled, "our friends impoverished, and our old brother [Joe] very feeble." They returned to Canada without mustering a dollar of income from the Mississippi trip; indeed, they had even left money for the support of the former Davis slaves who had stayed on the plantation. Having confronted postwar misery and devastation, Davis realized that he would have to look beyond the South for a livelihood.

Life was not easy in other respects as well. When he visited other cities, Davis's public reception was by no means filled with accolades and ovations. Once, as he was getting into a carriage, a man rushed up to him, handed him a note, and disappeared. When Davis opened it, he saw one scribbled word: "Andersonville." Two plots to assassinate him were reported, and he wrote Varina's brother that "there exists a conspiracy in the States to murder me, and many persons are engaged in it. . . . There is a proverb that threatened men live long. I hope I can be an example of it."[38] For former Confederates linked in any way to Lincoln's assassination, the possibility of vengeance was a constant terror.

Public opinion in Washington had taken a strange turn in the previous year, as the Republican Radicals stepped up the intensity of their animosity toward Andrew Johnson. The original proclamation itself was reinterpreted by the Radicals as a cover for his own guilt in the assassination of Lincoln.

From exile in England, Jacob Thompson struck back at the proclamation in a public letter to the New York *Tribune* on May 22, 1865, stating that "I know there is not half the ground to suspect me as there is to suspect President Johnson himself.

"First. There was an absence of motive on my part. . . .

"Second. A paper is found in President Johnson's room . . . signed by the assassin himself. . . . It is certain that if it had been sent by any other man at any other time . . . it would have implied previous intimacy . . . and a wish to have an interview without witness. . . .

"Third. President Johnson goes to bed on the night of the assassination . . . and is asleep . . . when an anxious gentleman leaves . . . to inform the new incumbent of his great good fortune."[39]

Beverley Tucker, another of the Confederate agents in Canada named in the proclamation, wrote a public letter to the Montreal *Gazette* on May 23, 1865, pointing out "the fact that Andrew Johnson is the only solitary individual of the thirty-five million souls comprised in that land who could possibly realize any interest or benefit" from the assassination. He continued: "He . . . must expect to be dealt

with as a man, not as a potentate. . . . If God spares my life, Andrew Johnson, and not I, shall go down to a dishonored grave."[40]

The effort by President Johnson to carry out Lincoln's policy of reconciliation brought him inexorably into collision with Stanton and the Radicals. Finally he fired Stanton, who challenged the action by refusing to leave his post until expelled from his office by force. The House of Representatives then introduced impeachment proceedings against the President in the U.S. Senate and the subsequent trial lasted three months. The charges against Johnson were for "high crimes and misdemeanors," but nine out of the ten charges dealt with Stanton's removal from office.

In mid-1868, three years after Jefferson Davis's capture, Washington politics and the impeachment trial of President Johnson dictated another postponement of Davis's treason trial until the fall. In the aftermath of the one-vote victory for Andrew Johnson on May 26, 1868, which defeated his impeachment and brought about the resignation of Stanton the same day, Davis was advised by his lawyers that it would be useful if he went to England for a few months. With a presidential election due in the fall, the lawyers were hopeful of some resolution in his favor during political debates ahead. Davis dictated a letter to Varina for Howell Cobb, former Governor of Georgia: "I have decided to go to Liverpool to see what may be done in establishing a commission house, especially for cotton and tobacco. An Englishman of very high character and social position who has been extensively engaged in the India Trade as a commission merchant has proposed to me a partnership."[41]

Varina added a postscript of her own to the letter: "I trust that at last we see our way clear to be raised above the sense of idle dependence which has so galled us. . . . I am sorry to say that Mr. Davis looks wretchedly. I think much of his indisposition is induced by his despair of getting some employment."

They left for Liverpool on July 26, 1868, and as the troubles of the South receded below the horizon behind him, Davis seemed to recover from his melancholy. He even walked the deck without his walking stick.

A crowd of more than one hundred met the ship at Liverpool; Benjamin could not be there because of a case in London but sent his regrets. To one woman, Davis appeared "placid and calm and gentle, like the soft waves of the sea after a mighty storm."[42]

Benjamin and the Davises arranged to meet in London.

"We saw Mr. Benjamin quite often, and always with increasing

pleasure," Varina wrote. "He had now become Queen's Counsellor, and was very successful. He appeared happier than I had hitherto seen him." She seemed surprised by his attitude toward the war, adding that "though he gave Mr. Davis one long talk about Confederate matters, after that he seemed averse to speaking of them. He was too busy to spend much time anywhere, but was sincerely cordial and always entertaining and cheerful. His success at the English bar was exceptional, but did not astonish us. In speaking of his grief over our defeat, he said that his power of dismissing any painful memory had served him well after the fall of the Confederacy."[43]

Davis and Varina were infuriated at the accounts of the war published that autumn by Edward Pollard, the former editor of the Richmond *Examiner*. Pollard attacked Davis in a 400-page diatribe that referred to Varina as "a woman who was excessively coarse and physical in her person, and in whom the defects of nature had been repaired neither by the grace of manners nor the charms of conversation. Mrs. Davis," he continued, "was a brawny, able-bodied woman who had much more of masculine mettle than feminine grace. Her complexion was tawny, even to the point of mullatoism; a woman loud and coarse in her manners; full of social self-assertion."[44] He referred to Davis as a "distinguished loafer" who had "descended into the counting house."[45]

Pollard had not overlooked, in his hatred for Davis, the role of the Confederate Secretary of State in the plots of the Canadian spy ring: "The author recollects a remarkable article," he wrote, ". . . to which rumor assigned Mr. Benjamin, Secretary of State . . . warning the North that but a few secret hands might suffice to commit her finest cities to the flames, and to inflict an injury as great as that which Sherman's army had done to Atlanta. It was a new mode of warfare thus suggested; it was, of course, not large enough to affect, to any considerable degree, the fate of the contest; it was not useful, and scarcely considered as such; it was *revengeful.*"[46]

He accused Davis of having "luxurious conceit," a "temper . . . almost as one of insanity," and wrote that he "folded his arms idly in the face of the war—'waiting for Europe' as Mr. Benjamin expressed it with the perpetual smile that basked on his Jewish lips."[47]

But even Pollard defended Jefferson Davis against the assassination charge: "There have been those who have believed—few believe it now—that the strange warfare which the South proposed to conduct

by secret agents and emissaries in the North, and in which we have seen Mr. Davis might have borne an indirect share, might possibly have extended to a conspiracy against the life of the Northern President. It is an absurd and foul imagination, without a particle of evidence to support it. . . . Mr. Davis never could have carried it to the point of cold-blooded assassination, and that as against a President whose death could not possibly benefit the South, and who, at the time, was more tolerable to it than the man who would succeed him."[48]

Davis asked Benjamin's advice on answering the charges in the book, and Benjamin responded from his knowledge of the British press and "on the close observations of men and things" in England: "If you publish the statement you will find it impossible to remain silent under the replies, and your existence here will be empoisoned by the necessity of engaging in a newspaper warfare at every disadvantage against hosts of unscrupulous enemies. The book you notice, I never heard mentioned, and it will drop still-born into oblivion, unless you advertise by your notice of it."[49]

It was advice that Benjamin applied to himself on all matters dealing with the war.

Davis and Varina also visited Paris. There they met the Confederate expatriate community that included Benjamin's old friends from New Orleans, the Slidells. Rosine Slidell had become Baroness Erlanger, having married Emile Erlanger of the Jewish banking family, and the Slidells were well situated.[50] Benjamin joined the Davises in Paris. He and Natalie attended the rounds of receptions and dinner parties. The elegance was touched with irony: All the former Confederates were prospering except the guests of honor, who were without position or steady income.

In 1874 Benjamin's old nemesis, Henry Foote, published his book on the war entitled *Casket of Reminiscences.* In it he linked the reunion of Davis and Benjamin in England after the war to insinuations of wrongdoing involving the Confederate treasury:

> I have been frequently asked whether Mr. Davis made any money by the war in which he and his associates had succeeded in involving the cotton states and to this question I have never been able to respond satisfactorily. I know that I always expected him and Mr. Benjamin to get rich by the war, and I often ventured to predict that they would be found whenever the Confederate cause

caved in to have provided largely for in Liverpool, whither the Confederate Government had sent considerable amounts of cotton.[51]

For Foote, the fact that Davis and Benjamin had met in England was all the evidence he needed. "Mr. Benjamin's sudden flight to England immediately on his decamping from Richmond was to my mind always quite a suspicious circumstance," he wrote, "knowing well as I did that devoted fondness for money which he had evinced even from his earliest boyhood. Mr. Davis' subsequent movement in the direction was a strong confirmatory fact. The public is at least entitled to a fuller explanation on this subject than it has yet received."

He charged that Jacob Thompson had taken some $200,000 in gold to England. "Did he and Mr. Davis divide the money? Did the immortal Benjamin get his share . . . ?"[52]

The charge would reverberate and grow until Benjamin would have to answer it. For the time being, he much preferred silence to the visibility that self-defense would have brought to him.

The election of General Ulysses S. Grant as President in the fall of 1868 improved Davis's political and legal situation. Even in his absence, his lawyers advised that he press for the trial to proceed in Richmond in late November. The court could not reach a decision, and Chief Justice Chase instructed a reporter to record him as voting to quash the indictment for treason and to bar all future proceedings, citing the Fourteenth Amendment. He wanted his opinion to be in the public record. On Christmas Day, 1868, outgoing President Johnson issued a general amnesty proclamation. Davis could consider himself free, though his case was left dangling, and the charges of complicity in the Lincoln assassination were never examined, presented to a jury, or withdrawn. He was excluded from the official amnesties of 1872 and 1876, and his right to citizenship was never restored.

After a year in Europe, without success in any of his business ventures, Davis returned to America to examine an offer from an insurance company in Memphis. Although he and Benjamin would correspond on a number of official questions over the next fifteen years and would see each other on five other Davis trips to England, they never developed a postwar intimacy. Benjamin's impatience at Davis's obsession with correcting the public record manifested itself when he replied to an invitation from the ex-President to discuss

various issues regarding the war in March 1874: "I too am very desirous of a long talk with you, but rather I must confess, about our old friends, than about the misrepresentations of Confederate affairs which I have ceased to hope it possible to rectify, at least for the present."[53]

Davis was facing backward to defend his personal defeat; Benjamin was facing forward to a new life and career.

20

The British Barrister from America

Benjamin's reputation at the bar grew enormously, and he once again began to behave as if on a stage acting out his own legend. In April 1869 he argued in behalf of his friend Colin McRae, the Confederate agent in London, who had handled the funds from the Erlanger loan. In *United States* v. *McRae* he defended McRae against a bill filed in England by the U.S. Government to obtain an accounting of all the money and goods in McRae's hands as belonging to "the pretended Confederate government during the late insurrection."[1]

In addition to a number of procedural matters, the case revolved around the question of whether the relief sought should be limited to money and goods originally the public property of the United States or could be extended to include funds raised by loan from foreigners in England and France. Just as it appeared that the Vice Chancellor was going to order an inquiry into the foreign funds, Benjamin suddenly rose from his seat and "to the astonishment of everyone present, began to speak in a stentorian voice." He said: "Not withstanding the somewhat off hand and supercilious manner with which this case has been dealt . . . if you will only listen to me—if you will only listen to me (repeating the same words in a crescendo)—I pledge you will dismiss this suit with costs."

The court sat in amazement as Benjamin calmly laid out the background to the case "for an hour or two." Word of his performance

was whispered out of the courtroom to the hallways of the Inn, and crowds gathered to hear him. He was the great Senator from Louisiana again, returning with his heralded persuasive powers of oratory to defend the South and its actions against the unjust inquiry of the Federal government. His audience listened in rapt fascination to the elegant phrasing, to his deep grasp of the history of the loan in question, to the origins of the law and its application to this case. When he was finished and sat down, the judges discussed the case briefly and promptly dismissed it in favor of his client.[2]

Benjamin excelled at arguing directly to judges as well as at trials involving witnesses and juries. Most of his energies were devoted to appeals courts, but when involved in a jury trial he enjoyed the interplay with witnesses and the sheer theater of the trial. Baron Pollock called him "an effective cross-examiner" and described his legal style at handling a witness in one particular case.

An expert testified for a store owner whose walls had collapsed, damaging the cotton belonging to Benjamin's client.

"I think, sir," Benjamin asked "you said you had great experience in building of warehouses?"

"Yes."

"And you have carefully considered the causes which lead to their weakness?"

"Certainly."

"And you have applied those considerations to the present case?"

"I have done so."

"Then will you kindly answer me one more question? Why did that warehouse fall?"[3]

Pollock reported that, caught off guard, "the witness paused and Benjamin with a pleasant twinkle in his eye sat down with almost a bump on his seat. The pause continued, and the effect was so striking that jurymen, bystanders, all could not resist a hearty laugh, which terribly diminished the effect of a long and reasoned reply which the expert gave as accounting for his conclusion. . . . The result was irresistible." Benjamin won his verdict. It was a stunt that turned an expected and predictable course of questioning to his advantage. Pollock pointed out that he "thoroughly knew the rules of the game [and] presented his client's case with great force to a jury."[4]

Butler reported on one episode later in his career, revealed in the Lawley papers, "that made a deep impression in England . . . and [was] echoed in nearly every one of the English reminiscences"

about him. In a very difficult case, with puzzling facts, Benjamin proceeded with his arguments even though the members of the House of Lords were showing impatience. As was his usual technique, he stated a bold proposition he intended to defend, but this time he overheard the Lord Chancellor mutter to himself "Nonsense!" "Changing color slightly . . . Mr. Benjamin proceeded to tie up his papers. This accomplished, he bowed gravely to the members of the House and saying 'That is my case, my Lords' he turned and left the House." The next day, when a junior counsel appeared, the Lord Chancellor apologized publicly "for the unfortunate remark. . . . I certainly was not justified in applying such a term to anything that fell from Mr. Benjamin." To stalk out of the House of Lords was a daring maneuver calculated to increase the respect of the bar; it placed Benjamin's dignity and honor above all other considerations, including the outcome of a case. It also contributed one more story in the Benjamin legend. But perhaps, just as had happened when Benjamin as a young U.S. Senator challenged Jefferson Davis to a duel over a callous remark, the experienced American barrister knew his man. "I wish you to convey to him my regret," the Lord Chancellor said, and Benjamin replied with a note accepting the apology.[5]

In December 1870, Benjamin proudly wrote his former law partner Bradford that he had argued his first case in the House of Lords. At last, he wrote Mason soon after, he was earning enough money to put something aside to support his family "when I am no longer able to work, in the place of what our Northern friends confiscated [from] me."[6]

Benjamin was so much in demand that he had to cut short a Christmas vacation when a client offered him one hundred guineas for three days' work, "and I could not afford the luxury of a holiday at that rate."[7] In another instance, he had to leave London for Liverpool on a Thursday night for a case the next day, then return on the train to London the following night for a special hearing on Saturday.[8] He once wrote that he spent eleven hours on a Sunday to master a brief in order to make an argument the next day "and was at my desk till two hours past midnight with only an interval of half an hour for taking some light food as one cannot dine when so deeply absorbed."[9] In another letter, he was "straining every nerve to get through the work this coming week" when he would leave on another trip and sometimes had to "avoid as much as possible using my eyes by gaslight. . . . I have so much writing to do, that

they get fatigued before I finish my day's work."[10] He complained about the English legal system as the cause of his backbreaking schedule: "The attorneys are terrible in this respect, giving us no time to get up heavy cases, but thrusting them on us at the last moment."[11] It was not a convincing complaint; Benjamin had been working the same fierce hours all of his life.

When a visitor came to call, the busy barrister was the very essence of order and quietly intense organization. "If you called on him in his chambers," wrote John George Witt, his friend and executor, "you were perfectly sure to find him seated at his table, writing a letter with a gold pen, in the best of style, with nothing on the table except the note paper and a tidy blotting pad." Those were habits of a lifetime carried over from his war years. They presented a picture unforgettable to those who witnessed it, part of the Judah P. Benjamin mystique. "No papers littered about—no untied briefs," Witt continued. "He welcomed you with the air of a man who had nothing just then to do except to enjoy a chat. If he wanted to find a paper for you, he unlocked the proper drawer in his table, and at once handed you the document. . . . Mr. Benjamin was never in a hurry, never important with this big thing or that big thing—never pretentious, always the same calm, equable, diligent, affable man, getting through an enormous mass of work day by day without ostentation and without friction."[12]

Hard work was paying off. He had reached a stage where, except under special retainer of one hundred guineas, he refused to appear anywhere but the House of Lords or in his favorite forum, the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, where judges heard cases from all over the British Empire. His past experience in diplomacy, his facility in French and Spanish, and his knowledge of the laws and legal customs of other countries enabled him to argue his cases with an intimate knowledge of the facts and superior expertise rare for his time. Between 1872 and 1882, he appeared in no fewer than 136 reported cases before those tribunals in cases of great legal significance or involving important financial interests.

The most significant case he ever argued was *Queen* v. *Keyn* in 1876, which is known in international law as the *Franconia* case.[13] Benjamin defended Keyn, captain of a German vessel that ran down and sank an English steamer, causing the death of an English passenger. Keyn was tried and convicted for manslaughter. Appealing on Keyn's behalf and arguing that the court lacked jurisdiction, Benjamin faced the greatest battery of lawyers in England. The case received high-

level representation and widespread publicity, because the Government felt that the lives of English subjects and the security of the English coast were at stake. The case was front-page news in the London *Times,* and for months the English newspapers reported the brilliant repartee and sparring of the lawyers and judges. Benjamin wrote his sister that "I have been acquiring a good deal of reputation lately in a great cause that I had to argue before fourteen judges, presided over by the Lord Chief Justice of England, in behalf of the captain of a German ship, the *Franconia.* As it involved a question of international law, the papers were full of it, and I received many compliments."[14] Benjamin seemed to enjoy the publicity again, having been intentionally absent from the press for more than a decade.

During his summation, which laid out the facts, history, and commentary from books, articles, and cases all over the world, Benjamin took several days to complete his argument because of interruptions and questions from the bench. When a judge asked him how much longer he would take, Benjamin replied that it depended upon the discussion from the bench. In tribute to his superior knowledge of the law and the international implications involved, which he had explained carefully to them over several days, the Lord Chief Baron answered, to the laughter of the other judges, "You might pertinently ask us the questions."

Three months later, the judges voted 7 to 6 in Benjamin's favor on the grounds of lack of jurisdiction, and freed Keyns. Parliament soon afterward passed the Territorial Waters Act to remedy the jurisdictional gap in the law.

His victory in the *Franconia* case elicited comment in the American press. A London correspondent wrote to the Cincinnati *Commercial* that Benjamin "must be regarded as the most famous advocate at the English bar at the present moment." The correspondent had once heard him speak in the U.S. Senate. He said Benjamin had improved "in manner as well as power" and was "eagerly sought for in all great cases." He noted what a hopeless case the *Franconia* captain seemed to have at the beginning and commended the choice of Benjamin as "the best defender of forlorn hopes." He suggested Benjamin's Confederate experience as the reason he "had been appearing in some desperate cases." Benjamin certainly did not win all of his cases. The American correspondent pointed to "three severe falls" that he suggested might be attributable to a reaction setting in to his great reputation.[15]

According to the Lawley biography, one member of the House

of Lords commented that "Mr. Benjamin's mode and method of argument [was] peculiar and strange" to the English judges in the early years. "His habit was to commence his arguments with an abstract lecture upon the law affecting the case before the court. Most elementary principles would be very minutely explained. If the court differed from or doubted any of his propositions, members of the tribunal were informed that they certainly were wrong, and that it was desirable they should have the state of law more fully explained to them."[16] Sir Henry James, the Attorney General, cautioned him about his didactic manner and later recalled: "Right well he accepted all I had to say, and agreed that he had not yet fallen into our ways."[17]

Benjamin's speaking style was often commented upon. The London *Times,* looking back on his life, observed: "His great faculty was that of argumentative statement. He would so put his case, without in the least departing from candor, that it seemed impossible to give judgment except in one way."[18] Baron Pollock, on the other hand, reflecting a cultural bias, commented that he was "not eloquent as a speaker." Others noted his American accent and what they termed the unpleasant tone of his voice.[19]

But in the nineteenth century, Benjamin was unique—an American at the top of his profession in England who had received all of his training and prior legal experience in American courts. Many of the English legal observers were hearing their first brilliant American in a daily interaction on the highest levels of the law, and one could expect a condescending and critical reaction to the style of his oratory. But among his colleagues he was almost universally admired. A fellow barrister said that "he makes you see the very bale of cotton that he is describing as it lies upon the wharf in New Orleans."[20]

Old enemies back in the United States reacted with grudging admiration to his growing reputation and prominence. James G. Blaine wrote, "His ability and learning were everywhere recognized, but it was at the same time admitted that he owed much of his success to the sympathy and support of that preponderant class among British merchants who cordially wished and worked for our destruction." Blaine complained that the "manner in which he was lauded into notoriety in London, the effort constantly made to lionize and to aggrandize him, were conspicuous demonstrations of hatred to our government, and were significant expressions of regret that Mr. Benjamin's treason had not been successful."[21]

Because of the charges made against him by Wigfall and by some

of the newspapers in the North, suspicious of his rapid rise at the English bar, both Butler and Meade examined Benjamin's fee books with care.[22] The records showed that his income began to grow dramatically after 1870, when he was promoted to Queen's Counsel and had special access to the highest courts.

In 1867 his fees totaled 495 pounds, or less than $2,500. By 1871 his fees had risen to 2,100 pounds, or $10,500; by 1873 his fees were 8,934 pounds, or more than $44,000. That represented a four-fold increase in four years! The pace of this extraordinary advance eased a bit in 1874 to 9,874 pounds, or more than $49,000. But by 1876 he had reached an income of 13,812 pounds, or more than $69,000; by 1878, a total of 15,742 pounds, or more than $78,000; in 1880, a maximum of 15,792 pounds, or almost $80,000. In 1881 and 1882, as he began to organize his retirement, his income dropped to 14,632 and 12,789 pounds respectively, or more than $73,000 in 1881 and $63,000 in 1882. The total for the sixteen years from 1867 through 1882 was 143,900 pounds, more than $700,000.[23] A New York *Times* correspondent who interviewed him in 1879 judged his income to be $150,000 a year, including his investments and the income from his book on *Sales,* which by then had sold enough copies to have reached a third printing.[24]

Butler pointed out that "popular fancy dazzled by the rapidity of Mr. Benjamin's success, had placed his earnings at a much higher figure; they are surely sufficiently amazing, however without fantastic increments."[25] Benjamin, from his perspective, wrote to his family that "although my success at the bar is absurdly exaggerated in some accounts I have seen in the newspapers," he felt confident that "in the event of my death a comfortable subsistence will be secure for my family."[26] This comment was made in the early 1870s in response to the charges by Wigfall and others that he was so rapidly successful that he must have illegally taken funds that belonged to the Confederacy.

In 1873, when he was sixty-two years old, he wrote a friend at Cambridge University that he was looking forward to retirement and even daydreamed about a university career:

> I quite envy your pleasant life. I am sure that at my age I could dream away the remnants of life there quite content, but my battle with the world is not quite ended, though I hope in two or three years at most to feel satisfied that I can withdraw from active work without disquietude as to the means of living in the modest way that suits my tastes.[27]

He began to ease up on his work habits, explaining that "I make it a rule that I will not work after dinner, that after wine in the evening I do as I please."[28]

His executor, John George Witt, wrote that "he had a good appetite for his dinner, drank his wine, smoked his cigar, and took life like a philosopher. His conversation was very bright, full of humor, and not too full of anecdote, and for years he managed to end his day of toil before the dining hour."[29]

The loneliness of his existence in England during his struggle to rebuild his life is revealed most poignantly in his letters to his family in New Orleans. His notes to his sisters and his nephews and nieces have a desolate quality, as if he longed for a connection to small children that would never be: "I suppose that Ernest and Julius and my saucy little coquette, Becky, have long since lost all memory of me. Your other little one I have never seen, but it seems you might send" some photographs "with the portraits of all of you."[30] He asked a second time for photographs "of all the family, for those I received in Richmond are in my trunk which is concealed on the other side, and I perhaps will never recover it."[31] When the photographs came, he wrote that he had "fallen desperately in love with your little blossom Alma, whom I have never seen, but I can imagine from the photograph what a darling cherub she must be."[32] When he discovered that the children were saving stamps from his letters, "I searched in vain for some time" and finally found a shop "which I believe is the only place in this great world of a city where they could be found. So now they will get Chinese, and Egyptian and Turkish!!!"[33] Sending exotic stamps to children was a delight he clung to for twelve years, even though they were later too old to appreciate them yet too considerate of their "Uncle Ben," as he referred to himself, to tell him so.

He gave advice to his nephews who "must be made to take an education, not be allowed to fancy a profession or business yet, for boys are really incapable of forming judgments of such things, and only long to get into business to seem grown up; let it be a good education first; if you will, let them come to me; after they are fitly educated, then business or profession, what you will."[34]

He longed to be with them, "looking forward to the day when restored peace to our unhappy South will enable me to devote a long vacation to a full month's visit to you all, and when I shall have nothing to do but be petted and stuffed, and get no scoldings unless my appetite fails."[35]

In his first year in England, he wrote his Louisiana family that "I

long beyond measure to see you all once more, but I am plainly to be disappointed this year. The simple truth is that I cannot afford the visit."[36] But as his law practice gained momentum, another rationale kept him from them—the suggestion of concern for his safety. In 1872 he wrote: "Pen says that she will celebrate her silver wedding . . . next year, and if I dared look forward so far, it would rejoice me beyond measure to be [part] of the party. But while the political excitement lasts, and while the Senate rejects amnesty bills, and the South is kept crushed under negro rule, it sickens me to think of the condition of things. After the Presidential election, it may be that a general amnesty bill will pass; but it is a wonder to me that so much bitterness against the conquered can endure the lapse of seven or eight years."[37]

Then, in 1874, he was more definite: "You say, my dearest, that I never now speak of visiting you all. I never can consent to go to New Orleans and break my heart witnessing the rule of negroes and carpetbaggers. I have hoped year by year that some change would be effected which would place decent and respectable men at the head of the administration of affairs, and it seems to me that the time is now fast approaching. I long and yearn to press you all to my heart once more, and for some of us at least age is creeping on and not much time is to be lost."[38] The next spring, a Negro named Pinchback was registered by the U.S. Senate as the Republican Senator-elect from Louisiana to occupy the seat of Judah P. Benjamin.

Benjamin looked forward in September 1874 to the marriage of Ninette, then just past thirty years old, to Henri de Bousignac, a captain in the French army.

"Of course," he wrote to his sister, "I cannot but feel anxious at thus giving up my only child, but, as far as human foresight can predict, I have assurance that the match will prove happy."

He was pleased at the "match" because of the captain's professional potential. "Captain de Bousignac, her intended, is represented on all sides as one of the most promising officers in the French army. At the age of thirty-two, he has acquired a distinguished position on the general staff from his merits both as an artillery and engineer officer." Benjamin was also impressed with his social standing and personal qualities. "He is of excellent family, irreproachable habits, beloved by all around him for his frank, gay and amiable character and I know no better test of a man than his possession of the affection of those most intimate with him."[39]

They were married in a Catholic ceremony in the church of St.

Pierre de Chaillot in Paris. The ceremony was performed by the bridegroom's uncle. Natalie's brother, Jules St. Martin, who came from New Orleans to attend the wedding, is listed as witness on the marriage certificate. He stayed on with the Benjamin household for many months because of an illness.

Benjamin was concerned about Ninette's financial security as a military wife. "By giving up all my savings," he wrote, "I have been able to settle on Ninette three thousand dollars a year, so that her future is now secure against want."[40] The decision was not without consequences for him. "I must now begin to lay up a provision for the old age of my wife and self. I undertake this new task with courage because we shall not require a great deal, and the practice of my profession is now so much more lucrative than it ever was before, that I hope in two or three years to see the end of necessary labor and be able to work as little or as much as I please."[41] The next spring, he wrote that his new son-in-law was "all that I could desire."[42]

His success now enabled him to make grand gestures, such as sending a thousand dollars as a wedding present to one of his nieces. He gave to Southern causes and sent money to impoverished friends, such as the widow of a former judge in New Orleans "whom I knew in old times and who wrote me a most pitiful story of her distress."[43] But having diminished his savings mainly with gifts to his family, he again went to work in earnest. "In after years," because his schedule changed again under the pressure to earn more income, J. G. Witt, his executor, wrote, "he was compelled to work late in the evening, and that was a necessity against which his whole soul revolted. But his determination to make money not for himself . . . but for those he loved conquered his aversion."[44]

There were more severe losses driving him as well. His brother Joseph lost $25,000 that Benjamin had sent him for a business venture, but Benjamin mentioned it only casually to his sisters. And he continually sent them money at regular intervals and special gifts at holidays and birthdays.

Benjamin was close to his younger brother Joseph, who had served in the Confederate army and after the war had fled to Mexico and then to Spanish Honduras. When asked once why he left America, Joseph answered, "I wouldn't take the oath of allegiance to the United States." According to Meade, who interviewed a friend of Joseph, Joseph once read the friend a letter from Judah Benjamin who invited Joseph to England to live with him and, in case Joseph did not

have the money, would send him all that he needed. But in the end Joseph did not wish to leave his family or his property in Honduras.[45]

One other sad event left him even lonelier. "I am depressed in spirits on account of the condition of poor Jules," he wrote to his sister. "In the meantime, I am using every means in my power to get Capt. deBousignac stationed at Paris so as not to break up the household, for my poor brother-in-law Jules St. Martin is in a very precarious state of health and will remain in the South of France during the coming winter (if he lives so long)."[46] Jules's death in 1875 greatly affected Benjamin and Natalie, who had raised him from early childhood. Natalie now felt doubly alone with Ninette away.

In preparation for his retirement, Benjamin built a large mansion at 41 Avenue d'Iena in Paris. It was in the grand style—three stories joined by an ornate and impressive marble staircase. He reported that Natalie and Ninette "are busy as bees deciding on shades of color for the decorations, patterns of paper for every room . . . the two . . . are finishing the furnishing and ornamentation of the 'grand salon' and threatening to give several soirees during the winter on the pretext that they want to establish intimate relations with certain grand personages who can aid in the more rapid promotion of the captain."[47] He concluded that "we shall be housed like princes, but the cost will be greater than I supposed, and including additional furniture, etc., etc., I don't get off for less than $80,000. However all is now paid off."[48] He was repeating the pattern of his New Orleans years, when the young and successful lawyer built the Bellechasse plantation, symbolic of his newly achieved station in life. His purpose was revealed in a letter to his sister in 1867, when a struggling Benjamin faced an uncertain future and was ready to settle for far less. "I am getting too old," he wrote, "to care now for anything except ease and tranquility, with means sufficient to live in comfort, but without any desire for splendor, for show, or what are called pleasures."[49] Now he would have all three, as befitting a successful retired barrister. The house in Paris ultimately became the residence of one of the members of the Rothschild family.

The Avenue D'Iena is one of six avenues extending out from the Place de l'Etoile, where the Arc de Triomphe stands. The arch, started in 1806 and finished in 1836, could possibly have been seen from the upper floors of his house and certainly was then, as it is today, an imposing presence just a half-mile away. Today his address is a modern apartment building, and the mansion is gone.

The houses next door at 42 and across the street at 63 are similar grand mansions of Benjamin's era, extraordinary residences with heavy doors, high windows, and sculpted casements on the front of the buildings, proud relics among the modern structures on the street.

The avenue is wide and tree-lined, in Benjamin's day able to accommodate six carriages across, perhaps more. It rises majestically from the Arc de Triomphe to a crest, from which one looks down a slight decline to his house and a view of the Eiffel Tower, begun the year after his death and completed four years later. Benjamin would live out the rest of his life in the splendor of this fashionable Paris neighborhood, in velvet isolation, away from his friends and his own history.[50]

Jefferson Davis in 1869 had accepted a position as president of the Carolina Insurance Company in Memphis, but his two-year tenure in the job ended in disaster when the company collapsed, taking with it most of his savings and leaving him once again in financial ruin. The death of his brother Joseph in 1870 opened up old wounds for Varina. Joseph left no written deed to the Brierfield plantation, others testified, because of his dislike for Varina, who he feared would gain control of it at the death of his brother Jefferson. Both Davis and the grandchildren of Joseph claimed the inheritance, and the ensuing bitter and embarrassing family struggle lasted until 1877, when Davis finally won his claim.[51]

In the meantime, Davis was rescued from his impoverished state by an ardent Confederate admirer, a wealthy widow named Sarah Anne Dorsey. She was a dark, vivacious woman who was descended from two wealthy cotton families. Her literary tastes and talents had produced four books under the pen name "Filia." She knew Louisiana politics well: One of her books, *Recollections of Henry Watkins Allen,* was about a Confederate brigadier general and a former Governor of Louisiana. Mrs. Dorsey had spent time in England, where she liked to collect celebrities, and had met Judah P. Benjamin there. Knowing of her literary interests and earlier collaborations concerning his home state, Benjamin may have suggested that she help Jefferson Davis write his history of the war.

After her husband died in 1876, Mrs. Dorsey moved to Beauvoir, a beautiful 600-acre plantation on the Gulf coast of Mississippi with running streams, thick forests, and beach front views that were, in all directions, "beautiful to see." She invited Davis to occupy a separate cottage, where he could write in peace. She offered to serve as his

amanuensis, taking dictation each day and arranged to employ a former Confederate major as a collaborator to help with research and the collection of documents and information. Varina was in England visiting her daughter when Davis moved his furnishings and belongings down from Memphis. When she heard he had moved to the plantation of a wealthy widow, Varina was furious with jealousy, especially after Mrs. Dorsey gave an interview to a newspaper, and her assistance to Davis became public knowledge. After Varina returned to Memphis and Davis suggested that Mrs. Dorsey visit her, Varina's jealousy shone through in a blunt letter:

"There is only one thing, my dear Husband," she wrote from Memphis, "that I have to beg of you. Do not—please do not let Mrs. Dorsey come to see me. I cannot see her and do not desire ever to do so again. . . . Let us agree to disagree about her, and I will bear my separation from you as I have the last six months—as but I can and hope for the better times the history being once over."[52]

When he needed Varina's memory of events, he was reduced to writing her letters. For more than a year and a half, Varina persisted before giving in to the inevitable and moving to Beauvoir. It was a wise step: Mrs. Dorsey sold Davis part of the estate for a nominal sum, and then died of cancer in 1879 after naming Jefferson Davis the sole heir to all her properties. The Davises at last had an appropriate estate for their old age.[53]

In completing the book, Davis also sought information from Judah Benjamin in England. For Benjamin, unlike his chief, the shadows of the war had begun to lengthen behind him, and the letters from Davis were an unhappy echo from his past. Davis wrote several letters asking his recollections on the controversy over the removal of General Joseph E. Johnston from his command during the battle of Atlanta. Only one of the letters survives, written in 1874, in which Davis wrote: "I feel as you do that it is hopeless to correct the false impressions which have been created, but it seems to me both proper and due that the truth should be stated by those who alone know it." It was the President's special compliment to him that he counted Benjamin as one of those who "alone" knew the truth. Davis was sensitive to Benjamin's eagerness to avoid public attention and assured him that "I do not wish to involve you in controversy but only to have the benefit of your memory."[54]

In 1879, while Davis was working on his two-volume history, he wrote Benjamin again about Johnston. Benjamin replied with generous opinions, and concluded the letter:

> I have thus given you my dear friend the recollections which you asked for. So far as the use of my name is concerned, I freely confess that it is not agreeable to mix in any way in the controversies of the past which for me are buried forever. If at any time your character or motives should be assailed and my testimony is needed, I should be indeed an arrant coward to permit this feeling to interfere with my prompt advance to your side to repel the calumny. But in any other case, I long for repose. I seek rest and quiet after the exhausting labours of 68 years of a somewhat turbulent or rather adventurous life.[55]

For the first time in his life, Benjamin began to relax and to enjoy the fruits of a lifetime of arduous effort. "I am beginning to go into society," he wrote his sister, "which I had relinquished for years, and to accept invitations to dinner which I habitually declined. I am all the better for it."[56] He could ease up on his work schedule, leave his "dull lodging," stroll in the park. He "loved to bask in the sun like a lizard" and enjoy a spring day "with a sky as blue as my memory paints the California sky to have been some fifteen years ago."[57]

Then, in 1880, when the Paris mansion was almost completed and he was still in England but beginning to shift to living in the first home of his own since the Bellechasse plantation, Benjamin was growing impatient with English weather and wrote: "I have felt work more this winter than ever before, and in addition to advancing age, which of course must tell on me, I attribute much to the dreadful weather which we had early in the season and which carried off very many persons advanced in life."[58]

He received a letter from Varina detailing the problems of publishing her husband's history, and Benjamin wrote back in April 1881 to give her his British perspective on the lack of public interest in the war:

> I have been expecting for some time to hear of the publication of "the book" but from your letter I begin to think that the prospect of its appearance is still remote. Public interest in our struggle has now quite died out in England though of course military men will read with great interest any account of the Campaigns—But here political questions have grown up so numerous and important that in the present feverish action of men in all spheres of life, what happened 15 years ago is regarded as "ancient history."[59]

Jefferson Davis's two-volume *The Rise and the Fall of the Confederacy* was published in June 1881 and was a complete failure as a

publishing venture. Like Davis himself, the books were excessively legalistic, filled with pages of constitutional argument, almost as if he were writing the brief to defend himself in the treason trial that never occurred. Benjamin wrote his biographer Lawley asking when the book would be available in England. When he read it, he must have had mixed feelings. In all the 1,500 pages, there is only a single comment on Benjamin and one other passing reference. Describing the selection of his first Cabinet, Davis wrote that "Mr. Benjamin of Louisiana had a very high reputation as a lawyer, and my acquaintance with him in the Senate had impressed me with the lucidity of his systematic habits and capacity for labor. He was therefore invited to the post of Attorney General."[60]

Why did Davis give such short shrift to Benjamin's role in and contribution to the war? There were so many ways in a book of personal history for the former President to have indicated their intimacy and show his appreciation without violating Benjamin's wish not to be embroiled in the controversies of the past. He did not even address issues one would have expected—why Davis appointed Benjamin Secretary of War; the truth about Roanoke Island and Benjamin's willingness to accept the blame for the nondelivery of arms and munitions the South did not have; why he appointed Benjamin Secretary of State; Benjamin's international role. Yet, on all those matters and more, beyond that single comment, he was coldly silent, almost as if he had intentionally drained away the intimacy for reasons of pique or reproach.

It represented an odd neglect, at the least ungenerous, but what is more curious, inaccurate, given the tone of the book with its ponderous details and mountainous facts. There are a number of possible theories to explain the omission, each of which throws light on their relationship.

First, there is the known request from Benjamin that he not "mix in any controversies of the past which for me are buried forever." Responding, Davis might simply have been honoring the request of a friend, but doing so with a scrupulous, almost perverse thoroughness bordering on spite.

There are more subtle possibilities. Benjamin's role during the war was so intimately involved in the President's day-to-day activities that Davis may have considered him entirely an instrument of the President's will, with no independent capacity for action. Thus he was not separate but an alter ego, an extension of Davis's personal and official direction, and whatever he did was done in the President's

name and office. Judah P. Benjamin was so much his loyal servant in the Cause that no case was to be made for a separate analysis of his activities and role. Speeches, letters, orders, messages, all emanated under Davis's name, and from Davis's point of view authorship was irrelevant. He signed them or read them, and they were his and his alone. Benjamin's comment in a letter to Mason confirms that view: He reported to Mason, in apologizing for his inability to supply information on an inquiry about the war, that "I have hardly anything to which I can refer to refresh my memory but I have . . . a bound copy of the President's messages to Congress which you (who were in on our secrets) know to have been written by me, as the President was too pressed with other duties to command sufficient time for preparing them himself."

The phrase "you (who were in our secrets)" reveals a great deal of Benjamin's attitude on the subject as well as Davis's. Whatever Benjamin did for the President, he did so in private, as the loyal aide, quiet and deferential; his was a total bending of his independence, identity, and performance to the President's purposes.

Besides, at the time Davis wrote his autobiography, his purpose was essentially political in nature: to defend himself from those who were blaming him for losing the war and to tell the story of the Confederacy from his own perspective. In those circumstances, to give excessive credit to Benjamin was to diminish himself. By the time he wrote the book, Davis was in poor health and wanted to be a symbol for the remnant of the Confederacy; he wanted to leave a legacy that would show that he had done his best for the Cause. It would have been uncharacteristic for a man as self-centered as Davis to confess to any intellectual help from his brilliant adviser.

For decades, Judah Benjamin had been conditioned to a lawyer–client relationship. Both men must have considered their roles in that context. Benjamin could differ with the President privately but never publicly; he could assess options and advise on decisions, but in the end the final responsibility was the President's. And once policy was set, until it was changed, the lawyer in him prepared the paperwork and followed through with the details.

He was the master of detail: He knew the amount of powder left in a regiment, the closest available supplies, the number of days' travel for so many men over that terrain based on previous experience, the morale of the troops, and the desertion rates, so that he could estimate actual men rather than reported men. He had a larger vision and understood the impact of Pyrrhic victories when loss of

men made the outcome meaningless. He had international experience and a grasp of the French court, the English press, and the world price of cotton. Above all, Davis trusted him and was willing to assign him all manner of responsibility, including writing in the President's name. But he was never willing to acknowledge that trust publicly.

Perhaps the explanation is clearer when it is placed next to Benjamin's refusal to reveal anything about his own role. It is almost as if there were a common agreement between them pledging mutual silence; to do otherwise would violate a bond of intimacy between two men who probably understood at the time that Benjamin could best serve by agreeing always to keep his real role secret. It was as if Benjamin were too privy to Davis's internal doubts and too close a participant in Davis's decisions to second-guess history and make critical judgments about them. Benjamin played a key role for Davis, who came to expect him to be totally informed, steeped in reality, not romance. Moreover, he had presented options and alternative scenarios, calculated risks, and advised in the total confidence that Davis would always accept the responsibility as his own.

Anonymity was inherent in the job, except when visibility served a purpose, such as accepting blame for Roanoke or the speech at the African Church that floated the idea of emancipation. Benjamin therefore probably did not expect recognition, and the book was too formal and official a presentation of the war to allow such expanded references.

Davis may have felt some resentment over their postwar relationship. Davis suffered in prison for two years, while Benjamin prospered as no other high-ranking official of the war. A few hundred Southerners went abroad after the war, and some of them had built up bank accounts in Europe during the war. Slidell, Toombs, Breckinridge, and Benjamin (after a few years of struggle) all lived in relative luxury. With his pious sense of honor, Davis might have felt their actions to be vaguely dishonorable. He even refused to allow Varina to save the family silver or take anything of value with them when they fled Richmond. He seemed to want to sink into ruin, as his nation did, out of exaggerated idealism. It would be difficult to imagine Jefferson Davis, fleeing in disguise with gold strapped around his waist, purchasing six hundred bales of cotton during the final days of the war and sending them ahead to England to cover future living expenses. Davis, ever the military man, believed in the soldier's code: fight until the end, then have courage to face the enemy when

captured. He was the elected leader who must not, at all costs, abandon his people.

After all, Davis may also have felt justified in thinking that at least part of the notoriety and fame that helped launch Benjamin's career in England was Davis's gift to him and therefore entitled Davis to much more assistance after the war than Benjamin gave him. Davis was searching desperately for business contacts in England up until 1877 and may well have concluded that Benjamin could have done more for him, perhaps even invested in one of his ventures.

There certainly was resentment on the part of Davis over the reluctance of Benjamin and others to provide him with information, impressions, and memories for his book. He even complained to Lucius B. Northrop, the former Commissary General, of the "impossibility of getting men to state in a manner to be used the truth as known to them orally." They had told him things in person that, "in that miserable spirit of harmonizing now endemic," he complained, "they cannot be induced to put into writing." He even apologized publicly in the foreword of his book for the reluctance of those who participated to answer his inquiries. Benjamin was not alone in his wish for privacy, but Davis must have been especially disappointed in him as one of "those who alone know" the truth.

Finally, there is a more haunting possibility of more deep-seated disappointment by Davis in Benjamin's peripheral and blameless, but nonetheless damaging, association with John Surratt and Jacob Thompson, who were charged with complicity in the Lincoln assassination. As Secretary of State, Benjamin was responsible for the Canadian spy ring, and in point of fact it was Benjamin's messages to Canada delivered by Surratt that lay at the center of the accusation against Davis. In that sense, the cloud that remained over Davis's career and reputation was a Benjamin-created cloud. Although no court of law, no reliable document, no unperjured testimony, no responsible investigation, no respectable witness ever proved any link, in Davis's strict sense of the military code Benjamin was responsible for the link that lent an impression of validity to the charges against him. John Surratt's role, of which evidence was insufficient and inconclusive, even happenstance as it turned out to be, lay there for Stanton, Holt, and others to grasp and use to attack the reputation and honor of Jefferson Davis. That Davis was even accused was a deep shock to the President; it had to have been unsettling that his most trusted adviser and closest confidant would be the bridge to the unfounded charges against him through the unfortunate

choice of a messenger whose mother owned the boarding house where John Wilkes Booth stayed. That Benjamin would select as his most trusted courier a young man who knew Booth personally and even plotted with Booth to abduct Lincoln and other hare-brained schemes must have been seen by Davis as a failure of judgment of profound proportion by his Secretary of State and, even more serious, a professional failure of the intelligence staff developed by Benjamin for investigating the background of people before trusting them with vital responsibilities. For two years in prison, Davis had long hours to ponder the quirk of history, as it were, that linked him in any way whatsoever to Booth. Like Benjamin, for five years he would not know what John Surratt's testimony would be. But he had no doubt, especially after Wirz was tried and hanged, that men who would threaten and then hang the first woman in history in order to force her son to surrender would stop at nothing to implicate the President should her son be captured. What would this young messenger say if faced with the same gallows that had taken his mother and given the chance for immunity if he would but name Benjamin and Davis? For five years, until Surratt's 1870 lecture, Davis's career, his personal honor, and his role in history would be in the hands of the most wanted man in the world, the young messenger to his closest adviser. He had a right to feel that John Surratt was Judah Benjamin's blunder, a fateful lapse of judgment that had provided their unscrupulous enemies with the baseless thread of evidence to weave into a tapestry of accusation.

21

Paris: *Hidden from History*

Benjamin in 1878 wrote his old law partner in New Orleans that, looking back on his career in England, he felt it was "almost a miracle," and "I sometimes feel ashamed of my own success, when I see others quite as deserving still forced to continue the battle against fortune."[1]

He was interviewed by a New York *Times* correspondent on New Year's day in 1879. As usual whenever he met the press, Benjamin the actor was very much on stage. "Rarely have I met a smile so genial," the correspondent wrote, "as that which welcomed me from the little gentleman whom Abraham Lincoln considered the 'smartest' of all the Richmond Revolutionary Junta." He reported that Benjamin's "physique is imminently Southern, of that jolly, well-fed Southern type which so nearly resembles John Bull."

"Nobody will call you a Yankee, anyway," the correspondent remarked. He reported that "Benjamin laughed and said he was born what he now was—an Englishman." When asked whether the English held his American or Southern roots against him, Benjamin replied in the negative, "except that I should have been a Queen's Counsel several years earlier if some of the powers that be had not imagined that to honor me might not be regarded as friendly by the Washington government."

The correspondent was struck by Benjamin's appearance. "Very

seldom indeed," he wrote, "does one meet a man who, having almost attained the scriptural three score years and ten, looks and acts like a man of forty. Mr. Benjamin is the best preserved man I have ever seen."[2]

Benjamin was beginning to enjoy himself more. On a trip to Toulouse, he wrote his sister, there were dinner parties "followed by extempore music and dancing in the evening and this 'old man' was made to dance by invitations from the young ladies who refused to dance at all if he would not. What do you say to that?"[3]

He viewed the British elections of 1880 from his comfortable perch atop the bar, writing, "It amuses me to look on, as I do not take the slightest part in politics and shall never again be induced to emerge from the quietude of private life . . . great efforts have been made to induce me to become a candidate but I laugh them off." He was surprised at Disraeli's defeat, because "nothing is so abhorrent to me as Radicalism which seeks to elevate the populace into the governing class."[4] It was more of a comment on reconstruction in America than on affairs in Britain.

At the end of his life, looking back on this time, he wrote to Mrs. Bradford, the wife of his former law partner: "You say I look on things through the *couleur de rose* of success. Not so, but through the *couleur de rose* of a temperament, blessed birth gift, that under all circumstances and every trial, took to the bright side and absolutely rebels against distrust of the future. I was complimented on my 'pluck' . . . it was simply elasticity of natural temperament: a total absence of . . . despondence and brooding over adverse circumstances."[5]

Almost nothing Benjamin left hints at any feeling of regret over his marriage to Natalie, except for two lines in a long letter to his niece Eugenia, who had turned to her uncle for advice because of family objections to a suitor she wanted to marry. "Don't imagine I am going to read you a moral lesson," he wrote, "for I hate them whether as giver or receiver." He thought back over the course of his life and his marriage. "I *don't* forget this, and I feel for you just as I felt for myself over fifty years ago. . . . What I want to warn you against is the impatience and rashness which are so natural at your age and which may prove fatal to your happiness."[6]

Then, in May 1880, he was "thrown to the ground with great violence in a foolish attempt to jump off a tram-car in rapid motion."[7] He broke his shoulder blade and his right arm and received a forehead fracture. His doctors said he would never fully recover but required

him, in order to reduce the pain, "to take a liqueur glass of cognac pure three times a day . . . and altogether accustom myself to getting a little 'tight' each day. I shall soon be an accomplished 'tippler,' " he joked, "and then my 'cure' will be complete."[8]

The rumors of the disposition of Confederate funds in Europe continued to pursue him, even as he was reaching the final chapter in his life.

Under the headline "NO CONFEDERATE FUNDS IN EUROPE," the New York *Tribune* of January 20, 1882, printed a letter of November 28, 1881, from Benjamin to S. L. M. Barlow, a successful corporate lawyer in New York who had written Benjamin "concerning the rumors that vast sums of money had been deposited by the Confederate Government in the Bank of England and elsewhere in Europe."[9] The Confederate bonds had been subject to speculation on the stock exchange, and the New York *Times* of November 6, 1881, had editorially commented: "It is said that there is on deposit in the Bank of England some seventeen-odd millions of Confederate gold which will be surrendered to the bondholders. If there is any such deposit it belongs to the United States. . . . Would not Mr. Benjamin, for instance, find in these facts some grounds for the recovery of a commission of 500,000 pounds, that being in excess of any fair fee for any bona fide financial operation? He might be somewhat puzzled as to whom to make plaintiff in the case, but that would be a minor objection to any one who proposed to get Confederate assets out of the Bank of England."[10]

Benjamin wrote a very careful letter in reply to Barlow, almost as if he were drafting a brief, pointing out that the "Confederate Government never had but two means of raising money in Europe—one was by the export of cotton, all of which was consigned to the house of Fraser, Trenholm & Co. of Liverpool; the other was by loan effected through Messrs. Erlanger & Co. and Schroeder & Co., the proceeds of which were all received by Colin J. McRae, the financial agent of the Government."[11]

He wrote with confidence of the case he once argued and won:

> At the close of the war the United States Government, claiming the right to receive the entire assets of the Confederate Government, instituted suits against Fraser, Trenholm & Co. and against McRae. After a determined and protracted litigation, Fraser, Trenholm & Co. were driven into bankruptcy, as their whole business was destroyed and their credit broken by the apprehensions cre-

> ated in the mercantile world of the result of the enormous claims hanging over them, when they really owed little or nothing; and I think the United States ultimately recovered a few thousand dollars as a compromise.
>
> McRae proved in his case that he had rendered a full and faithful account to the Confederate Government of the entire proceeds of the loan in payment of supplies and munitions of war to the various commissarial and quartermaster officers in this country and of the coupons on the bonds.

He felt as if he had to defend McRae's honor and pointed out that "he was ready to render his accounts over again if the United States would agree to reimburse him any balance found due in his favor. This was declined. (The case is reported in Law Rep 8 Eg 69). Poor McRae! In shattered health and with a few hundred pounds, the wreck of his fortunes, he emigrated to Spanish Honduras, where he sought to earn a support on a small stock farm, but he died in extremely reduced circumstances."

He described the desperate state of affairs over the course of the war and asserted, as if impatient with the constant questions and charges regarding his own integrity: "The last payment of coupons on the Confederate loan was only affected after great effort by means of cotton sold through Fraser, Trenholm & Co. as all the proceeds of the loan had long since been exhausted. The United States Government also recovered some supplies, machinery and several vessels. In fact, everything that remained from the wreck; and I do not believe that one penny is to be found anywhere in Europe of the assets of the defunct Confederacy. If anything can ever be recovered by the bondholders, it can only be by government action in the United States, and you can judge better than I can if there is the remotest hope of any action."[12] It was unusual for Benjamin to use a phrase of such bluntness and finality as "defunct Confederacy," but at the end of his life he was surely tired of the rumors of Confederate funds in Europe and aimed the letter at a public audience partly in defense of his own reputation and honorable actions at the end of the war.

That sudden concern in his later years for history's judgment of his postwar success caused him to be more public about his financial affairs in a number of ways. He made his fee books available to Lawley, the London *Times* correspondent planning his biography, and the details of his earnings and his financial history were

published.[13] And he was even more specific in an interview with the last American known to have called upon him, a legal scholar from Cincinnati named Gustavus Wald. Wald, a graduate of Harvard Law School, for several years was dean of the Cincinnati Law School and the American editor of Frederic Pollock's book on contracts. Pollock was the nephew of Baron Pollock, Benjamin's mentor and early sponsor. Because of Wald's friendship with Pollock, Benjamin showed him openness and courtesy that Wald found unusual. From the details Wald later reported, it was clear Wald was taking notes, and Benjamin must have sensed he was speaking for the record and for publication to a legal audience in America.

"I suppose that the lawyers in America think we make much less money here than they do," he confessed to Wald, "because you don't hear often of large single fees in cases here as you do on the other side, but I have done quite well. Now I practice only in three courts, the Court of Appeals, the Privy Council, and the House of Lords; I take no brief accompanied by less than fifty guineas, and generally none marked less than one hundred guineas. As I try no cases at *nisi prius,* and so, of course, get my cases on a record made up, I have simply to prepare the law applicable to a fixed state of facts, and that I can do in most cases overnight. From the time each case of mine is called until the argument in it is concluded, I receive in it a refresher of ten guineas a day. As I can be in only one court at a time, while I am engaged in a case in one of the courts my refreshers in a case or cases in one or both of the other courts are running on. And what is the most delightful thing about the practice here is that I never have to talk to, or even see, a client. My terms here are known, and solicitors either choose to employ me on them or they don't; of course, there is no such thing as bargaining about fees."[14]

It was time to slow down the pace of law practice. "I still keep up my old jog-trot, but my work is less absorbing now. I have cut off a good deal of my practice preparatory to withdrawing but my withdrawal now depends entirely on our success in getting Ninette and her husband back to live with us, as I should hardly know what to do in the 'big house' all alone with my poor wife, who is constantly fretting for her daughter."[15]

He railed at the British weather in the years after the mansion was finished, but his work and his clients prevented his moving fully to Paris.

"I am tired of work and need repose—I suppose that this feeling

overcomes me by reason of the shock given to my whole system in May 1880, for which it seems impossible for me to recover radically—I am always ailing in some way, and I 'give up'—. . . . Such weather as we have here! fog, fog, fog! I am most impatient to [go] somewhere where I can breathe."[16]

A severe heart attack brought on by diabetes on Christmas 1882 sent him to bed and forced his retirement. It was reported that he returned to clients briefs and retainers worth $100,000. He was genuinely surprised by the reaction to the announcement from the press and from his colleagues, and he wrote his sister, "Every leading London newspaper, with the *Times* at the head, has made my retirement a matter of national concern and regret and my table is covered with piles of letters (some sixty or seventy at least) from my brethren of the bar, expressing the warmest sympathy and regret. . . . For the last few days, I have hardly kept my eyes free from tears on reading these testimonials to rectitude and honor of my professional conduct, such as no member of the bar has ever received."[17]

The *Times* noted that in mercantile law, Benjamin had "equal authority with a standard textbook"[18] and that he had seemed "more like an assessor of the Supreme Courts of Appeal than a simple practitioner." The *Morning Telegraph* of London, for which he wrote in his early days in England, sought to sum up the life of "the gifted stranger" somewhat later:

> Such a career as that of Judah Philip Benjamin is not likely to be repeated. The man and the circumstances were both unique. As a parliamentary and forensic record his life has all the fascinations of a brilliantly narrated romance. He conquered fame and fortune by the exercise of a robust, and at the same time subtle, intellect, and by rare gifts of expression and persuasion. His industry was immense. It was his custom to master every intricacy of the most lengthy brief—to leave no detail, however slight, unnoticed. Of him it may be truly said that he touched no legal subject which he did not adorn with the clear light of a luminous intellect and with the force and grace of an exquisite eloquence. He knew when to wait, and when to strike, both as a statesman and as an advocate. Men of his stamp are born to success. . . . Beginning life afresh in a new country, and at an age when most professional men contemplate retirement from the active pursuit of their vocation, he took up the same line of action which had served him

> so well in the past, before the defeat of the Confederate cause drove him to seek a safe asylum upon our shores. That such an able and eloquent advocate should have found a warm welcome and a generous appreciation at the hands of the English Bar is, indeed, a high testimony to that great institution, and to the gifted stranger, possessed of strength of will and force of intellect to engage the unstinted admiration of kindred spirits, raised far above mean and petty jealousy.[19]

He thought that he would disappear quietly to Paris, but once again the English bar surprised him. He wrote his sister: "A letter from the Attorney General informs me that he has received a requisition signed by more than eighty Queen's Counsel, and by all the leading members of the bar of England, desiring him to offer me a public dinner in order to take a 'collective farewell' of me and to testify their high sense of honor and integrity of my professional career, and of their desire that our relations of personal friendship should not be severed. The correspondence will be made public. This is the first time that such an honor has been extended to a barrister on leaving the profession."[20]

The dinner took place in the ornate halls of the Inner Temple amid dark wood-paneled walls decorated with royal coats of arms, large somber paintings, and marble statues. In the chair sat Sir Henry James, the Attorney General; on his right sat Benjamin and on his left the Lord Chancellor. The noteworthy came to honor him: the Lord Chief Justice, the Solicitor General, the Lord Advocate for Scotland, the Attorney General for Ireland, and more than two hundred judges, Queen's Counsel, and other lawyers. The Attorney General spoke for the assembled audience: "You know how Mr. Benjamin came among us and how we received him. . . . We found a place for him in our foremost rank; we grudged him not the leadership he so easily gained—we were proud of his success, for we knew the strength of the stranger among us and the bar is ever generous even in its rivalry toward success that is based on merit. And the merit must have been there, for who is the man save this one of whom it can be said he held conspicuous leadership at the bar of two countries? To him, the change of citizenship and transition in his profession seemed easy enough. From the first days of coming he was one of us. . . . The years are few since Mr. Benjamin was a stranger to us all, and in those few years he has accomplished more than most men can ever hope in a lifetime to achieve."[21]

Benjamin replied with appreciation, made his farewells, and then added: "From the bar of England I never, so far as I am aware, received anything but warm and kindly welcome. I never had occasion to feel that any one regarded me as an intruder. I never felt a touch of professional jealousy. I never received an unkindness. On the contrary, from all quarters I received a warm and cordial welcome to which, as a stranger, I had no title, except that I was a political exile, seeking by honorable labor to retrieve shattered fortunes, wrecked in the ruin of a lost cause."[22]

He returned to Paris to face his last winter.

Lawley visited and pleaded with him one last time for his help in a possible biography.

"I would much prefer that no 'Life,' not even a magazine article should ever be written about me," Lawley reported that Benjamin told him. "But even if I had the health, and desired ever so much to help you in your work, I have no materials available for the purpose. I have never kept a diary, or retained a copy of a letter written by me. No letters addressed to me by others will be found among my papers when I die."[23]

Benjamin paid special tribute to Varina, with whom he continued to correspond regularly even after he was out of touch with Jefferson Davis: "With perhaps the exception of Mrs. Jefferson Davis, no one has many letters of mine, for I have read so many American biographies which reflected only the passions and prejudices of their writers that I do not want to leave behind me letters and documents to be used in such a work about myself."[24]

He advised John George Witt, the executor of his estate, "Never keep any letter or other document if you can help it. You will only give yourself infinite trouble, and if you die, you bequeath a legacy of mischief." According to Witt, "when he died, he did not leave behind him half a dozen pieces of paper."[25]

"We always talk French in our family circle," he wrote Lawley in 1882 of his life in Paris. "Indeed my wife and daughter have lived so long in Paris that they have almost forgotten their English." As for his longed-for grandchild, he wrote: "We have decided it is to be a boy and that he is to become Marshal of France." But he would be deeply disappointed, as "thus far each of her children has died shortly after it was born and thus the cherished hope of my life that I might have a grandchild to play with in my old age has not been granted to me. But I still live on hopes."[26]

He looked back on his life with wistfulness, having come full circle back to the Europe from which his Sephardic ancestors had fled: "I have been hard at work ever since I was ten years old and now I am 72, and have fairly earned some repose. The last ten or twelve years of my practice in London have been the most laborious in my life, not even excepting those which you doubtless remember when I toiled so hard at the State Department in Richmond."[27]

Even after eighteen years in England and in Paris, he was beginning to feel more attachment to the Southern soil of his early years. To a visitor from New Orleans he said, as if addressing his history, "Louisiana . . . remember me there."[28]

His poor health was taking its toll. He wrote a last letter to Varina as if to say good-bye. "I fancy I shall not recover. I would not have you hear of my misfortune from another than your friend, who is always affectionately yours."[29]

Judah P. Benjamin died on May 6, 1884, at the age of seventy-three, in his mansion in Paris. Varina wrote, "Thus passed from earth one of the greatest minds of this century."[30] Natalie had summoned a priest to administer the last rites, providing her husband with a contact with the Catholic Church at a final moment when he could not resist. Funeral services were held at the same church in which Ninette had been married, and Natalie had him buried in a crypt in Père Lachaise cemetery marked only for the families of St. Martin and Bousignac. Today the records in Père Lachaise cemetery still identify him only as "Philippe Benjamin," the name only Natalie called him, as if he had agreed with her intent to conceal his identity.[31]

Epilogue

Père Lachaise today is an immense, aging, urban cemetery of somber confusion and mystery, built on the high ground of Paris to withstand the rising waters of the Seine. It contrasts with most Southern cemeteries in the United States, which are green and wooded on rolling hills, with flowers and plantings. New Orleans, however, with its fear of the frequently flooding Mississippi, has cemeteries like Père Lachaise; thus Judah P. Benjamin does not rest in altogether unfamiliar surroundings.[1]

More than one hundred years after Benjamin's death, Père Lachaise is as overcrowded as Paris itself, with thousands of tombs spreading over several square miles of hills in the midst of the city. High walls around the cemetery shield it from view of the street, adding to its forbidding character. Benjamin is not listed among the famous personages buried there, to whose graves all the tourists who enter are guided by maps: Colette, Rossini, Chopin, Bernini, Molière, Modigliani, Oscar Wilde, Sarah Bernhardt, Balzac, Bizet. The concierge at the entrance had not heard of him, and one has to know the burial date to find the location, in the southwestern corner a half-mile from the entrance.

Winding through the cemetery are cobblestone roads, cut around and through the hills so that the cluttered stones of the gravesites rise and fall against the eye like the rolling waves of a marble sea. It is so desolate that as one searches for the Benjamin grave, the scene recalls the psalmist's vision of "a walk through the valley of

the shadow of death." In the stillness, any movement or noise catches attention—a wild-eyed cat darting out of a crypt or a bird fluttering—and one tries to imagine in the eerie silence what Judah P. Benjamin's funeral train must have been like. The clatter of horses' hooves and the creaking wheels must have echoed off the hard marble casements throughout the graveyard as the mourners maneuvered the coffin-laden carriage through the jumble of stones to a grave on the crest of a hill where the road divides.

Benjamin rests in a modest gravesite. The grand burial structures surrounding the site render his grave all the more humble to the visitor. An oak tree nearby provides shade; the sun casts angular shadows from the other tombs, and there are extreme differences of temperature between the shade, where one is surrounded by cool marble, and the sunlight, where the heat radiates off the marble slabs.

Mounds of dead flowers lie at intervals along the cobblestone roads, gathered by caretakers from the graves, reminding one that though this is a cold and barren place, it is linked to human memory.

Standing at the foot of Judah Benjamin's grave, one is struck by an irony. It is as if he tried to escape notice even in Paris, this Confederate statesman who is misplaced here, buried not in his city of New Orleans, where he lived the longest, or in the State of Louisiana, which he served in the U.S. Senate, but here, far away from his roots in the South. One can think of no other major American political leader buried so far from his origins.

But he is safe in Paris, hidden in the serpentine roads and the crannies of a historic burial ground, safe from the vengeful, the unfriendly, the defacers, and the anti-Semites; safe from the angry mob or the spiteful; safe from the false accusers who would dishonor his name. Almost anonymous in Père Lachaise, Benjamin has no mourners to wash his gravestone or to place flowers on his grave, but he never counted on such sentiments during his life. His task always seemed to be to erase the past, not to retain it. To him, surely, the fear of desecration and humiliation far outweighed the tears of Confederate sympathizers in determining his own preference for a final resting place.

He seems all alone in Père Lachaise. He came to Paris only in the last year of his life and, aside from his family, was without friends or admirers there. For a man born of the Jewish faith, the rare Jewish graves at Père Lachaise only add to the loneliness of his place there. The cemetery is overwhelmingly Catholic, with its crosses and cruci-

fixes, images of Jesus, and Latin phrases etched in stone. It is so Catholic in its mood that a simple Kaddish—the Jewish prayer of remembrance—would seem foreign, a distant language, inappropriate. Natalie, surely with his acquiescence, arranged for a quiet, anonymous site, where he would never be disturbed, where he would be assimilated into his surroundings, far away from his South, and by all means protected from those seeking revenge for the crime he did not commit. A Jew by birth, he would be buried in secret among the Christians—alone, disguised, but safe.

When Jefferson Davis died in December 1889, E. B. Kruttschnitt, Judah P. Benjamin's nephew, served at the New Orleans funeral as one of the pallbearers, so chosen, the newspapers reported, because he was a descendant of the President's closest colleague. Three years later, after several states vied for the President's remains, Varina agreed that he should be moved to Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond with the thousands of other Confederate dead "as the proper place for the grave of him who loved them all and labored for their glory."[2] A life-sized statue of Jefferson Davis standing tall was placed on the gravesite.

In 1938 the Paris chapter of the Daughters of the Confederacy finally provided an inscription to identify the man in the almost anonymous grave in the Père Lachaise cemetery:

JUDAH PHILIP BENJAMIN
BORN ST. THOMAS WEST INDIES AUGUST 6, 1811
DIED IN PARIS MAY 6, 1884
UNITED STATES SENATOR FROM LOUISIANA
ATTORNEY GENERAL, SECRETARY OF WAR AND
SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE CONFEDERATE STATES
OF AMERICA, QUEEN'S COUNSEL, LONDON

In life, as in death, he was elusive, vanishing behind his agreeableness, his cordiality, his perpetual smile. To blend into the culture—whether Southern or English—was innate, bred into him, a matter of the Jewish Southerner's instinct for survival. But, the "dark prince" could not elude the Christian bias, released with unbearable intensity by the Civil War. He withdrew even more deeply—into hard work, loneliness, isolation, and a life without intimacy. The public man celebrated on two continents sought a kind of invisibility, not unlike the private man nobody knew. Shunning his past, choosing an almost secret grave, with calculated concealment, he nearly succeeded in remaining hidden from history.

Notes

Full information can be found in the selected bibliography. Otherwise, the work will be cited in full in the notes.

CHAPTER 1
Charleston: Boyhood in the Reformed Society

1. *Encyclopedia Judaica* (New York and Jerusalem, 1971), 9: 477–78 (see verse 20, Obadiah).
2. *Ibid.,* 8: 431–59.
3. "The Inquisition," *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia* (New York, 1941), 5: 566–70. See also H. Ben Sasson (ed.), *A History of the Jewish People* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), Part V, "The Middle Ages: Popular Pressure Against the Jews," pp. 574–93, esp. "Developments in Christian Spain (1391–1492)," pp. 583–84.

   For more details on the Spanish Jews, their flourishing history, the Inquisition, and the expulsion, see A. Ashtor (Strauss), *The History of the Jews of Moslem Spain,* Vols. I–II (Jerusalem, 1966) (in Hebrew); Y. Baer, *A History of the Jews of Christian Spain,* Vols. I–II (Philadelphia, 1961–66); L. Finkelstein, (ed.), *The Jews: Their History, Culture, and Religion,* 4 vols. (New York, 1960), Vol. I, pp. 216–49, 287–320; H. Graetz, *History of the Jews,* Vol. 4 (1927); J. R. Marcus, *The Jews in the Medieval World* (Cincinnati, 1938); C. Roth, *World History of the Jewish People,* 2d Series Medieval Period, Vol. II, *The Dark Ages* (Tel Aviv, 1966); and Abram Sachar, *A History of the Jews,* 5th Ed. Rev. (New York, 1967).
4. Also known as Mendez, de Mendes. See Robert D. Meade, *Judah P. Benjamin, Confederate Statesman,* pp. 3–5, 381–82.
5. "Judah" and "Tribe of Judah," *The Jewish Encyclopedia,* 7: 327–30.

6. Meade reported that Judah was the second son and Solomon the first. Malcolm Stern, author of *First American Jewish Families,* interview, June 1981, pointed out that Benjamin's paternal grandfather lived in St. Eustatius before moving to the Virgin Islands, where he was a *mohel* (a religious official trained to perform the ritual of circumcision). His record of circumcisions mentions an older Judah, who died in infancy, to be replaced, in Sephardic tradition, by the second Judah. The old man circumcised both grandsons and passed on the name Judah, as was the custom among Sephardics even if the grandfather was alive. Stern says he believes Meade was simply mistaken that Solomon was the oldest of the sons. Stern points out that Solomon was named after the maternal grandfather, Solomon De Mendes of Portugal, which, under Sephardic custom, would make him the second son.
7. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 6.
8. Barnett A. Elzas, *Jews of South Carolina,* p. 184. For background and history of the Jews of Charleston, see Charles Reznikoff and Uriah Engelman, *The Jews of Charleston.*
9. Elzas, *Jews of South Carolina,* p. 185.
10. Elzas, *Leaves from Scrapbook,* Second Series, No. 6.
11. Pierce Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 24.
12. Recordbook Q, p. 183, August 16, 1817, and p. 20, March 28, 1817, Wilmington, N.C., courthouse.
13. For background, see *An Account of the Late Intended Insurrection,* (pamphlet, 1822), and contemporary issues of Charleston *Courier,* June, July, and August 1822.
14. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 14.
15. Article VI of "The Constitution of the Reformed Society," published in L. C. Moise, *Biography of Isaac Harby with an Account of the Reformed Society of Israelites of Charleston, S.C.* (Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1931), p. 62.
16. Reznikoff and Engelman, *The Jews of Charleston,* p. 106.
17. *Ibid.,* pp. 125–28.
18. Article III of "The Constitution of the Reformed Society" is published in Moise, *Isaac Harby,* p. 62. Judah P. Benjamin turned thirteen on August 11, 1824, and the first meeting of the Society was on November 21, 1824; its petitions were in December.
19. *Ibid.,* pp. 82–83, excerpt from prayerbook of the Reformed Society. The first prayerbook, in Harby's own handwriting, was issued on November 24, 1824.
20. Solomon Breibart, *The Rev. Mr. Gustavus Poznanski* (Charleston, 1979); For an interesting discussion of the psychology of Southern Jews in this period, see Abraham J. Peck, "That Other 'Peculiar Institu-

tion': Jews and Judaism in the Nineteenth Century South," *Modern Judaism* 7, No. 1 (February 7, 1987), 99–114.

21. Elzas, *Jews of South Carolina,* pp. 185–87.

CHAPTER 2
Yale: A Mysterious Departure

1. Matriculation book in Yale records; for further background, see Dan A. Oren, *Joining The Club: A History of Jews and Yale.*
2. Reports on the Course of Instruction at Yale College, 1830; also, Kingsley, *Yale College* (New York, 1879), p. 277.
3. Elzas, *Jews of South Carolina,* pp. 163, 185.
4. W. W. Hoppin in an interview after Benjamin's death in May 1884. Undated clipping from collection of John O'Brien, New Haven, Conn.
5. Letter from Simeon North to Brayton, January 30, 1827, in Library of Congress; see also "Judah P. Benjamin's Guardian," New York *Times,* February 26, 1883, quoting from an interview with North in Utica *Observer,* February 24, 1883.
6. Calliopean Society Records, Yale University, from Anson Phelps Stokes, *Memorials of Eminent Yale Men,* pp. 196–97.
7. New York *Independent,* January 31, 1861.
8. For additional analysis, see Dan A. Oren, "Why Did Judah P. Benjamin Leave Yale?" *A Jewish Journal at Yale,* Fall 1984, pp. 13–17.
9. New Orleans *Delta,* March 2, 1861.
10. Letters to James A. Bayard and T. F. Bayard, March 19, 1861, and April 5, 1861. Callery Collection, Historical Society of Delaware, and Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
11. Letter from Reverend Porter, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University; Chapter 1, located in Folder 10, Box 61, Day Family Papers, Ms. Group 175, YMAL.
12. Letter to President Jeremiah Day, Yale University Archives, noted in Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 29.
13. Letter from Simeon North to Brayton, January 30, 1827.
14. "Judah P. Benjamin's Guardian," New York *Times,* February 26, 1883, quoting from reminiscences by North in Utica *Observer,* February 24, 1883.
15. Stokes, *Memorials of Eminent Yale Men,* p. 263.
16. Oren, "Why Did Judah P. Benjamin Leave Yale?" *A Jewish Journal at Yale,* Fall 1984, p. 15.
17. Stokes, *Memorials of Eminent Yale Men.*

CHAPTER 3
New Orleans to Bellechasse: The Climb to U.S. Senator

1. For descriptions of New Orleans during this period, see Kendall, *History of New Orleans,* 3 vols. (Chicago, 1922); King, *New Orleans* (New

York, 1895); Rightor, *Standard History of New Orleans* (Chicago, 1900). For the Jewish Community, see Bertram Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans.* See also Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 32.

2. Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 42–44.
3. Elzas, *Jews of South Carolina.* The entry in the Charleston directory for 1831 is as follows: "Philip Benjamin, fruiterer, 16 St. Philip St." In the directory for 1840–41, "Philip Benjamin, fruits, 29 Beaufuinand," and in 1849, "Philip Benjamin, 9 Princess." Thus, he did not move to Beaufort with his wife. Elzas wrote in *Leaves of My Historical Scrapbook,* which appeared in the Charleston *Sunday News,* March 8, 1908, "Philip Benjamin appears, like his distinguished son, to have been unfortunate in his domestic relations—apparently living apart from his wife." For more on Judah's trips to visit his family, see Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
4. Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
5. Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 34, quoting "an anecdote from the late Dr. Davidson."
6. For the impact of yellow fever on various families and the New Orleans Jewish community generally, see Korn, *Early Jews of New Orleans,* pp. 53, 162, 172, 174, 176–77, 231, 239, 243, 319.
7. *Ibid.,* p. 188. Benjamin was married on February 12, 1833, after being admitted to the bar on December 16, 1832. St. Louis Cathedral, New Orleans, Marriage registers 5, act 286.
8. Records of St. Martin's houses, Civil District Courthouse. Sale of Lot on Bourbon Street to St. Martin recorded July 28, 1835.
9. Judah P. Benjamin and Thomas Slidell, *Digest of the Reported Decisions of the Superior Court of the Late Territory of New Orleans and the Supreme Court of the State of Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1834).
10. Burton Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause,* pp. 283–85, and Louis M. Sears, *John Slidell,* pp. 140–65. "Wire puller" phrase is by W. H. Russell in the London *Times,* December 10, 1861.
11. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 39.
12. Letter to Robert Meade, April 8, 1931, in Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library.
13. Meade interview with Mrs. G. G. Myrover, Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscript Department, University of Virginia Library.
14. Salomon de Rothchild, quoted in Jacob Marcus, *Memoirs of American Jews,* III: 104.
15. Dr. M. Wiener, writing in *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* (Berlin), VI (1842): 294–95. About his trip to the United States, see Korn, *Early Jews of New Orleans,* p. 244.
16. Korn, *Early Jews of New Orleans,* pp. 240–43.

17. For details of Benjamin's life as a sugar planter, see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 48–60.
18. Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 57–58.
19. Published first as articles in *DeBow's Review,* II (January 1848): 322–45, and V (April 1848): 357–64.
20. Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 62.
21. Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 57–59, and William P. Spratling, *Old Plantation Houses in Louisiana* (New York, 1927), pp. 157–58.
22. Cemetery record for the Hebrew Cemetery, Canal and N. Anthony Streets, New Orleans.
23. Whitaker, *Sketches of Life in Louisiana* (New Orleans, 1847), pp. 27–30.
24. *McCargo* v. *New Orleans Insurance Company,* 10 Robinson's Louisiana Reports, pp. 202–39, 279. There were six suits in all and three briefs. See *Louisiana Annual Reports,* Vol. X. For full text of Benjamin's "What is a slave?" brief, see *Lockett* v. *The Merchants Insurance Co.,* brief for defendants, p. 18, in Howard Memorial Library, New Orleans. Also, see Louis Gruss, "Judah P. Benjamin," *Louisiana Historical Quarterly,* October 1936, pp. 1023–26.
25. *Congressional Globe,* 1st Sess., 34th Cong., pp. 1092–98. See also Benjamin to Bayard, May 3, 1858, in Bayard Papers, Callery Collection, Historical Society of Delaware; Louisiana *Courier,* May 11, 1856; and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 102–5.
26. Proceedings and debates of the Convention of Louisiana, New Orleans, 1845, pp. 89, 131–34, 142, 156–57, 187–89, 220–25, 382, 906–11. See also Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 52–56, and newspaper accounts: Louisiana *Courier,* November 19, 20, 23, 1845, and *Picayune,* January 14, 1845.
27. Benjamin Perley Poore, *Reminiscences,* p. 409.
28. For the background of the trial, see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 179–84, and *Delta,* January 3, 10, 11, 14, 18, and 23, 1851.
29. *Delta,* January 24, 1851.
30. *Delta,* May 23, 1851.
31. *McDonogh* v. *Murdock,* 15 Howard, pp. 367–415; Meade, *Benjamin,* gives an especially detailed account, pp. 68–71. Account from Washington *Union* quoted in the *Picayune,* February 2, 1854. See also Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 139–40.
32. *Picayune,* January 7, 1852. For background, see James Luetze, *Judah P. Benjamin and the Tehuantepec Canal,* 1961, masters thesis, University of North Carolina.
33. The *Delta* covered Benjamin's railroad activities extensively: January 7 and 8, April 10 and 17, and June 8, 1852. For a detailed account, see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 119–36.
34. The *True Delta* remained opposed to him editorially, September 1851.

35. *Delta,* February 7, 1852.
36. Louis M. Sears, *John Slidell,* pp. 6–8. See also Willson, Beccles, *John Slidell and the Confederates in Paris;* Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 165; and Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause,* p. 87.
37. *Delta,* February 7, 1852.
38. Mortality records and city directories, Charleston, Lawley Mss., Chapter 3; Ernest Kruttschnitt to Lawley, September 27, 1898, Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.

CHAPTER 4
Jefferson Davis: The Education of a Lonely Protestant

1. Jefferson Davis, "Autobiographical Sketch," in H. M. Monroe, Jr., and J. T. McIntosh (eds.), *The Papers of Jefferson Davis* (Baton Rouge, 1971), 1: lxviii.
2. Varina H. Davis, *Jefferson Davis: A Memoir by His Wife,* I: 3–8, offers Davis's own account of his early childhood.
3. *Ibid.,* I: 4, 17.
4. For Davis's trip to Kentucky, his meeting with Andrew Jackson, and his years at St. Thomas, see *ibid.,* pp. 1–16.
5. For Davis's account of his trip home and his reactions to Mississippi as an adolescent, see *ibid.,* pp. 16–21.
6. The five other members of the U.S. Senate were David Bishop of Missouri, Edward Hannegan of Louisiana, George Jones of Iowa, S. W. Jones of Louisiana, and Joseph R. Underwood of Kentucky. *Ibid.,* pp. 22–31. See also, John D. Wright, Jr., *Transylvania: Tutor to the West* (Lexington, 1975), and M. N. Wagers, *The Education of a Gentleman: Jefferson Davis at Transylvania 1821–1824* (Lexington, 1943).
7. Personal papers, Samuel E. Davis, Accession no. 26130, Virginia State Library. Reported in Monroe and McIntosh (eds.), *Papers of Jefferson Davis,* 1: 4–5.
8. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir* I: 32.
9. Jefferson Davis Papers, Frances Carrick Thomas Library, Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky, reported in Monroe and McIntosh, *Papers of Jefferson Davis,* 1: 11.

CHAPTER 5
Melancholy War Hero

1. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 34, reported in Monroe and McIntosh, *Papers of Jefferson Davis,* 1: lxxviii.
2. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 35, and Monroe and McIntosh, *Papers of Jefferson Davis,* 1: lxxvix.
3. Monroe and McIntosh, *Papers of Jefferson Davis,* 1: 14–15.

4. *Ibid.,* p. 105.
5. L. Lasswell, "Jefferson Davis Ponders His Future, 1829," *Journal of Southern History,* XLI (November 1975): 516–22. See also, Clement Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* p. 15.
6. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir* I: 475, and Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* p. 37.
7. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 191–92.
8. Hudson Strode, *Jefferson Davis: Private Letters 1823–1889,* pp. 19–38. Six of Davis's letters of courtship were saved by Varina.
9. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 206.
10. *Ibid.,* I: 352.
11. *Ibid.,* I: 358.
12. *Ibid.,* I: 359.
13. *Ibid.,* I: 288.
14. Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* pp. 33–46.
15. Janet S. Hermann, *The Pursuit of the Dream,* pp. 3–15. For a description of the life of slaves on the Davis plantations in the antebellum period, see pp. 3–37.
16. *Ibid.,* p. 12.
17. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 179.
18. *Ibid.,* I: 178.
19. *Ibid.,* I: 479–80.

CHAPTER 6
Washington: A Senate Duel

1. Dunbar Rowland (ed.), *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist,* pp. 177–79.
2. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
3. Charles Warren, *The Supreme Court in United States History* (Boston, 1924), 2: 516–19, and New York *Times,* February 14–15, 1853. For background, see Carl Swisher, *History of the Supreme Court of the United States: The Taney Period 1836–64* (New York, 1974), pp. 240–44. See also London *Times,* May 9, 1884.
4. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 535.
5. John W. Daniel (ed.), *Life and Reminiscences of Jefferson Davis by Distinguished Men of His Time* (Baltimore, 1890), p. 32.
6. Stanley L. Falk, "Solder-Technologist: Major Alfred Mordecai and the Beginnings of Science in the United States Army," Ph.D. dissertation, Georgetown University, 1959, pp. 426–82.
7. *Ibid.,* pp. 546–93.

8. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 535.
9. Hudson Strode, *Jefferson Davis,* I: 274.
10. Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 149–50, and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 103–4.
11. Quoted in the Charleston *Courier,* May 11, 1856.
12. From a speech to the Senate, July 12, 1848, *Congressional Globe,* 30th Cong., 1st sess., Appendix, p. 907–14. Eaton calls this speech his first important speech in the Senate. Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* pp. 68–69.
13. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 361.
14. Strode, *Jefferson Davis: Private Letters, 1832–1889* (New York, 1906), p. 79.
15. Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* p. 78. As a Congressman in 1847, Eaton noted he was "handicapped by bad health. He had severe earaches and inflamed, red eyes." *Ibid.,* p. 52.
16. Rowland, *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist,* III: 339–60, speech to Mississippi Legislature, November 16, 1858.
17. Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* p. 104.
18. *Ibid.,* p. 102, and Benjamin letter to James Robb, March 18, 1858, James Robb Papers, The Historic New Orleans Collection.
19. W. B. Hesseltine (ed.), *Three Against Lincoln: Murat Halstead Reports the Caucuses of 1860,* pp. 119–21. Murat Halstead, editor of the Cincinnati *Commercial,* attended the Baltimore convention of the Democratic Party of 1860 and described Davis in detail.
20. For a full text of this noted speech by Benjamin, see *Congressional Globe,* 34th Cong., 1st and 2d sess., pp. 1092–98. Excerpts in Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 100–105.
21. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 535.
24. Isaac M. Wise, *Reminiscences,* pp. 184–87. For an article analyzing Wise's statements and on Benjamin's Jewishness in general, see Bertram Korn, "Judah P. Benjamin as a Jew," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society,* No. XXXVIII, Pt. 3 (March 1949), pp. 153–71. Reprinted in Bertram Korn, *Eventful Years and Experiences: Studies in Nineteenth Century American Jewish History,* pp. 79–97.
25. *Occident,* I, no. 4 (July 1843): 216.
26. *Congressional Globe,* 33d Cong., 1st sess., XXVIII, part 2: 1144. See also Korn, "Judah P. Benjamin as a Jew," pp. 91–93.
27. George G. Vest, "A Senator from Two Republics: Judah P. Benjamin," *Saturday Evening Post,* October 3, 1903.
28. *True Delta,* May 2, 1959.

29. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 120. Meade personally investigated the documents in the box.
30. *United States* v. *Castillero,* U.S. District Court, Northern District of California, no. 420.
31. *Ibid.,* New Almaden transcript of the record, 4 vols., San Francisco 1859–61, and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 131–32.
32. Herbert T. Ezekiel and Gaston Lichtenstein, *The History of the Jews of Richmond from 1769–1917,* p. 169.
33. Korn, "Judah P. Benjamin as a Jew."
34. *Ibid.*
35. See Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 143–44, and *True Delta,* January 6 and 7 and November 15, 1855.
36. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 91. See also *True Delta,* March 20, 1853, and William H. Russell, *My Diary, North and South,* p. 252.
37. *True Delta,* February 2, 1859.
38. Pickett Papers, Library of Congress (Meade suggests the letter may have been left in Benjamin's trunks when he escaped in 1865); mentioned in *Allgemeine Zeitung des Judentums* (Berlin), XXII: 553.
39. Gruss, *Judah P. Benjamin,* p. 937. See Max J. Kohler, *Judah P. Benjamin: Statesman,* pp. 83–84, citing *Senate Debates,* and Korn, "Judah P. Benjamin as a Jew," p. 97. Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 434, doubts the authenticity of the exchange. Senator George Vest of Missouri vouched for the story though attributing the taunt to someone else. *Saturday Evening Post,* October 3, 1903.
40. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
41. *Congressional Globe,* 35th Cong., 1st sess., June 8, 1858, p. 2775–82; Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 177–79; and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 115–17.
42. Notes of Tom Bayard in Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University. See also Bayard Papers, Callery Collection, Historical Society of Delaware.
43. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
44. *True Delta,* January 15 and 26, 1859.
45. For details of the Houmas affair, see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 166–70; Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 117–19; and Sears, *John Slidell,* pp. 164–67.
46. *True Delta,* March 15, 1859, quoting from the St. Louis *Republican.*
47. *Congressional Globe,* 36th Cong., 1st sess., May 29, 1860, p. 2433.
48. Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 166–67, and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 118–19.
49. *Delta,* January 26, 1859.
50. Edwin A. Alderman and Armistead Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry* (New York and London, 1911), pp. 402–3.

51. Reverdy Johnson during argument of *U.S.* v. *Castillero* in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California, No. 4220. See *Transcript of the Record,* 4 vols., San Francisco, 1859–61.
52. Vest, *Saturday Evening Post,* October 3, 1903.
53. Mrs. Virginia Clay-Clopton (Mrs. Clement Clay), *A Belle of the Fifties,* pp. 51–52.
54. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
55. Meade interview with the daughter of Senator Yulee, in Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library. Meade examined some of the objects bought at auction, which were still in the possession of the Yulee family.
56. *Ibid.*
57. *Congressional Globe,* 36th Cong., 1st sess., pp. 2239–41. Benjamin's speech made such an eloquent case against Douglas that it was reprinted by the Democratic National Committee and used as a campaign document for Breckinridge, the presidential candidate of Southern Democrats. A copy of the pamphlet is in the Library of Congress.
58. *Congressional Globe,* 36th Cong., 1st sess., p. 2309.
59. Lawley Mss., in Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University Library.
60. Pamphlet copy of speech in New York Public Library. See also California News in New York *Times,* November 28, 1860.
61. *Picayune,* December 16, 1860.
62. *Personal Reminiscences of Jefferson Davis,* ms. in Confederate Memorial Hall, New Orleans.
63. *Congressional Globe,* 36th Cong., 2d sess., pp. 212–17.
64. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
65. *Ibid.*
66. Sir George Cornewall Lewis to Lord Sherbrooke, in Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 211. See also Alderman and Gordon, *J. L. M. Curry,* p. 401.
67. Quoted in *The Israelite,* VII, no. 30 (January 25, 1861): 238.
68. Quoted in *The Israelite,* VII, no. 38 (March 22, 1861): 301.
69. *Congressional Globe,* 36th Cong., 2d sess., p. 727 *et seq.*
70. Bragg diary, February 4, 1861.
71. C. F. Adams, *Charles Francis Adams 1835–1915: An Autobiography,* pp. 94–95.
72. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* I: 696–98.

CHAPTER 7

From Attorney General to Secretary of War: The Unprepared Warrior

1. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 12.
2. *Ibid.,* II: 37–38.

3. Jefferson Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederate Government,* I: 242.
4. Leroy Walker, personal conversation with Pierce Butler, reported in Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 234.
5. Clay-Clopton, *A Belle of the Fifties,* p. 158.
6. J. M. Morgan, *Recollections of a Rebel Reefer* (Boston, 1917), p. 36.
7. C. Vann Woodward (ed.), *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* p. 217.
8. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
9. J. B. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary at the Confederate States Capital,* I: 71.
10. *Ibid.,* I: 65.
11. Official Records, Series I, II: 986.
12. Jones, *Diary,* I: 65.
13. Benjamin to Walker, November 9, 1861, Confederate War Department *Letterbook,* National Archives.
14. New Orleans *Courier,* October 5, 1861.
15. Official records, Series IV, I: 760.
16. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
17. Benjamin to Beauregard, October 17, 1861, Official Records, Series I, V: 919.
18. Beauregard to Davis, October 20, 1861, Official Records, Series I, V: 920.
19. Davis to Beauregard, October 25, 1861, Official Records, Series I, V: 920.
20. Benjamin to Beauregard, October 17, 1861, Official Records, Series I, V: 904.
21. Beauregard to Davis, November 5, 1861, Official Records, Series I, V: 945.
22. Davis to Beauregard, November 10, 1861, Official Records, Series I, V: 945.
23. Jones, *Diary,* I: 88.
24. Benjamin to Beauregard, April 16, 1861, Wisdom Collection, Tulane University.
25. Brown to Benjamin, November 11, 1861, and Benjamin to Brown, November 12, 1861, Confederate Records, II: 142–43.
26. Brown to Benjamin, November 13, 1861, and Benjamin to Brown, November 13, 1861. *Ibid.,* II: 143–44.
27. Moore to Benjamin, September 29, 1861, and Benjamin to Moore, September 30, 1861, Official Records, Series II, I, pt. 4: 706–7.

28. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
29. Biographers have all described, at various points in his life, the gaunt look of Davis and the oddness of his gaze from his blind left eye. See William E. Dodd, *Jefferson Davis;* Strode, *Jefferson Davis,* 3 vols.; Eaton, *Jefferson Davis;* Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative,* 3 vols.
30. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
31. *Ibid.*
32. Letters to Joel Addison Hayes, discovered in 1978, Memphis State University Library, Mississippi Valley Collection, gift of the Davis Family Association.
33. Jefferson Davis to Addison Hayes, Jr., March 28, 1880, *ibid.*
34. Davis to Addison Hayes, Jr., November 26, 1880, *ibid.*
35. *Ibid.*
36. Davis to Minor Merriwether, December 17, 1882, *ibid.*
37. Davis to Senators and Representatives of Mississippi State legislature, February 15, 1886, *ibid.*
38. Davis to Mrs. Merriwether, January 5, 1876, *ibid.*
39. Benjamin to Anderson & Co., March 12, 1862, Letters Sent, Secretary of War, Record Group 109, NA. See Charles B. Dew, *Ironmaker to the Confederacy: Joseph R. Anderson and the Tredegar Iron Works,* p. 181.
40. Official Records, Series 1, VII: 701.
41. *Ibid.,* I: 848.
42. New York *Tribune* April 30, 1864. See *The Papers of Andrew Johnson,* 6 (1862–64): 678–79.
43. W. G. Brownlow, *Sketches of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of Secession,* p. 386.
44. Quoted in *The Israelite,* VI, no. 36 (March 9, 1860): 283. See Bertram Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* p. 167.
45. Quoted in *The Israelite,* IX, no. 22 (December 5, 1862): 172, and (December 12, 1862): 180. See Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* p. 167.
46. Quoted in *Messenger,* XI, no. 14, (April 11, 1862): 111; see Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* p. 171.

CHAPTER 8

The First Lady and the Secretary of State: A Strategic Friendship

1. T. C. De Leon, *Belles, Beaux, and Brains of the 60's,* pp. 91–92.
2. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.

3. A number of books contain or have collected anecdotes, stories, and quotations about or descriptions of the life of Varina Howell Davis. Her own book, *Jefferson Davis: A Memoir by His Wife,* 2 vols., provides many insights into her role as First Lady. One of her best friends was Mary Boykin Chesnut, whose diary contains many references to conversations, parties, and receptions with Varina. See Woodward (ed.), *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* and a biography by Ishbel Ross, *First Lady of the South: The Life of Mrs. Jefferson Davis.*
4. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, April 8, 1898.
5. Woodward (ed.), *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* p. 136.
6. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Official Records, Series 1, V: 1040–59. See also Frederick Morton, *The Story of Winchester* (Strasburg, Va., 1925); Lenoir Chambers, *Stonewall Jackson,* 2 vols. (New York, 1959); Burke Davis, *They Called Him Stonewall: A Life of Lt. General T. J. Jackson, C.S.A.* (New York, 1954); G. F. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War,* 2 vols. (New York, 1898); Frank Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall;* and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 213–18.
9. Official Records, Series 1, V: 1051–53.
10. Letters from Johnston, Letcher, and Bennett in the personal papers of Jackson's grandson, General T. J. J. Christian, examined by Meade. See Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 218, and Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library.
11. Official Records Series 1, V: 1057–58.
12. Alexander Hunter, *Johnny Reb and Billy Yank* (New York, 1905), p. 566.
13. T. R. R. Cobb letter to his wife, January 15, 1862, T. R. R. Cobb Collection, Hargrett Rare Book and Manuscript Library, University of Georgia Libraries.
14. Benjamin letter to Jackson, October 21, 1861, T. J. Jackson Papers, Virginia Historical Society; for background see Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall,* pp. 174–75.
15. Official Records, Series 1, IX: 132, 135–36. Original letter in author's personal collection.
16. For a description of the battle and the concern of Wise, see Foote, *Civil War,* I: 225–32.
17. Notes in Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library. Meade reported that Herbert Ezekiel, the Richmond historian, took notes at the occasion. For full text of the letter, see Frederic Maurice (ed.), *An Aide-de-Camp of Lee: Papers of Charles Marshall* (Boston, 1927), pp. 14–18; reprinted in Henry S. Commager, *The Blue and the Gray,* pp. 97–99.

18. For description of the funeral, see Richmond *Dispatch* February 15 and 17, 1862, and *Examiner,* February 17, 1862.
19. Notes from Meade's personal interview, Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia.
20. John S. Wise, *The End of An Era,* pp. 176–78, 401–2.
21. For the hearings, see Official Records, Series 1, IX: 183–90.
22. For more from Foote on Benjamin's fitness for office and Foote's campaign to remove him, see Henry S. Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences,* pp. 232–37, and *idem, War of the Rebellion,* pp. 356–57.
23. Quoted in Ezekiel and Lichtenstein, *The Jews of Richmond,* p. 167.
24. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 183.
25. Constance Cary Harrison, "A Virginia Girl in the First Year of the War," *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine,* XXX (August 1865): p. 610. See also her book, a compilation of articles, *Recollections Grave and Gray.*
26. Harrison, "A Virginia Girl," p. 182.
27. *Ibid.*
28. J. B. Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Confederacy,* I: 183–88.
29. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 183. See also Foote, *Civil War,* I: 217–19.
30. Dunbar Rowland (ed.), *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers, and Speeches,* III: 198–203.
31. *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* VII: 276.
32. For a brief history of the term, see *Butterworth's Medical Dictionary,* 2d ed. (1978), p. 554.
33. Letters to Joel Addison Hayes discovered in 1978, Memphis State University Library, Mississippi Valley Collection, gift of the Davis Family Association.
34. Speech to Mississippi Legislature, November 16, 1858, and Rowland, *Davis,* III: 339–60.
35. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
36. *Ibid.*
37. Benjamin to Mason, February 8, 1871, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress. See Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 395.
38. Woodward, *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* p. 498.
39. *Ibid.,* p. 288.
40. *Ibid.,* p. 233.

41. Edward A. Pollard, *Life of Jefferson Davis with a Secret History of the Southern Confederacy* (Philadelphia, 1869), p. 151.
42. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
43. Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences,* pp. 233–34.
44. Sallie Ann Brock Putnam, *Richmond During the War: Four Years of Personal Observation,* p. 99.
45. Richmond *Examiner,* March 20, 1862.
46. R. T. Thayer, *The Life of John Hay* (Boston and New York, 1915), I: 235–36.

CHAPTER 9
Richmond: The Stage for Intrigue

1. For various descriptions, both primary and secondary, of Richmond over the course of the war, see Emory Thomas, *The Confederate State of Richmond: A Biography of the Capital;* Samuel Mordecai, *Richmond in Bygone Days* (Richmond, 1946); W. A. Christian, *Richmond: Her Past and Present* (Richmond, 1912); Mary N. Standard, *Richmond: Its People and Its Story* (Philadelphia, 1923); Louis H. Manarin (ed.), *Richmond at War: The Minutes of the City Council 1861–1865;* and Alfred Hoyt Bill, *The Beleaguered City.*
2. Edmund Kirke, "Our Visit to Richmond," *Atlantic Monthly,* September 1864; see also Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 245.
3. For a description of Tredegar and its inner workings, see Frank Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords: Josiah Gorgas and Conferate Ordnance* (Austin, 1952), and Charles B. Dew, *Ironmaker to the Conferacy: Joseph R. Anderson and the Tredegar Iron Works.*
4. Douglas S. Freeman, *R. E. Lee: A Biography,* II: 22.
5. T. J. Jackson to Mary Ann Jackson, April 7, 1862, in *Life and Letters of General Thomas J. Jackson* (New York, 1891), p. 248.
6. Butler's Order No. 28, text in *Rebellion Record,* Vol. V, Doc. 136; see also Hamilton Basso, *Beauregard: The Great Creole,* p. 235.
7. See Foote, *Civil War,* I: 534.
8. James Parton, *History of the Administration of the Department of the Gulf in the Year 1862* (New York, 1864), pp. 317–19. For a recounting of Butler's anti-Semitism, see Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (New York, 1970), pp. 164–65.
9. Benjamin F. Butler, *Autobiography and Personal Reminiscences of Major General Benjamin F. Butler,* p. 510.
10. Quoted in *Messenger,* XV, no. 8 (February 26, 1864): 60. For Lincoln's response, see Simon Wolf, *The Presidents I Have Known from 1860 to 1918* (Washington, 1918), pp. 8–9.

11. Butler, *Autobiography,* p. 514.
12. Quoted in *Israelite,* IX, no. 33 (February 20, 1863): 258. See also Korn, *American Jewry,* p. 170.
13. A. J. L. Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States* p. 166.
14. Benjamin to Slidell, July 19, 1862, Official Records, Series 2, III: 462–63.
15. Harrison, *Recollections Grave and Gray,* pp. 79–80.
16. Author's visit, June 1982.
17. Richmond *Examiner,* May 29, 1862.
18. Winfield Scott to Lee, April 18, 1861. For Lee's interview with Scott and the background of Lee's decision, see Freeman, *R. E. Lee,* I: 432–43, 636.
19. For insights into Lee's early career and reputation, see Freeman, *R. E. Lee.*
20. Lee to his wife, December 27, 1856. Full letter quoting Lee's views on slavery in A. L. Long and M. J. Wright (eds.), *Memoirs of Robert E. Lee* (New York, 1887), pp. 82–84.
21. Edmund Kirke, "Our Visit to Richmond," *Atlantic Monthly,* September 1864.
22. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Slidell to Secretary of State Hunter, March 10, 1862. Official Record Series 2, III: 356. For background, see Beccles, Willson, *John Slidell and the Confederates in Paris: 1862–1865.*
25. Official Records, Series 2, III: 387.
26. Mercier to Thouvenal, Washington, April 28, 1862 (received May 14, 1862), AMAE, CP, E-U, 127: 50–79, no. 97, and May 6, 1862 (received May 19, 1862), *Ibid.,* 85–105, no. 98.
27. T. C. De Leon, *Four Years in Rebel Capitals,* p. 192.
28. Lee to Stuart, June 11, 1862, Official Records, Series 2, III, pt. 3: 590–91. See Douglas S. Freeman, *Lee's Lieutenants,* I: 278. For eyewitness reports, see "Stuart's Ride Around McClellan," *Battles and Leaders of the Civil War,* II: 275.
29. Lee to Jackson, June 11, 1862, Official Records, Series I, VII, pt. 3: 914.
30. From the editor of the New York *Tribune,* reprinting a comment from the Richmond *Examiner,* quoted in Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* p. 177.
31. John H. Reagan, *Memoirs,* p. 163.
32. Foote, *Civil War,* I: 482.

33. *Ibid.,* I: 519.
34. Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 336–38. Butler heard this story from Benjamin's niece, Leah Popham.
35. Richmond *Dispatch,* April 1, 1861. See Albert Stoutamire, *Music of the Old South* (Rutherford, N.J.: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1972), p. 197.

CHAPTER 10
Lee Invades the North: Enticing France and Britain

1. Official Records, Series 1, XII, pt. 3: 473–74.
2. Lee to Davis, September 3, 1862, Official Records, Series 19, II: 591. See Foote, *The Civil War,* I: 662.
3. Slidell to Benjamin, July 25, 1862, Official Records, Navy, Series 2, III: 484–86.
4. *Ibid.* See also Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause,* pp. 316–18, and Frank L. Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy,* pp. 310–13.
5. Official Records, Navy, Series 2, III: 484–86.
6. London *Times,* January 11, 1862.
7. W. H. Russell in London *Times,* December 10, 1861. See Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause,* pp. 234–35.
8. Mason to Benjamin, June 23, 1862, James Mason Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscripts Division; Official Records, Navy, Series 2, III: 446, 503–4.
9. Lee to Davis, Official Records, Series 19, II: 600. For background and details of Lee's thinking, see Freeman, *R. E. Lee,* II: 358.
10. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
11. McClellan to Lincoln, August 4, 1863, Official Records, series 19, I: 26; order quoted, p. 36. See Foote, *The Civil War,* I: 673. For detailed accounts, see Foote, *The Civil War,* I: 681–702, and Freeman, *R. E. Lee,* II: 367–414.
12. *Battles and Leaders,* II: 611.
13. For the full text of the Emancipation Proclamation, which Lincoln published on September 22, 1862, see Official Records, XXIV, pt. 3: 567, and New York *Times,* September 23, 1862.
14. Richmond *Examiner,* September 25, 1862. The *Examiner* published the full text on September 29, 1862; on January 7, 1863, it called the proclamation "the most startling political crime in American history."
15. Davis message to the Confederate Congress, January 12, 1863, in Richardson (ed.), *Messages and Papers of the Confederacy,* I: 291.

16. Governor John A. Andrew, letter to Albert Gallatin Brown, September 22, 1862. See A. G. Brown, *Sketch of the Official Life of John A. Andrew* (New York, 1868) pp. 74–75.
17. For the story of Belle Boyd, see her own story written in 1905, *Belle Boyd: In Camp and Prison,* reissued under the editorship of Curtis Davis (South Brunswick, N.J., 1968), and Louise A. Sigaud, *Belle Boyd, Confederate Spy* (Richmond, 1943).
18. Slidell to Benjamin, September 5, 1862, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress; Official Records, Series 2, III: 568–72.
19. For detailed analysis of the Erlanger loan, see Judith F. Gentry, "A Confederate Success in Europe: The Erlanger Loan, 1862," *Journal of Southern History,* XXXVI (1970): 157–88, and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 269–70.
20. *Israelite,* X, No. 44 (April 29, 1864): 248. See also Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* p. 160.
21. London *Times* October 8, 1862, citing William E. Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer, in banquet speech at Newcastle, England, October 7, 1862. Also quoted in Crook, *North Carolina and the Powers* (New York, 1974), pp. 227–28.
22. Memorandum of an interview of Slidell with the Emperor at St. Cloud on Tuesday, October 28, 1862; enclosure B in letter from Slidell to Benjamin, October 28, 1862, Official Records, Navy, Series 2, III: 574–78. See also L. M. Case, and W. F. Spencer, *The United States and France: Civil War Diplomacy,* pp. 347–403.
23. Slidell to Benjamin, August 24, 1862, Official Records, Navy, Series 2, III: 520–21.
24. Richmond *Examiner,* 1863, and Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences,* p. 237.
25. Woodward (ed.), *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* p. 542.

CHAPTER 11
Anti-Semitism and the Jews of Richmond

1. For histories of the Richmond Jewish community, see Ezekiel and Lichtenstein, *History of the Jews in Richmond from 1789–1917,* and Myron Berman, *Richmond's Jewry 1769–1976.* The Common Hall was the forerunner of the city council.
2. Woodward, *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* p. 547.
3. Jones, *Diary,* I: 213.
4. *Southern Punch,* October 17, 1863.
5. Richmond *Examiner,* December 20, 1862.
6. The *Occident,* 18 (1861): 260.
7. Phoebe Yates Pember, *A Southern Woman's Story,* p. 168.

8. Foote in debate in Confederate House of Representatives, January 14, 1863, *Southern Historical Society Papers,* n.s. (Richmond, 1930), IX: 122; reported in Richmond *Examiner,* January 15, 1863.
9. *Ibid.*
10. *Ibid.*
11. Richmond *Examiner,* December 17, 1863.
12. Nicholas Davis of Alabama, quoted in *Israelite,* IX, no. 20 (November 16, 1860): 159, quoting from the Florence, Alabama, *Gazette;* see Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* p. 158.
13. De Leon, *Belles, Beaux and Brains of the 60's,* pp. 91–93.
14. *Southern Punch,* October 10, 1863. See also Thomas, *The Confederate State of Richmond,* p. 151.
15. Sermon by Rabbi Michelbacher, delivered on May 27, 1863, reprinted in *Jewish Record,* II, no. 13 (June 5, 1863): 1.
16. Richmond *Sentinel,* reprinted in *ibid.* See also Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* pp. 180–81.
17. Ezekiel and Lichtenstein, *The History of the Jews of Richmond from 1769–1917,* p. 170.
18. Lee to Michelbacher, August 29, 1861, Virginia State Library, Richmond; photograph of letter in Berman, *Richmond Jewry,* p. 192.
19. General Order No. 11, December 17, 1862, Official Records, Series 1, XVII, pt. 2: 424.
20. Major General W. T. Sherman to Colonel John A. Rawlins, July 30, 1862, Official Records, Series 1, XVII, pt. 2: 140–41.
21. Cincinnati *Daily Times,* January 17, 1863.
22. Dana to Stanton, Official Records, Series 1, LII, pt. 1: 331.
23. Letters from J. Russell Jones, United States Marshal at Chicago, to Congressman Elihu B. Washburne, January 28 and February 15, 1863, in Elihu B. Washburne Papers, Library of Congress.
24. U. S. Grant to H. P. Walcott, Assistant Secretary of War, Washington, December 17, 1862, Official Records, Series 1, XVII, pt. 2: 421–22.
25. *Israelite,* XV, no. 22 (December 4, 1868): 4.
26. Quoted in *Israelite,* VIII, no. 35 (February 28, 1862): 278.
27. The details of the meeting were described in *Israelite,* IX, no. 28 (January 16, 1863): 218.
28. Halleck to Grant, January 21, 1863, Official Records, Series 1, XXIV, pt. 1: 9.

CHAPTER 12

Christmas in the White House: Growing Bonds of Trust

1. Davis to Mississippi State Legislature, December 26, 1862, Mississippi State Archives, Jackson.

2. *Ibid.*
3. Varina H. Davis, "Last Christmas in the White House of the Confederacy," New York *Sunday World,* December 13, 1896.
4. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
5. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, April 4, 1897.
6. Quoted in Richmond *Enquirer,* January 7, 1863.
7. Russell, *My Diary North and South,* p. 252.
8. Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States,* p. 210.
9. Richmond *Enquirer,* January 3, 1863.
10. Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences,* p. 236.
11. Woodward, *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* p. 548.
12. Memorandum by Lord James of Hereford in Lawley papers, Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University. See also Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 365.
13. For background on the Erlanger loan, see Judith Fenner Gentry, "A Confederate Success in Europe: The Erlanger Loan," *Journal of Southern History,* XXXVI (1970): 157–188, and Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause,* pp. 216–32.
14. Quoted in Hendrick, *Statesmen of the Lost Cause,* p. 256.
15. Benjamin to Slidell, March 24, 1863, Official Records, Series 2, II: 724.

CHAPTER 13
Fateful Defeats: Stonewall's Funeral and the Battle of Gettysburg

1. Message to the Confederate Congress; details reported in Richmond *Examiner* January 15, 1863. For text, see Rowland (ed.), *Davis,* V: 493; for background, including reactions in the South, see Foote, *Civil War,* I: 704–10.
2. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 375–76; see also Mrs. Roger Pryor, *Reminiscences of Peace and War,* pp. 251–59, and Emory Thomas, "The Richmond Bread Riot of 1863," *Virginia Cavalcade,* XVIII (Summer 1868): 41–47.
3. Richmond *Examiner,* January 6, 1862.
4. Edward Younger (ed.), *Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean,* p. 55.
5. *Ibid.,* p. 93.
6. *Ibid.,* p. 161.
7. For background on the battle of Chancellorsville and Jackson's death, see R. U. Jackson and C. C. Buel (eds.), *Battles and Leaders,* III: 172–223, and Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall,* pp. 455–94.

8. Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States,* pp. 166–67.
9. For descriptions of Jackson's last hours and his funeral, see Mrs. Mary Jackson, *Memoirs of Stonewall Jackson* (Louisville, 1895), pp. 450–57; *Whig,* May 12, 13, and 14, 1863; Thomas, *The Confederate State of Richmond,* pp. 123–25; De Leon, *Four Years in Rebel Capitals,* pp. 251–52; and Harrison, *Recollections Grave and Gray,* p. 138. For the battle and its aftermath, see Vandiver, *Mighty Stonewall,* pp. 455–94.
10. Foote, *Civil War,* II: 453–54.
11. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 392.
12. Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States* (New York: 1864), p. 167.
13. *Ibid.,* p. 169.
14. Benjamin to Benjamin H. Micou, Tallassee, Alabama, August 18, 1863, in Pickett Papers. See Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 289–90, and notes about Micou from personal conversations with Micou's relatives, Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library.
15. Richmond *Enquirer,* May 7, 1863.
16. Benjamin to James Spence, January 11, 1864, in Pickett Papers. See Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 291.
17. Benjamin to Mason, August 24, 1863, Official Records, Series 2, III: 852.
18. Slidell to Mason, July 17, 1864, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
19. Official Records, Series 2, III: 853–54.
20. New York *Daily Tribune,* May 25, 1884.
21. Davis to Lee, August 12 or 13, 1863, and Rowland (ed.), *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist: His Letters, Papers and Speeches,* V: 586–89.
22. Benjamin to Davis, October 8, 1863, Official Records, Series 2, III: 928–36.
23. *Ibid.*
24. Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences,* pp. 148–50.

CHAPTER 14
Tragedy at Home

1. Foote in Confederate Congress, January 6, 1864, Southern Historical Society Papers, V. 50, December 1953, p. 209.
2. Pickett Papers, Library of Congress. See Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 281.
3. Judith B. McGuire, *Diary of a Southern Refugee During the War,* p. 326.

4. Text of Cleburne Memorial in Official Records, Series 1, LII, pt. 2: 586–92.
5. *Ibid.* See also Robert F. Durden, *The Gray and the Black: The Confederate Debate on Emancipation,* pp. 53–63.
6. Seddon to Johnston, January 29, 1864, Official Records, Series 1, Vol. LII, pt. 2.
7. Brigadier General Patton Anderson to Lieutenant General Leonidas Polk, January 14, 1864, Official Records, Series 1, LII, pt. 2: 598–99.
8. Sherman letter to the Mayor and City Council of Atlanta, September 12, 1864. See William T. Sherman, *Memoirs,* II: 126.
9. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 496.
10. Woodward, *Mary Boykin Chesnut's Civil War,* pp. 600–601.
11. Harrison, *Recollections Grave and Gray,* p. 67.
12. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
13. Harrison, *Recollections Grave and Gray,* p. 129.
14. See Bill, *The Beleaguered City,* p. 189.
15. For background on Lydia Johnston's enmity for Mrs. Davis, see Ross, *First Lady of the South,* p. 94.
16. Washington *Daily Morning Chronicle,* April 10, 1863.
17. See Ross, *First Lady of the Confederacy,* p. 130.
18. Fitzhugh Lee, *General Lee,* p. 324.
19. Official Records, Series 2, III: 174.
20. Benjamin to Slidell, *ibid.,* III: 1105–6.

CHAPTER 15
The Confederate Emancipation Proclamation

1. Grant to Meade, Spring 1864, in Foote, *The Civil War,* III: 491.
2. *Ibid.,* p. 318.
3. John Hay, *Lincoln and the Civil War in the Diaries and Letters of John Hay,* selected by Tyler Dennet (New York, 1972, reprint of 1939 ed.), p. 179.
4. John W. Thomason, *Jeb Stuart* (New York, 1930), pp. 498–501. See also Emory Thomas, *Bold Dragoon: The Life of J. E. B. Stuart.*
5. *Congressional Globe,* 37th Cong. 1st sess., p. 295. See also speech in support of Presidential War Program, July 27, 1861, *Papers of Andrew Johnson,* IV: 634.
6. Herman Moos to Governor Andrew Johnson, September 16, 1864, *Papers of Andrew Johnson,* VII (1864–65): 168–69.
7. Hudson *Gazette,* quoted in *The Jewish Record,* V, no. 7 (November 11, 1864): 2.
8. Benjamin to Davis, February 15, 1879, original letter in collection of Stephen B. Lemann, New Orleans.

9. See James D. Horan, *Confederate Agent,* pp. 151–62, 255–59, and John Bakeless, *Spies of the Confederacy* (Philadelphia, 1970).
10. See Foote, *Civil War,* III: 586–87.
11. For detailed description of the St. Albans raid and the trials, see Horan, *Confederate Agent*, pp. 166–80.
12. Sherman to Oliver O. Howard, August 10, 1864. For details of the battle of Atlanta, see Foote, *Civil War,* 3: 472–92 and 520–30.
13. See Samuel Carter III, *Siege of Atlanta 1864* (New York, 1973).
14. Sherman message to Grant, October 9, 1864, quoted in Sherman, *Memoirs,* II: 153.
15. For text of Field Order no. 120, November 9, 1864, see Sherman, *Memoirs,* II: 175.
16. Foote, *Civil War,* III: 651.
17. L. Q. Washington to Lawley, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University. See Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 347–48.
18. Lee to Andrew Hunter, January 11, 1865, Official Records, Series 4, III: 1012–13.
19. Davis speech to Congress November 7, 1864, in Richardson (ed.), *A Compilation of Messages and Papers of the Confederacy,* I: 482–86.
20. *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 16
The Speech to Free the Slaves

1. Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* p. 259.
2. Richmond *Examiner,* January 6, 1865.
3. Francis Blair Papers, Library of Congress.
4. Lincoln letter to Blair, January 18, 1865, and Davis reply in letter to Hunter *et al.,* January 28, 1865, Official Records, Series 2, III: 190–91. For details of Hampton Roads, see E. C. Kirkland, *The Peacemakers of 1864* (New York, 1927), pp. 222–58.
5. Benjamin to Frederick Porcher, December 21, 1864, Official Records, Series 4, III: 959–60.
6. Memorandum by W. W. Henry of a conversation with Kenner, sent March 24, 1899, in *William and Mary College Quarterly,* Series I, vol. XXV (July 1916).
7. Mason, quoting Lord Donoughmore, to Benjamin, March 26, 1865. See Eaton, *Davis,* p. 172.
8. Robert E. Lee to Virginia State Senator Andrew Hunter, January 11, 1865, Official Records, Series 4, III: 1012–13.
9. Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 351.

10. Richmond *Examiner,* February 24, 1863.
11. Richmond *Enquirer,* February 9, 1865. See Durden, *The Gray and the Black,* p. 188.
12. Richmond *Examiner,* February 10, 1865.
13. Richmond *Dispatch,* February 10, 1865. See also Durden, *The Gray and the Black,* pp. 192–94.
14. The fullest account of the speech and reactions appeared in Richmond *Dispatch,* February 10, 1865.
15. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
16. Jones, *Diary,* II: 416, and J. T. Leach of North Carolina on floor of Confederate Congress, Feb. 15, 1865, *Southern Historical Society Papers,* 53 (July 1959): 355.
17. Benjamin to Robert E. Lee, February 11, 1865, Official Records, Series 1, XLVI, pt. 2: 1229.
18. *Journal of the Senate of the Confederate States of America,* IV: 788.
19. Howell Cobb to James A. Seddon, January 8, 1865, Official Records, Series 4, III: 959–60. See also, Durden, *The Gray and the Black,* pp. 183–85.
20. Letter from Robert Toombs quoted in Foote, *Civil War,* III: 860.
21. *Journal of Confederate Senate,* IV: 550, 522, 553.
22. See Meade, Benjamin, p. 309.
23. See Durden, *The Gray and the Black,* p. 202, 289.

CHAPTER 17
Escape

1. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 575–78.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*
4. Quoted in Foote, *The Civil War,* III: 864.
5. "History of the 104th Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry," pp. 309–10, and "Reminiscences of the Civil War," p. 176, in *Diaries of Members of the 103rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry,* quoted in Bruce Catton, *This Hallowed Ground,* p. 374.
6. "Story of the Service of Company E and the 12th Wisconsin Regiment," p. 104. See Catton, *This Hallowed Ground,* p. 376.
7. Sherman to Brigadier Judson Kilpatrick. See Foote, *The Civil War,* III: 788, and John Bennett Walters, *Merchant of Terror: General Sherman and Total War* (Indianapolis and New York, 1973).

8. George W. Pepper, *Personal Recollections of Sherman's Campaigns in Georgia and the Carolinas* (Zanesville, Ohio, 1866). For an eyewitness account, see Emma Florence LeConte, *Journal of Emma Florence LeConte* December 31, 1864, to August 6, 1865, Southern Historical Collection, Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For an overview of Sherman in South Carolina, see John G. Barrett, *Sherman's March Through the Carolinas.*

9. Grant told this to Sheridan when they met on March 26, 1865; see Foote, *The Civil War,* III: 853, 881.

10. Letter of French Consul Alfred Paul to Drougn le Llys, Minister of Foreign Affairs, April 11, 1865, Archives des Affaires Etrangères, Etats Unis; see Warren Spencer, "A French View of the Fall of Richmond," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* April 1965, p. 181.

11. Journal of Elizabeth Van Lew, Archives Division, Virginia State Library, Richmond, p. 379. A number of diaries and papers exist, many published, describing the fall of Richmond and the flight of the President and Cabinet: F. Harrison (ed.), *The Harrisons of Skimino* (Burton Harrison's account first appeared in *Century Magazine,* November 1883; the Harrison Family Papers are in the Library of Congress); Katharine Jones, *Ladies of Richmond: Confederate Capital;* Frank R. Lubbock, *Six Decades in Texas;* Stephen Mallory, "The Last Days of the Confederate Government," *McClure's Magazine,* new edition by Bell Wiley (ed.) (Jackson, Tenn: 1959); Putnam, *Richmond During the War;* Raphael Semmes, *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (Baltimore, 1869); John T. Wood, *Diary,* Southern Historical Collection, Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and Younger, *Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean.* Secondary sources include Bill, *The Beleaguered City;* Burke Davis, *The Long Surrender;* A. J. Hanna, *Flight into Oblivion;* and Thomas, *The Confederate State of Richmond.*

12. Putnam, *Richmond During the War,* pp. 366–69.

13. Frederick S. Daniel (ed.), *The Richmond Examiner During the War, or The Writings of John H. Daniel with a Memoir of His Life.*

14. Jones, *Ladies of Richmond: Confederate Capital,* p. 275.

15. *McClure's Magazine,* December 1900. See Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 312, and Stephen Mallory, recollections in Southern Historical Collection, Library of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

16. Hoge to Lawley, August 14, 1897, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.

17. From a collection of eyewitness accounts of the fall of Richmond. See Jones, *Ladies of Richmond: Confederate Capital,* and "The Evacuation of Richmond," *Southern Historical Society Papers,* IX: 542–56 (December 1881).
18. Nellie Grey was a pseudonym for a woman of Richmond invented by Myrta Lockett Avary, who wrote *A Virginia Girl in the Civil War.*
19. "Natalie" (anonymous), first published in the Norfolk, *Virginian.* Reprinted in Edward A. Pollard, *The Lost Cause: A New Southern History of the War of the Confederates* (New York, 1866). See Jones, *Ladies of Richmond,* pp. 280–81.
20. Lincoln's arrival in Richmond was described by U.S. Admiral David Porter. See Robert McElroy, *Jefferson Davis: The Unreal and the Real,* II: 460–61. See also Davis, *The Long Surrender,* p. 55, and Foote, *The Civil War,* III: 897.
21. Foote, *The Civil War,* III: 897.
22. *Ibid.,* p. 898.
23. "Agnes" to Mrs. Roger Pryor, April 5, 1865, in Sara Pryor, *My Day: Reminiscences of Peace and War.* See Jones, *Ladies of Richmond* pp. 284–87.
24. Lincoln's answer to Major General Godfrey Weitzel, who had received the surrender of the city, was recorded by Weitzel's aide, Major E. E. Graves. See Weitzel *Letter Press Books,* Cincinatti Historical Society, and Major Godfrey Weitzel, *Richmond Occupied: Entry of the United States Forces into Richmond, Virginia April 3, 1865,* Louis Manarin (ed.) (Richmond Civil War Centennial Committee 1965).
25. Jefferson Davis, *Rise and Fall,* II: 677–78. See Meade's interview with Joseph B. Anderson, Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 313.
26. Lee's surrender was described by Joshua L. Chamberlain, *The Passing of the Armies* (New York, 1915), pp. 230–42; Sir Frederick Maurice (ed.), *An Aide-de-Camp of Lee: Being the Papers of Colonel Charles Marshal* (Boston, 1927); *The Personal Memoirs of U. S. Grant,* 2 vols. (New York, 1885–1886), II: 489; and Colonel Horace Porter, *Battles and Leaders,* I: 729–46.
27. Hoge to Lawley, Lawley manuscript, Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
28. *Ibid.*
29. Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 361.
30. Joseph Johnston, *Narrative of Military Operations Directed During the Late War Between the States* (New York, 1874, and new edition, 1959), pp. 396–400. See also Burton Harrison, "The Capture of Jefferson Davis," *Century Magazine,* XXVII (November 1883): 130–145.

31. Johnston, *Narrative.* See also Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 315.
32. Boutwell to Butler, April 30, 1865, *Letters to Benjamin Butler,* V: 598.
33. Stanton to General Dix, Official Records, Series 1, XLVI, pt. 3: 781.
34. Stanton to Charles F. Adams, *ibid.,* pp. 43, 784–85.
35. Charles Dana to U.S. Marshal, Portland, Maine, Official Records, Series 2, VIII: 493.
36. New York *Herald,* May 4, 1865, p. 1.
37. Reverend C. B. Crane at the South Baptist Church of Hartford, Conn., Sunday, April 16, 1865, quoted in Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln: The War Years 1861–1865,* p. 876.
38. Edward Everett Hale at his Unitarian Church in Boston on Sunday, April 16, 1865; more of the sermon quoted in *ibid.,* p. 877. For other sermons, see Thomas Turner, *Beware the People Weeping,* pp. 77–89, ch. 6, "Voices from the Pulpit."
39. Woodward (ed.), *Mrs. Chesnut's Civil War,* p. 795.
40. New York *Times,* May 1, 1865.
41. Testimony of Captain Williams, Johnson's guard, in J. E. Buckingham, *Reminiscences and Souvenirs of the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln* (Washington, 1894), p. 63. See also Turner, *Beware the People Weeping* pp. 45–46.
42. U.S. Congress, House, Committee on the Judiciary Impeachment Investigation, testimony taken before the Judiciary Committee of the House of Representatives in the investigation of the charges against Andrew Johnson, 39th Cong., 2d sess., 1867, and 40th Cong., 1st sess., 1867. Johnson used the phrase often. See his speech at Knoxville, April 12, 1864, in *Papers of Andrew Johnson* (Knoxville, 1983), VI: 670.
43. "Remarks on the Fall of Richmond," April 3, 1865, *Papers of Andrew Johnson, 1864–1865* (Knoxville, 1986), VII: 544.
44. *Ibid.,* VII: 546, note 5.
45. Andrew Johnson in the Senate, speech on the expulsion of Senator Bright, January 31, 1862, *ibid.,* V: 585.
46. Andrew Johnson's speech to the House of Representatives, January 21, 1864. See James Jones, *The Life of Andrew Johnson* (Greenville, Tenn., 1901), p. 111.
47. George Custer, New York *Times,* May 7, 1865. For other reactions, see Turner, *Beware the People Weeping,* p. 54.
48. Pollard, *Life of Jefferson Davis,* p. 521.
49. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, July 22, 1865. See Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 364.

50. James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress,* II: 14.
51. *Ibid.,* p. 22.
52. Charles Pollock, "Reminiscences of Judah Philip Benjamin," *Fortnightly Review,* LXIX (March 1898): 354–61, and *The Green Bag,* Vol. I, no. 9, September 1889.
53. Adams, *Charles Francis Adams 1835–1915: An Autobiography,* pp. 94–95.
54. The card was put into the box of Johnson's secretary, William A. Browning. L. I. Farwell, the ex-Governor of Wisconsin, who was present at Ford's Theater that night, hurried over to Andrew Johnson's room, adjoining his own, at Kirkwood House to tell him of the assassination. It was the first Johnson heard of it. Farwell's detailed statement in writing to Senator J. R. Doolittle of Wisconsin, March 12, 1866. In Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.
55. Burton Harrison, "The Capture of Jefferson Davis," *Century Magazine,* XXVII (November 1883): 130–45. See also Harrison, *Recollections Grave and Gray,* p. 223.
56. Varina H. Davis, to Jefferson Davis, April 1865, Confederate Museum, Richmond.
57. Benjamin to Davis, April 22, 1865. Copy in Edward M. Stanton Papers, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress. For background see McElroy, *Jefferson Davis: The Unreal and the Real,* pp. 492–93.
58. Harrison, *The Harrisons of Skimino,* p. 243. See also Davis, *The Long Surrender,* pp. 87–88.
59. Benjamin to Bayard, October 20, 1865, Bayard Papers, Callery Collection, Historical Society of Delaware.
60. Stephen Mallory, "The Last Days of the Confederate Government," *McClure's Magazine,* XVI (December 1900): 99–107, and (January 1901): 239–48.
61. *Ibid.*
62. Reagan, *Memoirs,* p. 211.
63. Varina H. Davis, letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898.
64. *Ibid.*
65. Wood, *Diary,* Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. See also Hanna, *Flight into Oblivion,* pp. 195–96, and J. T. Wood, "Escape of the Confederate Secretary of War," *Century Magazine,* XLVII: 115.
66. See *A Dictionary of the Cajun Language,* by Reverend Monsignor Jules O. Daigle (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1984), pp. 68–69. The author is grateful to Diana Autin for pointing out that the "l" is silent in Cajun and therefore "Bonfals" would have been pronounced "fausse," meaning "to falsify, alter" or "untrue, fictitious."

67. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, July 22, 1865. See Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 365. See also Benjamin to Varina H. Davis, November 16, 1865, in Jefferson Davis Collection, Transylvania University.
68. J. G. Randall and David Donald, *The Civil War and Reconstruction,* p. 528.
69. John Taylor Wood, *Famous Adventures and Prison Escapes of the Civil War* (New York, 1893), p. 298.
70. Varina H. Davis to Francis Blair, June 6, 1865, in Crist-Blair Papers, Library of Congress. See also Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 641.
71. Cartoon collection, Library of Congress. Davis's own account of his capture denies the legend in *The Rise and Fall,* II: 701–2. Varina's account is in her letter to Francis Blair, June 6, 1865.
72. New Orleans *Times-Democrat,* May 13, 1900.
73. New York *Herald,* May 23, 1865.
74. Mrs. Surratt to her priest, Father J. A. Walter, in Rev. J. A. Walter, *Church News,* August 16, 1891. Paper read before the U.S. Catholic Historical Society, May 25, 1891.
75. Lloyd Lewis, *Myths After Lincoln* (New York, 1929), p. 106.
76. William H. Gregory, former governor of Ceylon, to Lawley, October 18, 1889; letter in Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University. Benjamin told the story after a dinner party in London.
77. Rev. W. B. Tresca, son of Captain Tresca, in Lillie B. McDuffe, *The Lures of Manatee* (Nashville, 1933), p. 158.
78. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, August 1, 1865, copy in Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
79. McLeod quoted in Galveston *Daily News,* May 27, 1894.
80. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, September 29, 1865, copy in Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
81. William Preston to Varina Davis, November 1, 1865. Preston was appointed as the Minister "extraordinaire" to the court of Maximillian in Mexico. Original in Davis Papers, Transylvania University.
82. Benjamin to Bayard, August 30, 1865, in Bayard Papers, Callery Collection, Historical Society of Delaware.

CHAPTER 18
England: From Law Student to Queen's Counsel

1. Howard Sachar, *The Course of Modern Jewish History,* p. 114. See also "England," *Encyclopedia Judaica,* V: 161–74; Finkelstein (ed.), *The Jews: Their History, Culture and Religion,* Vol. I, Book 3; and Cecil Roth, *A History of the Jews of England* (Oxford, 1941).
2. George Bentinck to John Manners, in C. Whibley, *Lord Manners and His Friends,* 2 vols. (1925) II: 283. For the story behind the Jewish

Disabilities Bill, see also Sarah Bradford, *Disraeli,* pp. 177–88, and Constance Rothschild, *Reminiscences* (1922), p. 232.

3. Hansard, 3d series, XCV: 1323–31, and Sarah Bradford, *Disraeli.* For thorough early biography of Benjamin Disraeli, see W. F. Moneypenney and G. E. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli,* 2 vols. (New York, 1910–20).
4. See Sachar, *Course of Modern Jewish History.*
5. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, September 29, 1865; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 370–72.
6. *Ibid.*
7. *Ibid.*
8. Benjamin to Bradford, February 21, 1866; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 379–81.
9. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 344, from diary of Mrs. Mary White Beckwith, Petersburg, Va., daughter of the Confederate blockade-runner John White.
10. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, September 29, 1865. Disraeli had been D'Israeli but had dropped the apostrophe as a young man. Benjamin was using the original spelling.
11. Benjamin to Bayard, October 20, 1865, Bayard Papers, Callery Collection, Historical Society of Delaware.
12. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, December 20, 1865; Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*
15. *Ibid.* For an earlier letter, see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 328.
16. Benjamin to Bradford, February 21, 1866; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 379.
17. *Ibid.*
18. Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 378.
19. Benjamin to Bradford, February 21, 1866; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 379.
20. *Ibid.*
21. Pollock, "Reminiscences of Judah Philip Benjamin," *Fortnightly Review,* LXIX (March 1898): 354–61, and *The Green Bag,* Vol. I, no. 9, September 1889.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*
24. See Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 333, and *The Law Journal,* November 1932. For a full text, see *The Black Books of Lincoln's Inn,* V, *1845–1914,* pp. 133–41.

25. U.S. Court of Claims, *Henry B. Ste. Marie* v. *the United States,* amended petition No. 6415, May 6, 1873, and Leo F. Stock (ed.), *United States Ministers to the Papal States: Instructions and Dispatches 1848–1868,* 2 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1933), I: 359, 360, 367, 377–78, 381–82, 388, 401. See also Thomas Reed Turner, *Beware the People Weeping: Public Opinion and the Assassination of Abraham Lincoln,* p. 227.
26. James G. Randall and Theodore C. Pease (eds.), *Diary of Orville Hickmar Browning,* 2 vols. (Springfield, Ill.: Jefferson's Printing and Stationery Company by the Trustees of the Illinois State Historical Library, 1933), II: 100.
27. *Ibid.*
28. U.S. Congress, House, Executive Document No. 9, 39th Cong., 2d sess., 1866, pp. 9–10; Letters from the Secretary of War *Ad Interim Relative to a Claim of Sainte Marie for Compensation Furnished in the Surratt Case,* 40th Cong., 2d sess., 1867, p. 24. See Turner, *Beware the People Weeping,* p. 228.
29. Henri Ste. Marie, statement in *Diplomatic Correspondence, 1867–1868,* Archives of the Department of State, quoted in G. S. Bryan, *The Great American Myth,* p. 387.
30. For the story of Surratt's escape and capture, see United States Government, *Trial of John Surratt in the Criminal Court for the District of Columbia, Honorable George F. Fishes, Presiding,* 2 vols. (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1867).
31. House of Representatives, 39th Cong., 2d sess., Executive Document No. 9, Consular Message No. 538.
32. *Ibid.,* Consular Message No. 476.
33. *Ibid.,* Consular Message No. 236.
34. *Ibid.*
35. *Ibid.,* Executive Document No. 17.
36. *The Great Conspiracy, a Book of Absorbing Interest! Startling Developments, Eminent Persons Implicated, Full Secrets of the Assassination Plot, John H. Surratt and His Mother, with Biographical Sketches of J. B. Booth and John Wilkes Booth, and Life and Extraordinary Adventures of John H. Surratt, the Conspirator,* pp. 36–37, 70, 111–13.
37. Springfield *Daily Republican,* January 28, 1867.
38. "Moran," *Civil War Dictionary,* pp. 151–52. His diary is in forty-three volumes (1851, 1857–1875), Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
39. Papers of Benjamin Moran, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress, Vol. 18, February 11, 1867. The edited and published diaries of Moran do not contain these quotes.
40. *Ibid.,* Vol. 18, February 18, 1867.

41. *Ibid.,* Vol. XVIII, March 14, 1867. George McHenry assisted Edwin De Leon in Paris. De Leon was a Confederate journalist and propagandist in Paris from 1862 through 1864.
42. *Ibid.,* Vol. VII, July 22, 1859.
43. *Ibid.,* Vol. XX, April 17, 1868.
44. *Ibid.,* Vol. XV, July 27, 1865.
45. *Ibid.,* Vol. XVIII, March 16, 1867.
46. *Ibid.,* Vol. XVIII, March 21, 1867.
47. House, 40th Cong., 2d sess., Executive Document 68, Serial 1332, submitted to Mr. Seward, July 1867; transmitted by the Secretary of State, William Seward, to the President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, December 17, 1867; transmitted by message from the President to the House of Representatives, December 17, 1867.
48. *Ibid.*
49. United States Government, *Trial of John Surratt.*
50. John H. Surratt, "Lecture on the Lincoln Conspiracy," *Lincoln Herald,* Vol. LI, December 1949. For full text of the lecture, see also the appendix to Clara Laughlin, *The Death of Lincoln* (New York, 1909).
51. *Ibid.*
52. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 704*n.*
53. See A. W. Thomson, "How Jefferson Davis Received the News of Lincoln's Death," *The Independent,* February 15, 1900, p. 436.
54. Pollock, "Reminiscences of Judah Philip Benjamin," *Fortnightly Review,* LXIX (March 1898): 354–61, and *The Green Bag,* Vol. I, no. 9, September 1889.
55. Benjamin to Mason, October 25, 1866, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
56. *American Law Review,* I (1866–67): 220.
57. London *Times,* July 2, 1882. See also Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 335–36, and Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 393.
58. Benjamin to Mrs. Levy, February 8, 1870. See Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 394.
59. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, April 11, 1867; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 388–89.
60. Benjamin to his sisters, February 22, 1868; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 391.
61. *A Treatise on the Law of Sale of Personal Property, with Reference to the American Decisions, to the French Code and Civil Law* (1868).
62. London *Daily Telegraph,* February 10, 1883; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 337.
63. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, April 11, 1867; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 388–89.

64. Benjamin to Mrs. Levy, February 8, 1870; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 394.
65. *Ibid.*
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70. *Ibid.*
71. *Ibid.*
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74. Benjamin to Mason, October 25, 1866, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
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76. For background on the gold, see Hanna, *Flight into Oblivion,* pp. 25–54 and 92, and Davis, *The Long Surrender,* pp. 121–31 and note 1, Chapter 8; the most reliable and detailed account is by Otis Ashmore, *Georgia Historical Quarterly,* 2: 119–33. Micajah H. Clark, a Confederate captain, has given an authoritative account in *Southern Historical Society Papers,* 9: 542–56. Paymaster John F. Wheless also wrote on the subject, *Southern Historical Society Papers,* 10: 138–41.
77. Benjamin to Mason, May 29, 1867, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.

CHAPTER 19
The Lincoln Assassination: Lingering Suspicion

1. Benjamin to Mrs. Davis, September 1, 1865, London, *Georgia Review,* XX (1966): 251–60. Original in Jefferson Davis Collection, Transylvania University.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Varina Davis to President Andrew Johnson, May 5, 1866, Johnson Papers, Library of Congress; see also Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 757.
4. For background, see Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 767–68.

5. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, Havana, August 1, 1865; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 367.
6. London *Times,* September 11, 1865, p. 1. and New York *Times,* September 25, 1865, p. 1.
7. *Ibid.*
8. Benjamin to Mrs. Davis, November 16, 1865, *Georgia Review,* XX (1966): 251–60. Original in Jefferson Davis Collection, Transylvania University.
9. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 769–70.
10. John Craven, *The Prison Life of Jefferson Davis,* pp. 155–56.
11. Mary Bernard Allen, *Joseph Holt, Judge Advocate General 1862–1875: A Study in the Treatment of Political Prisoners* (Chicago, 1927), pp. 66–67.
12. *Letters from the Hon. Joseph Holt, Upon the Policy of the Government,* 2d ed. (Washington, 1861), p. 16; New York *Times,* August 20, 1894, p. 1, col. 2.
13. Official Records, Series 1, XLVII, pt. 3: 301.
14. Official Records, Series 2, VIII: 899, and *Messages and Papers of the Presidents,* 6: 307–8.
15. Ben Pitman, *Assassination of President Lincoln,* pp. 24–37; trial of the Alleged Assassins, pp. 132–42. See also Judge W. W. Cleary, "The Attempt to Fasten the Assassination of President Lincoln on President Davis and Other Innocent Parties," *Southern Historical Society Papers,* Vol. IX, July–August 1881.
16. New York *Tribune,* June 6, 1865, p. 4, col. 2.
17. Letter from Conover to Thompson, March 20, 1865, printed in the Chicago *Tribune,* July 1, 1865, p. 2. See Turner, *Beware the People Weeping,* p. 213.
18. Holt to Stanton, June 1865. For background and additional details, see Seymour Frank, "The Conspiracy to Implicate the Confederate Leaders in Lincoln's Assassination," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* XL (March 1954): 629–56.
19. For an informative account of the Conover chapter in the assassination, see Turner, *Beware the People Weeping,* pp. 216, 212–19, 221–23.
20. Papers of Joseph Holt, Vol. XLVII, Manuscript Division, Library of Congress.
21. The author compared handwriting in the fraudulent letter with validated letters by Booth in the Library of Congress. There were *no* similarities.
22. House of Representatives Report No. 104, p. 25.
23. Letter from Chief Justice George Shea to the New York *Times,* January 24, 1876. See George Bryan, *The Great American Myth,* p. 388.

24. Varina H. Davis to Horace Greeley, June 22, 1865, Confederate Museum, Richmond.
25. Varina H. Davis to Horace Greeley, September 2, 1866, Manuscript Division, New York Public Library.
26. John W. Burgess, *Reminiscences of an American Scholar* (New York, 1934), p. 292.
27. Horace Greeley, editorial in the New York *Tribune,* November 9, 1866.
28. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 794.
29. Burton Harrison, "The Capture of Jefferson Davis," *Century Magazine,* November 1883. Harrison's verbatim account is in Harrison (ed.), *The Harrisons of Skimino* (1910). See also Burton Harrison to his fiancée, Constance Cary, May 13, 1867, B. N. Harrison Papers, Library of Congress.
30. Rev. C. Minnegerode, *Memoirs,* quoted in Strode, *Jefferson Davis, Tragic Hero* III, *1864–1869:* 310.
31. Burton Harrison to Constance Cary, May 13, 1867, Harrison Papers, Library of Congress.
32. Benjamin to Harriet Benjamin, June 5, 1867; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 390.
33. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 797.
34. Varina H. Davis, to Mrs. Howell Cobb, September 6, 1867, New-York Historical Society.
35. Benjamin to Mason, May 29, 1867, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
36. Varina H. Davis, *Memoir,* II: 799.
37. *Ibid.,* II: 624.
38. Jefferson Davis to William Howell, November 6, 1867. For further background of the plots to assassinate Davis, see Strode, *Jefferson Davis,* III: 323.
39. Letter from Jacob Thompson to New York *Tribune,* May 22, 1865, p. 4. Thompson fled to Paris, then to Naples, then to Egypt and to "Palestine to tread the ground our Savior trod . . . and escape the grossest slanders and foulest falsehoods." For his own descriptions of his travels and his plea for fairness, see letter from Thompson to William Delay, August 11, 1866, *Journal of Southern History,* Vol. VI, February 1940.
40. Letter from Beverley Tucker to Montreal *Gazette,* May 23, 1865.
41. Jefferson Davis to Howell Cobb, July 25, 1868; see Strode, *Jefferson Davis,* III: p. 323.
42. Mrs. Norman Walker, Journal, August 4, 1868.
43. Varina H. Davis to Lawley, April 4, 1897, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
44. Pollard, *The Life of Jefferson Davis,* pp. 154–55.

45. *Ibid.,* p. 445.
46. *Ibid.,* p. 407.
47. *Ibid.,* p. 151.
48. *Ibid.,* p. 413.
49. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 345; see also Rowland, *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist,* 10 vols. VII: 246–51, and McElroy, *Jefferson Davis,* II: 612–13.
50. See Richard Lester, *Confederate Finance and Purchasing in Great Britain,* p. 23, note 99. It is generally thought that Slidell's daughter Mathilde married Erlanger's son, but she married Emile Erlanger himself, and the couple had a very happy life together. They were married October 4, 1864.
51. Foote, *Casket of Reminiscences,* pp. 150–51.
52. *Ibid.*
53. Benjamin to Davis, March 18, 1874, Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, Shakespeare Center, Stratford-upon-Avon, England.

CHAPTER 20
The British Barrister from America

1. *Law Time,* June 10, 1939, p. 391. See Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 337–38.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Pollock, *Fortnightly Review,* LXIX (March 1898): 354–61, and *The Green Bag,* vol. 1, no. 9, September 1889.
4. *Ibid.*
5. Memoranda by E. Russell Roberts and Richard Horton Smith in Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University. See also *Law Reports Appeal Cases,* VI: 722–39, and Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 404–5.
6. Benjamin to Bradford, December 24, 1870, and Benjamin to Mason, February 8, 1871, James Mason Papers, Manuscripts Division, Library of Congress.
7. Benjamin to Miss Harriet Benjamin, February 21, 1872, in Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University; text in Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 397–98.
8. Benjamin to Bradford, June 13, 1872; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 351.
9. Benjamin to his sisters, March 17, 1875; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 407.
10. Benjamin to Miss Harriet Benjamin, February 21, 1872; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 397.
11. Benjamin to Bradford, April 22, 1873; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 352.
12. J. G. Witt memorandum to Lawley, undated, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University. See Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 423–24.
13. Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 358–60; London *Times,* June 16, 1876; and Earl of Oxford and Asquith, *Memories and Reflections,* vi: 72–79.
14. Benjamin to his sisters, July 16, 1876; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 408.
15. Cincinnati *Commercial,* June 18, 1876.

16. Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 403–4.
17. *Ibid.*
18. London *Times,* May 9, 1884, and Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 401–2.
19. Pollock, *Fortnightly Review,* LXIX (March 1898): 354–61 and *The Green Bag,* Vol. 9, no. 1, September 1889.
20. *Ibid.*
21. James G. Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress,* II: 22–23.
22. Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 441, and Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 354, 355, 364.
23. Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
24. New York *Times,* January 2, 1879.
25. Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 419–10, 441 (appendix), and Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
26. Benjamin to his sisters, October 15, 1871; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 397.
27. Bradford papers, letter of February 25, 1871; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 354–55.
28. Benjamin to Bradford, April 22, 1873; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 354.
29. Witt memorandum to Lawley, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
30. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, August 1, 1865; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 367.
31. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, September 29, 1865; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 370–72.
32. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, April 11, 1867; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 388–89.
33. Benjamin to his sisters, February 22, 1868; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 391.
34. Benjamin to Mrs. Levy, February 22, 1868; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 390–92; and Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 339.
35. *Ibid.*
36. Benjamin to Mrs. Levy, February 8, 1870; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 394.
37. Benjamin to Harriet Benjamin, February 21, 1872; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 398.
38. Benjamin to his sisters, March 17, 1875; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 394.
39. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, August 9, 1874; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 405–6.
40. *Ibid.*
41. *Ibid.*
42. Benjamin to his sisters, March 17, 1875; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 407.

43. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, March 23, 1880; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 425.
44. Witt memorandum, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
45. Interviews by Meade, *Benjamin,* pp. 362, 413; Notes in Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library.
46. Benjamin to Harriet Benjamin, June 6, 1876, and Benjamin to Mrs. Bradford, September 6, 1875, in Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library.
47. Benjamin to his sisters (undated); see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 430–31.
48. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, November 6, 1879; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 409.
49. Benjamin to Harriet Benjamin, June 5, 1867; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 390.
50. Author's visit to Paris, June 1983.
51. For background of the lawsuit, see Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* p. 264, and Ross, *First Lady of the South,* p. 344.
52. Varina H. Davis to Jefferson Davis, April 18, 1878, Confederate Memorial Hall, New Orleans.
53. For background to the story of Mrs. Dorsey, see Eaton, *Jefferson Davis,* pp. 264–65; Ross, *First Lady of the South,* pp. 328, 330, 405; and Strode, *Jefferson Davis, Tragic Hero,* pp. 421–43.
54. Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University. Because this letter survives in the Lawley papers, one can assume it is one of the few letters written *to* Benjamin that he did not destroy.
55. Benjamin to Davis, February 15, 1879; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 369, and Rowland, *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist,* VIII: 350–57.
56. Benjamin to his sisters, March 18, 1877; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 408.
57. Benjamin to Bradford, May 16, 1875; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 390.
58. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, April 5, 1880; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 409.
59. Benjamin to Varina H. Davis, April 25, 1881, and Hudson Strode, "Judah P. Benjamin's Loyalty to Jefferson Davis," *Georgia Review, XX* (1966): 260.
60. Davis, *The Rise and Fall of the Confederacy,* I: 242.

CHAPTER 21
Paris: Hidden from History

1. Benjamin to Finney, March 12, 1878; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 367.
2. New York *Times,* January 2, 1879, quoted in Lynchburg, Virginia, January 30, 1879; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 366.

3. Benjamin to Harriet Benjamin, November 4, 1881; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 411.
4. Benjamin to his sisters, April 1880; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 410.
5. Benjamin to Bradford, January 25, 1880, copy in Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 329.
6. Benjamin to Eugenia Kruttschnitt, May 8, 1880, copy in Robert D. Meade Papers, Manuscripts Department, University of Virginia Library; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 369.
7. Benjamin to Bayard, August 2, 1883; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 410.
8. Benjamin to Bayard, October 24, 1880; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 411.
9. New York *Tribune,* January 20, 1882.
10. New York *Times,* November 6, 1881.
11. New York *Times,* January 20, 1982.
12. *Ibid.*
13. Undated clipping, probably 1883, Bayard Papers, Callery Collection, Historical Society of Delaware.
14. Gustavus H. Wald, *Miscellany* (pamphlet, Cincinnati, 1906) pp. 35–44, reprinted in *Harvard Graduate Magazine,* XXXVI (June 1928): 538–42.
15. Benjamin to Harriet Benjamin, November 4, 1881; see Butler, *Benjamin,* pp. 410–11.
16. Benjamin to Bradford, December 15, 1882; see Meade, *Benjamin,* p. 376.
17. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, February 12, 1883; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 413.
18. London *Times,* February 9 and 10, 1883.
19. *Morning Telegraph,* May 7, 1884.
20. Benjamin to Mrs. Kruttschnitt, March 1, 1883; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 413.
21. The banquet occurred on June 30, 1883. Reported in the London *Times,* July 2, 1883; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 414–16.
22. *Ibid.*
23. Witt memorandum to Lawley, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 424.
24. *Ibid.*
25. Witt memorandum to Lawley, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University; see Butler, *Benjamin,* p. 435.
26. Benjamin to Lawley, September 12, 1882, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
27. Benjamin to Lawley, September 2, 1882, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.

28. Reported by Judge Henry C. Miller, member of New Orleans bar; see Louis Gruss, "Judah Philip Benjamin," *Louisiana Historical Society Quarterly,* October 1936, p. 1068.
29. Benjamin to Varina Davis, as reported by Varina Davis in letter to Lawley, June 8, 1898, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
30. Varina H. Davis to Lawley, June 8, 1898, Lawley Mss., Pierce Butler Collection, Tulane University.
31. Benjamin's will, written by hand and dated April 30, 1883, is preserved at Somerset House, London. It shows an estate of more than 60,000 English pounds ($300,000) in personalty and the mansion in Paris. The will left 10,000 pounds in various amounts to his three sisters, to his brother Joseph, and to his niece and nephews, and the residue "to my dear wife Natalie and to our only child, Ninette." The wills of Natalie, Ninette, and Henri de Bousignac are on file in the Archives de Paris. The mansion was passed to Ninette on Natalie's death in 1891; to Henri de Bousignac on Ninette's death in 1898 (her will stated: "I pray to God to reward my dear Henri for all his kindness, and for the good care and abnegation he showed by leaving the army at my earnest request.") Bousignac died in 1901, and his will contained an order to sell the mansion.

EPILOGUE

1. Author's visit to Père Lachaise cemetery, June 1983.
2. Varina H. Davis, letter to "The Veterans and Public of the Southern States," July 11, 1891, Fleming Papers, New York Public Library.

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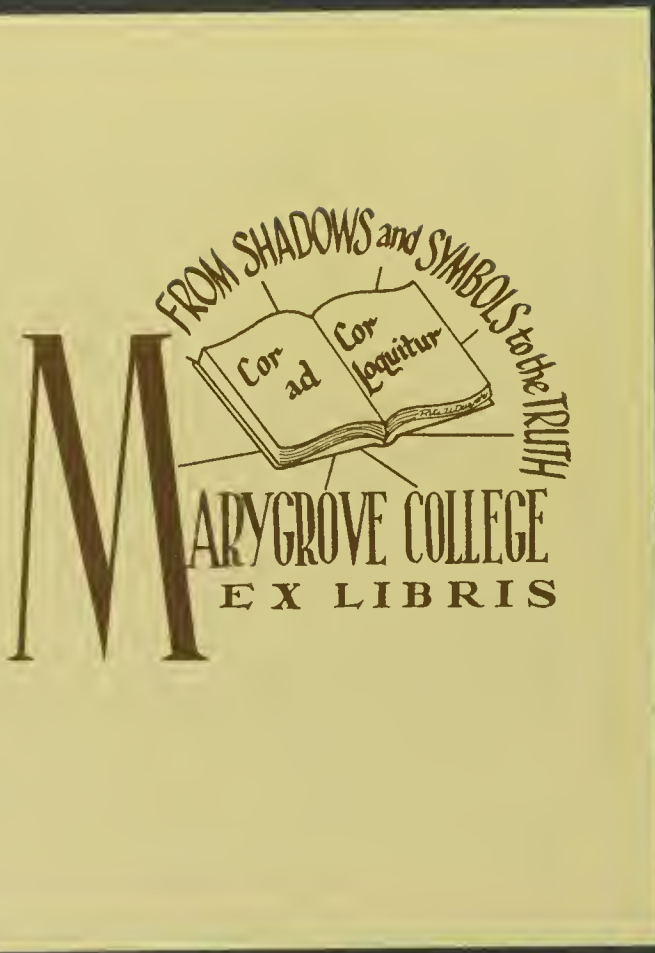
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AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER.

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Men and Brothers

ANGLO-AMERICAN ANTISLAVERY COOPERATION

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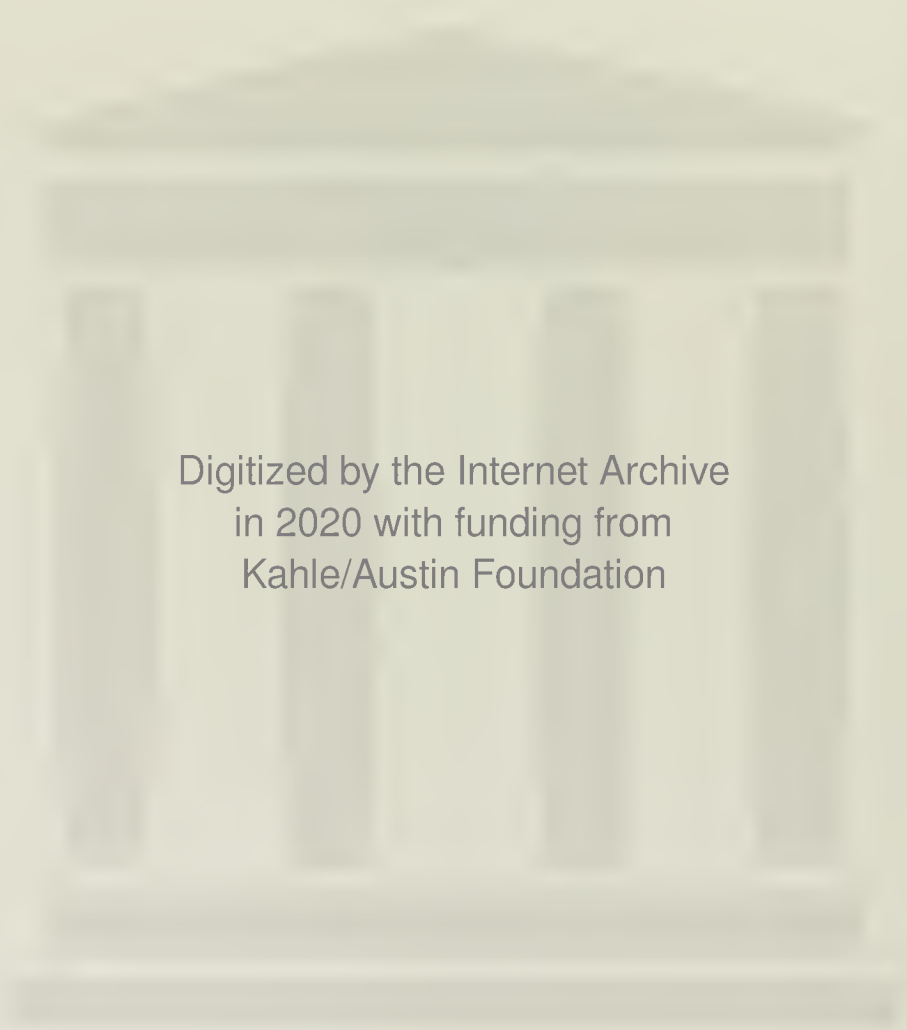
To the memory of my mother,
Bertha Nygaard Fladeland,
and my father,
Arne Fladeland



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Preface

Much has been written on both the British and the American antislavery movements, but hitherto they have been treated as separate developments. It is the thesis of this book that the struggles in Great Britain and the United States against slavery and the slave trade were so closely connected that they deserve to be studied together. Sometimes they ran parallel, as was generally true until the 1820s, but by the 1830s and 1840s they became so intertwined that they can scarcely be untangled from one another.

My first interest in this subject was aroused by the lectures of Professor Dwight L. Dumond at the University of Michigan, in which he suggested that British influence on the American antislavery movement needed to be investigated, and was further stimulated by my reading of Gilbert H. Barnes and Frank J. Klingberg especially, who dealt with specific aspects of that influence. Although this study originally began with the turbulent decade of the 1830s, it quickly became apparent that it was necessary to move backward as well as forward in time to see the complete picture of Anglo-American cooperation. Before I was through, I had pushed its origins back into the seventeenth century. The study ends with the American Civil War and legal emancipation in the United States, but I do not mean to imply that the Anglo-American connection then ceased to exist. Those same people who

had cooperated to bring about the downfall of legal slavery went on to cooperate in their efforts to aid the freedmen—a subject worthy of another volume.

One of the impressions which has emerged from my study is the great breadth of the connection between British and American abolitionists. Similar intellectual and social trends motivated both; and while the economic patterns in the areas concerned sometimes developed in opposite directions (for example, those of West Indian planters and the planters of the southern United States), both English and American abolitionists faced similar problems of opposition to social reform on economic grounds. Then, as now, racial stereotypes in the thinking of both nations were perhaps the hardest to overcome, but they naturally presented a bigger problem to Americans because of the physical presence within the country of large numbers of Negroes. The British were less fearful for racial reasons because they were liberating black people in the West Indies, several thousand miles away.

British and American abolitionists developed similar theories; they also borrowed strategy and tactics from one another. It has been said repeatedly that the British movement from the beginning was a political one, while the Americans did not move to political action until the founding of the Liberty party in 1839–1840. This I think to be a misapprehension. Because there was no organized antislavery party, we have underestimated the degree of political activity of American abolitionists in the earlier periods, particularly through the use of petitions, influence exerted on individual political leaders, and by the pressure of public opinion in certain areas. Traditionally we have underscored abolitionist political activity at the time of the Mexican War and the Kansas struggle. But it was very much present (though less militant, it is true) at the time of the Revolution, the making of the Constitution, the outlawing of the slave trade, the consideration of colonization plans, and in the debates over allowing slavery in Illinois and Missouri.

Because we have stressed the contrast between the political abolitionism of the 1840s and 1850s with the religious emphasis of the 1830s, we have neglected the political activity of the pre-1830 eras. Moreover, just as political activity was never com-

pletely abandoned in the 1830s, so religious abolitionism and nonreligious, nonpolitical abolitionism continued to coexist with and strengthen political abolitionism in the forties and fifties. Our generalizations have pushed us to draw false lines of distinction to separate eras in the antislavery movement which were not all that dissimilar. Once the British had abolished slavery in their own colonies and turned their attention to slavery elsewhere, their movement became, of necessity, less political. They could not exert the same kind of political pressure on foreign governments, principally that of the United States, as they had on their own. Their concentration had to shift to lecturing, publishing, and otherwise offering moral and financial encouragement to their American allies.

Another notion emerging from this study is that we have created a false impression by applying the label "abolitionist" specifically to the group of people who organized the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 on the philosophy of immediatism and the sinfulness of slavery. Immediatism was not something which suddenly emerged in that decade, and I submit that we have drawn too sharp a line of distinction between "early gradualists" and "later immediatists." I was surprised to discover so many early immediatists, and even the later theoretical immediatists were forced, from a practical standpoint, to be gradualists, for few were naïve enough to think success could be achieved other than by piecemeal gains, staggered according to the difference in areas. And, until war came, few advocated it as a solution.

Long before 1830 many people in the antislavery movement, both British and American, were resting their cause on the sinfulness of slavery, the need to repent of it and abandon it. The American Revolution, for example, was looked upon as God's punishment for the sin of slavery. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries the British used the label "abolitionist" for anyone working to end the slave trade, without reference to slavery itself. But once they had succeeded in getting that trade declared illegal, the same group, for the most part, went on to lead the fight against slavery, first in their own colonies under the banner of gradualism and then in the United States and the rest of the world as immediatists. Gradualist antislavery people in America

adopted the label "abolitionist" for themselves and in the names of their societies and used it interchangeably with "emancipationist." I prefer, therefore, to define an abolitionist in terms of his goal: the ending of slavery, no matter what method he advocated. To me it seems foolish to quibble that Wilberforce, for example, was not a "real" abolitionist or that William Lloyd Garrison was more of one than Anthony Benezet.

The British and American antislavery movements were similarly affected by great world intellectual and economic trends. These I have tried to indicate to provide a background, but they require volumes in themselves, such as Professor David B. Davis's excellent study, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Cornell University Press, 1966). While I am certainly concerned with what the abolitionists were thinking, this book is primarily an account of what they were doing and of the connections between the activities of the two groups: the cooperation between organizations and individuals, the exchange of publications and lecturers, their common problems and strategies. The obvious danger in this kind of work is that there is such a multiplicity of details that one may fail to see the woods for the trees. I have tried to avoid recounting those parts of the antislavery movement that are already well known, except where it is necessary to demonstrate the Anglo-American connection.

For the most part, I have used the chronological approach for the reason that topical treatment fails to give a picture of how many projects were on foot in each period, and also because the chronological account has a cumulative effect on the reader just as the chronological development had a cumulative effect, I think, on attitudes toward slavery. This changing attitude undoubtedly helped to prepare Americans to accept abolition as a consequence of the defeat of the Confederacy.

It is not my purpose to argue that British antislavery conviction was the factor which prevented British interference in the American Civil War on the side of the South. There were too many other pressures involved. Any attempt to draw a valid conclusion on the relative importance of antislavery sentiment as compared with other factors would require a separate study. I do hold that the Anglo-American antislavery movement was of significance in

the coming of the Civil War because it helped to intensify sectional antagonisms, that it had some bearing on the course the British government took during the war, and that it certainly had a great effect on the policies of President Lincoln and the Republican party on the question of slavery. Because the pressures of American abolitionists on the Lincoln administration have been dealt with so recently and so well by Professor James M. McPherson in *The Struggle for Equality: Abolitionists and the Negro in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Princeton University Press, 1964), I have confined my last chapter to the role of British abolitionists during the American Civil War.

My sympathy with the abolitionists will be apparent. I count the antislavery advocates as worthy of respect for their courageous and persistent stand in the battle we constantly fight for the recognition of human dignity, despite the fact that in these pages they will often appear petty, querulous, self-righteous, and overbearing. Although winning legal freedom for black people fell far short of abolitionist ideals, it was no mean achievement. Without that step none of the subsequent ones could have been taken. Even today's "Black Revolution" builds on the abolitionist foundation.

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Men and Brothers

The Colonial Period

I

In 1772, when the American Quaker abolitionist Anthony Benezet received from London the long-awaited news that Lord Mansfield had delivered his historic opinion in the Somerset case declaring that slavery could not legally exist in England, his enthusiasm could not be contained. He immediately penned a letter to Granville Sharp, to whom credit was due for originating the case, soliciting the opening of a correspondence "that there might be a union of action between them for the future." [1]

In truth, there already existed a degree of transatlantic cooperation against slavery that extended as far back as the seventeenth century, when a few individual Quaker voices were raised in protest. After a visit to Barbados in 1671, George Fox urged colonial Friends to make every effort to instruct their slaves and to free them after a period of servitude. Shortly thereafter another British Quaker, William Edmundson, directed an epistle to Friends in Virginia, Maryland, and other parts of America in which he strongly denounced slavery as he had witnessed it while preaching in those colonies.[2] From the time of Fox and Edmundson in the seventeenth

1. William O. Blake, *The History of Slavery and the Slave Trade, Ancient and Modern* . . . (Columbus, Ohio: H. Miller, 1860), 174.

2. Norman Penney, ed., *The Journal of George Fox,* 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1911), II, 201; Anne T. Gary, "The Political and

century, and continuing for two more centuries, British Quakers and eventually many non-Quakers as well were to be intimately involved with the problem of slavery in America. Their concern, and the persuasion and pressure they exerted, were a vital part of the antislavery movement.

Undoubtedly the exhortations of Fox and Edmundson made an impression on Quaker thinking, for one can trace responsive ripples beginning to ruffle the surface of Quaker complacency, despite the opposition that came from the merchant group with capital investment in the slave trade. In 1688 the Friends in Germantown, Pennsylvania, sent a memorial on slavery to their monthly meeting, and in 1696 the record of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting included a minute opposing the continuation of the slave trade.[3] Two years later the Philadelphia Monthly Meeting sent a protest to Friends in Barbados (where many of their Negroes came from) urging that no more slaves be included in the cargoes destined for the Delaware River. Their statement that many Negroes in the area might prove "preudissial several wayes to us and our posteraty" indicates that the motivation of the signers must have been other than economic. One cannot assume that it was purely benevolent, as it seems to reflect a greater concern for the master than the slave and, even at that early date, a degree of racial fear.[4]

By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries Quaker teachers were beginning to formulate the doctrine of the sinfulness of slavery, a conviction that was to be the basis of the later

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Economic Relations of English and American Quakers (1750–1785)" (Unpubl. thesis, microfilm, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore, Pa., 1935), 175; Stephen Weeks, *Southern Quakers and Slavery: A Study in Institutional History*, extra vol. XV of Herbert B. Adams, ed., *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1896), 198; Sydney V. James, *A People among Peoples: Quaker Benevolence in Eighteenth-Century America* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), 105–107.

3. James Bowden, *The History of the Society of Friends in America*, 2 vols. (London: Charles Gilpin, 1850), II, 192; Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 179–180.

4. James, *A People among Peoples*, 114–115; Henry J. Cadbury, "Another Early Quaker Anti-Slavery Document," *Journal of Negro History*, XXVII (Apr., 1942), 210–215.

involvement of the evangelical sects in the antislavery movement and that was such a powerful factor in the shift from gradualism to immediatism in the wake of the "Great Revival" in the United States. George Keith, for example, denied a biblical defense of slavery from either the Old or the New Testaments. He quoted from Deuteronomy the injunction "Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee: He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose in one of thy gates, where it liketh him best: Thou shalt not oppress him." And as for the New Testament, Christ shed his blood for all mankind, including Negroes; the love, compassion, mercy, and goodness he preached were entirely incompatible with the idea of slavery.[5] Another point of antislavery Friends was that slavery violated the biblical injunction against receiving stolen goods and went directly contrary to their testimony against war. Slaves were obtained in Africa either as captives of war or by raids in which they were stolen from their homes and villages.

John Hepburn's conversion to the sinfulness of slavery led him to take a position identical to that of the nineteenth-century immediatists. If slavery violated God's will, it must be forsaken at once. Not only must a slaveholder repent personally, but he must make restitution, or else he would diminish his portion in Glory; if he had none anyway, he would increase his torment in Hell. Another of his arguments, standard in future attacks on the slave system, was that it contributed to the sins of idleness, wantonness, pride, and prodigality in the master class. Hepburn accused slaveholders of systematically destroying the writings of such men as Cotton Mather, George Fox, and George Keith in their determination to preserve the status quo.[6] A native of England who had emigrated to America about 1684, he was convinced

5. [George Keith], *An Exhortation & Caution to Friends Concerning Buying or Keeping of Negroes* (Philadelphia Monthly Meeting, 1693), reprinted in *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* XIII (1890), 265–270.

6. Henry J. Cadbury, "John Hepburn and His Book against Slavery, 1715," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society,* LIX (Apr., 1949), 89–160 (pp. 113–160 of this article contain a facsimile copy of Hepburn's pamphlet); Samuel Allinson, Jr., to John G. Whittier, Mar. 10, 1853, John Greenleaf Whittier Letters, Clarke Collection, Central Michigan University Library, Mt. Pleasant, Mich.

that repeated admonitions against slavery from the mother country could bear fruit.

But emissaries from England had to be prepared for strong opposition. When John Farmer, on a religious mission in New England, engaged in vehement denunciation of slavery and read his "Epistle Concerning Negroes" in meetings he visited, Rhode Island Friends advised him to forbear. When he persisted despite their "laboring" with him in prayer, he was disowned.[7] Rhode Island ports were among those most active in the slave trade.

Publications demonstrating the growing anxiety of Friends over slavery inevitably influenced some outside their own society, among whom were a Puritan merchant of New England, Samuel Sewall, and Morgan Godwyn, an Anglican minister who traveled in Virginia and Barbados, both of whom became pamphleteers in the cause. Morgan Godwyn testified that a Quaker had slipped a query into his hands which asked, "Who made you Ministers of the Gospel to the White People only and not to the Tawneys and Blacks also?" The truth of the accusation was enough to set him to pondering the injustice of the system and to initiate requests that the Church of England should concern itself with the condition of the slaves.[8]

By the first decade of the eighteenth century concern over slavery among the Friends had grown to the point where they were able to persuade the Pennsylvania Assembly to pass a law imposing a duty on slaves and then an outright prohibition against further importation. But pressure from the commercial interests in Great Britain proved too powerful for the Privy Council, which accordingly disallowed the colonial acts. It was clear to Pennsylvania Friends that they needed help from within the mother country to persuade the home government to support their restrictions, but their proposal that the London Yearly Meeting should

7. Thomas E. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1950), 29–32.

8. Morgan Godwyn, *The Negro's & Indians Advocate, Suing for Their Admission into the Church or A Persuasive to the Instructing and Baptizing of the Negro's and Indians in Our Plantations . . .* (London: J. D., 1680); Samuel Sewall, "The Selling of Joseph," reprinted in *Proceedings of the Massachusetts Historical Society*, VII (1863–1864), 161–162; Lawrence W. Towner, "The Sewall-Saffin Dialogue on Slavery," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd ser., XXI (1964), 40–52.

take counsel with Friends in all colonies, and on that basis formulate a policy, received a disappointing reception. London Friends admonished their Pennsylvania counterparts that the proper procedure would have been for them to consult with the other "plantations" first and then present the matter "conjunctly" to London. In fact, the London Yearly Meeting refused to take a position "until such time as it [the matter of slavery] is more generally represented." [9]

At least part of the explanation for the reluctance of English Quakers lies in the difficulty they were currently experiencing themselves. With the accession of Queen Anne to the throne, there had been a resurgence of High Church Tories and a consequent endangering of hard-won toleration for Quakers. Among the rights they were struggling to preserve was the one to affirm rather than to swear oaths. If they now pressed the attack on the slave trade, the Royal African Company would most surely retaliate, using its power in Parliament to defeat them on both issues. An additional handicap was that William Penn was suffering from apoplexy, which affected his mind. The loss of his leadership deprived the Friends of his valuable connections at court.[10]

Nevertheless, the Pennsylvania Friends persisted. They argued that since London had a more regular correspondence with the various colonies, its yearly meeting was in the best position to coordinate opinions. Besides, as the parent group, its leadership would carry more weight. It took until 1715 before the London meeting could be prodded to action, but considering their previous hesitancy, the directive of that year was amazingly strong: "That to be in any ways concerned in bringing negroes from their native country, and selling them for slaves, is a trade not fit for one professing truth to be concerned in." [11] Supported by such a declaration, the rural Quaker groups in Pennsylvania were encouraged to renew agitation in their own yearly meetings, despite some continuing disapproval on the part of the merchant opposi-

9. Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 180; Bowden, *History of the Society of Friends in America,* II, 196–199; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 24–26; James, *A People among Peoples,* 115.

10. James, *A People among Peoples,* 117–119.

11. Quoted in Bowden, *History of the Society of Friends in America,* II, 199–200.

tion. Because of the lack of consensus, the Pennsylvania society chose to avoid trouble by allowing local option within its own organization; the society in New England placated its merchant groups by rejecting an open condemnation of the trade.[12]

An irony of history, and one that presented a specific difficulty in the way of increased antislavery action, was that just at the time the Quakers and a few others were becoming aroused about the injustices of slavery, England's winning of the Asiento right from Spain in 1713 resulted in an increase in British capital investment in the lucrative slave trade, some of it Quaker money. Yet in 1718 the New York Yearly Meeting added its voice to those opposed to the trade by sending off an epistle to London that succeeded in eliciting another statement of disapprobation in 1720, although for several years thereafter the London Yearly Meeting maintained a discreet silence. The consequence was to throw back on the colonies the responsibility for keeping the issue alive. In 1722 members of the Virginia Yearly Meeting agreed to abstain from engaging in the slave trade, although they did not directly condemn it as such; in 1729 the Chester County Quarterly Meeting forced action in Pennsylvania by directing a query to the yearly meeting on the wrong done in the buying and importing of slaves. After reviewing all of its communications from London, the meeting concluded that all Friends should be very cautious about buying slaves, as such purchases were "disagreeable" to the meeting.[13]

By the middle of the eighteenth century antislavery doctrine was becoming more common in both the mother country and her colonies, and this era saw the rise of many outstanding individuals who felt a personal responsibility to agitate the cause and prick the consciences of their fellow Friends. Prominent among them were John Bell, Ralph Sandiford, Benjamin Lay, John Woolman, and Anthony Benezet. In response to Bell's pamphet of 1741, the Pennsylvania Yearly Meeting of 1743 posed the query "Do

12. Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 182–184.

13. John Cox, Jr., *Quakerism in the City of New York, 1657–1930* (New York: Privately printed, 1930), 56; Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 184–187.

Friends observe the former advices of our Yearly Meeting not to encourage the importation of negroes, nor to buy them after imported?" The New England Yearly Meeting recommended Bell's epistle to all members, and in 1744 it warned against buying Negroes imported by non-Quaker traders.[14] In doing so, they were rejecting the theory that all slaves were stolen goods—only those "illegally" obtained by unscrupulous traders. But at least they were attempting to adhere to the warning about receiving stolen goods that the Pennsylvania meeting had issued as early as 1730, and from that position it would be but a step to the higher one that all slaves were stolen and could not be held as property.

Like Bell, Sandiford and Lay both came from commercial backgrounds in England, and their dealings with the West Indies exposed them to the brutalities of slavery and aroused their crusading spirit to the point where they were willing to accept censure and even disownment by the society rather than soft-pedal their attacks. Sandiford's *The Mystery of Iniquity, in a Brief Examination of the Practice of the Times,* published anonymously by Benjamin Franklin in 1729, attacked slaveholding and slave trading as inconsistent with true spirituality. The chief justice of Pennsylvania threatened a severe penalty if the book circulated, but Sandiford disregarded the consequences and distributed it gratuitously. Despite the stern rebukes of more conservative Friends, perhaps as much for his contentious manner as for his radical ideas, he arranged for another edition of his work and appealed to the London Friends to bring pressure on his Philadelphia censors.[15] Since this was the period of London's cautious silence, his hopes were disappointed.

Lay inclined toward the extremely dramatic approach, typified in the well-known account of his coming to meeting dressed in a military uniform complete with sword and carrying what looked like a Bible but what was actually a bladder filled with red pokeberry juice. In his harangue against slaveholders he

14. Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 187; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 48–50.

15. Roberts Vaux, *Memoirs of the Lives of Benjamin Lay and Ralph Sandiford; Two of the Earliest Public Advocates for the Emancipation of the Enslaved Africans* (London: W. Phillips, 1816), 40; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 39–43; Bowden, *History of the Society of Friends in America,* II, 206.

cried out that one might as well plunge a sword into a slave as hold him in lifelong bondage, and at that dramatic moment he drew his sword and plunged it into the Bible, spraying the red juice, which appeared to be blood, over the startled people seated near him. On another occasion in the wintertime he sat outside a meetinghouse scantily clad, with one bare foot in the snow, to provoke questions and expressions of sympathy which would then give him an opportunity to retaliate with a rebuke and a return question about why people were not equally concerned for the sufferings of slaves.[16]

In direct contrast to the eccentric methods of Lay and Sandiford were those of their contemporary, John Woolman, a reluctant crusader. Conservative and reserved in temperament, he remained always the gentleman of good will who could deplore slaveholding without berating the slaveholder as an individual. But while outwardly retaining his faith that his fellow men would repent and give up slaveholding as they saw the light, his shrewd judgment of men told him that even Friends could not always be appealed to on wholly altruistic grounds. And so his pleas for actions based on the golden rule were intertwined with subtle emphasis on God's retribution against a people who violated his laws by denying that all men were brothers. Those who would not respond to the first appeal might, out of fear, consider the second. If God's wrath should be poured out, all Friends would suffer, presumably the nonslaveholding as well as those who were personally guilty, because all had failed to continue the testimony against such an evil. Therefore, his concern extended not only to the southern Quakers among whom he traveled and preached in 1746 and again in 1757, and to the Friends in the North who still owned slaves, but also to the society in England, whose testimony seemed to grow weaker rather than stronger with the passing years. Some English Quakers still had capital invested in the slave trade, and one of Woolman's major arguments was that the purchase of any merchandise which had been taken by

16. James, *A People among Peoples*, 124–126; David B. Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966), 320–325; Benjamin Lay, *All Slave-Keepers That Keep the Innocent in Bondage . . .* (Philadelphia, 1737).

the sword violated Quaker tenets. Woolman's conviction extended beyond the ending of the slave trade and slavery to persuading white people to accept black men as brothers.[17]

While his essays were aimed primarily at his fellow Americans, Woolman felt an increasing burden to carry his personal testimony to the mother country. By 1772 he was able to put his affairs in order and set out to attend the yearly meeting in London. Before it was over, he had earned the respect of the London Friends for his wisdom and judicious manner, so with their blessing he proceeded to meetings in various towns. Tragically his mission and his life were cut short. He died in York of smallpox, having given his last testimony against slavery in a meeting there.[18]

While most of the antislavery Quakers had been content to work among their own people, Anthony Benezet recognized the significance of the converging streams of antislavery thought and the need to capitalize on them: heightened consciousness of the slavery problem among the religious groups which had felt the impact of the "Great Awakening"; changing attitudes outside the ranks of organized religion, largely the product of the philosophy of the Enlightenment; and renewed vigor in Quaker antislavery sentiment. Benezet had the knack of maneuvering in the political world without losing touch with the Friends, and at the same time he could speak across denominational barriers to such allies as John Wesley. He typifies the diplomat as well as the reformer.

The new burst of antislavery vigor within the Quaker community was definitely connected to the general revival within that sect which had occurred during the crises of the French and Indian War. As Friends faced up to the necessity of renewing their testimony against war, they inevitably were led to examine other areas in which their standards had fallen, among them that of opposition to slavery. As a result of the moral revival that followed, the more "worldly" Friends lost their dominating influ-

17. John Woolman journal, microfilm, Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore, Pa.; Janet Payne Whitney, ed., *The Journal of John Woolman* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1950); Bowden, *History of the Society of Friends in America,* II, 219.

18. Whitney, ed., *Journal of John Woolman,* 177–210; G. David Houston, "John Woolman's Efforts in Behalf of Freedom," *Journal of Negro History,* II (Jan., 1917), 126–138.

ence in meeting, leaving the field open for the reforming faction. As their strictures were enforced, lukewarm members withdrew from the Society of Friends to seek religious folds less demanding of sacrifice, thus leaving the reformers that much more in control.[19]

The London Yearly Meeting for Sufferings in 1757 decided that the next yearly meeting should take up the issue of slavery, and in preparation all previous "Minutes" and "Advices" on the subject were directed to be sent to all English and colonial quarterly meetings. In pursuance of these instructions a committee was appointed. It included Jos. Bease; Dr. John Fothergill (a royal physician); four merchants engaged in Anglo-American shipping: Robert Bell, Philip Eliot, Henton Brown, and John Sherwin; and Richard Partridge, the parliamentary agent for the Society of Friends. Their work was productive: in 1758 the yearly meeting issued an exhortation to all Quakers to avoid reaping profits in any way from Negroes or other slaves in violation of the Gospel.[20]

While the Quakers were putting their house in order, the effects of the Great Awakening were producing a similar concern over slavery among some of the Methodists, who constituted another transatlantic link. After George Whitefield's visit to the southern colonies in the 1730s, he wrote to the inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, and South Carolina to remonstrate with them on the treatment of slaves and to warn them of God's vengeance.[21] Although John Wesley did not write his *Thoughts upon Slavery* until 1774, when he had been stimulated by reading Benezet's works, his anxiety about the slaves can be dated to a much earlier period. He, too, traveled in the South in the 1730s and expressed great despair over the state of ignorance prevailing among the slaves and the lack of any attempt by most masters to teach them. He thought the blacks capable of instruction and suggested that some plan should be worked out to have a teacher

19. James, *A People among Peoples*, 169, 216–217, 221; Davis, *Problem of Slavery in Western Culture*, 331; Roberts Vaux, *Memoirs of the Life of Anthony Benezet* (Philadelphia: James P. Park, 1817), 123–127.

20. Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 191–192.

21. William Dickson, *Mitigation of Slavery* (London: R. and A. Taylor, 1814).

travel from plantation to plantation accompanied by some carefully chosen slaves who understood English and could be of assistance. By the 1750s Wesley was carrying on a correspondence with the Reverend Samuel Davies of Virginia on the subject, and he sent over books for Davies to distribute among his Negro converts.[22] The exertions of Wesley and Davies most certainly influenced the future Bishop Francis Asbury, who was to become one of Methodism's strongest antislavery leaders in the postrevolutionary period.

Along with, and reinforcing, the religious impulses to antislavery action were two additional factors: the growth of humanitarianism in late eighteenth-century England and the spread of the philosophy of the Enlightenment with its emphasis on natural rights and the equality of man. As increasing industrialization produced new social conditions and tensions, there was a concurrent development of reform organizations protesting unemployment, intemperance, prison abuses, debtors' prisons, and poverty itself. It is possible that recognition of cruelty and exploitation of the poor white worker forced attention on abuses in the acquisition and use of slave labor. For the first time, as Professor Klingberg has pointed out, discussions of the economics of slavery began to have some "heart" in them, and attacks on the system, even by philosophers, were shifting to a moral basis and away from the old Aristotelian theory that some men are natural slaves. Professor David B. Davis has suggested that expressions of British capitalistic philanthropy and paternalism may have been consciously directed toward colonial slavery in order to shift the focus from the plight of English workers at home, on the theory that it would be far more discreet to experiment with benevolence at a safe distance.[23]

22. *The Works of John Wesley,* 14 vols. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, reproduced by photo-offset from 1872 ed.), I, 40, 48–49; II, 337, 354–356, 391–392 (hereinafter cited as Wesley, *Works*).

23. Frank J. Klingberg, "The Evolution of the Humanitarian Spirit in Eighteenth-Century England," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* LXVI (1942), 260–278; Wylie Sypher, "Hutcheson and the 'Classical' Theory of Slavery," *Journal of Negro History,* XXIV (July, 1939), 263–280; Davis, *Problem of Slavery in Western Culture,* especially chs. XI and XIII. It does not seem to me that the theses presented by Klingberg and Davis are necessarily antagonistic.

While there were certainly conservative aspects of Enlightenment philosophy that could be, and were, mustered in defense of slavery as part of the natural order, the result was that the institution was subjected to an intellectual scrutiny that led to the formulation of strong antislavery arguments based upon the natural rights of man. It was the latter current of Enlightenment thinking, which opposed the idea that some men were natural slaves, that Anthony Benezet lived to take advantage of. Through his friendship with such "Men of the Age" as Benjamin Franklin and Benjamin Rush in America, Granville Sharp in England, and the Abbé Raynal in France, he helped to coordinate their efforts with those of antislavery Quakers.

Benezet's major contribution to the transatlantic connection lay in his vast correspondence as well as in the publication of his pamphlets, with the former reinforcing the effectiveness of the latter and helping to assure their wider circulation. The first, *Observations on the Inslaving, Importing and Purchasing of Negroes,* came out in 1759, the same year that the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting renewed its pressure on London by transmitting a letter to the Meeting for Sufferings that reminded its members of their earnest desire "to warn and caution against the practice in dealing in Negro & other slaves" and admonished Friends everywhere to "endeavor to keep their Hands clean of this Unrighteous Gain of Oppression." [24] Within the year a second edition of Benezet's pamphlet was issued, and by 1761 some Friends were ready to act. On March 24 the annual letter from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to the London Yearly Meeting not only expressed concern over the oppression of slavery but reported that a petition had been sent to the Pennsylvania legislature to discourage any further importation, with the result that a duty had been levied for that purpose. A similar petition was being considered in New Jersey as well. Acknowledgment was also made in the

24. [Anthony Benezet], *Observations on the Inslaving, Importing and Purchasing of Negroes with Some Advice Thereon . . .* (Germantown, Pa.: C. Sower, 1759); Meeting for Sufferings in Philadelphia to the Meeting for Sufferings in London, Feb. 1, 1759, Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Society of Friends, Friends House Library, London.

letter of the apparent growing concern within other religious groups.[25]

Response from London this time was most positive: "We take particular notice of the Hint towards the close of your Epistle respecting the Inconsistency of that unrighteous traffick of dealing in Slaves, with our Christian profession . . ."; they also agreed to a "strong minute" "that such who are concerned in that Trade, after being duely admonished, shall be testified against." [26] At long last the parent organization would impose the penalty of disownment. With this example, the American meetings could act with greater confidence, and the very next year a Pennsylvania Friend who refused to free his slaves suffered that consequence.[27]

While there is no doubt that this step forward was partially the result of the Quaker revival of the 1750s and partially the recognition of growing support from those denominations affected by the Great Awakening, one must also consider a nonreligious, economic factor. In 1750 England's Asiento right was terminated. Perhaps an anticipation of a resulting decline in their trade made English merchants more amenable or receptive to abolitionist arguments. And in the American colonies the "dumping" of surplus slave cargoes in such ports as New York and Philadelphia when they could no longer be sold in the Spanish colonies may have heightened apprehensions and induced antislavery actions motivated by fear as well as by benevolence.[28] Writing to an English friend, Joseph Phips, in 1763, Benezet noted that the trade seemed to be increasing in the northern colonies and reiterated his fears of the danger already existing in the southern colonies because of the disproportionate numbers of blacks and whites.[29] Benezet was horrified at the thought of a

25. Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to London Yearly Meeting, Mar. 24, 1761, Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

26. London Yearly Meeting to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, 1761, Friends Historical Library.

27. Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 202.

28. *Ibid.*, 194; see also Edgar J. McManus, *A History of Negro Slavery in New York* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1966), 28–29.

29. Anthony Benezet to Joseph Phips, May 28, 1763, Spriggs Mss 156.56, Friends House Library. Benezet makes no mention of the Asiento but attributes

slave revolt. In a letter to David Barclay asking that one of his pamphlets be put into the hands of powerful and influential people "on your side of the water," he admitted that much could have been said of the danger inherent in the racial imbalance in the South but ". . . this was thought to be of too tender a nature to be exposed to view, in places where it might fall into the hands of the Negroes." [30] Benezet was at the time much troubled by rumors of an impending Negro revolt in Surinam.

One of Benezet's most widely circulated works was *A Caution and a Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies* (1766). It was also one of his most challenging, because he struck exactly the chord bound to evoke the most sympathy, given the mood of the age. "At a time when the general rights and liberties of mankind . . . are become so much the subjects of universal consideration," he asked, "can it be an inquiry indifferent to any, how many of those who distinguish themselves as the Advocates of Liberty remain insensible and inattentive to the treatment of thousands and tens of thousands of our fellow men, who . . . are at this very time kept in the most deplorable state of slavery . . . [?]" Two thousand copies of this essay were sent to the Society of Friends in London with the request that it be reprinted there and copies put in the hands of the Members of Parliament.[31] The London Yearly Meeting sent agents to distribute it in such public schools as Eton, Harrow, Westminster, Winchester, and St. Paul's. Professor Carter Woodson has commented that perhaps it was no coincidence that out of these schools were to come many of the leaders of the British abolition movement.[32]

The very years that saw the rift widening between Great Brit-

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the increased trade to new factories the English had established on the Senegal River.

30. Copy of Benezet to David Barclay, Apr. 29, 1767, Mss Portfolio 38.87, Friends House Library. Barclay was a London merchant engaged in the American trade.

31. Anthony Benezet, *A Caution and a Warning to Great Britain and Her Colonies, in a Short Representation of the Calamitous State of the Enslaved Negroes in the British Dominions* (Philadelphia: H. Miller, 1766); George S. Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1937), 82–83.

32. Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 83; Carter G. Woodson, "Anthony Benezet," *Journal of Negro History,* II (Jan., 1917), 39–50.

ain and her North American colonies, as men argued over taxation, restrictions on trade, and the rights of colonial legislatures, witnessed a growing cooperation among antislavery people. Both Benezet and Granville Sharp led the way in publishing pamphlets that were exchanged, reprinted, circulated, corresponded about, and discussed, creating a heightened awareness of common endeavor. It was Benezet who suggested to both Benjamin Franklin and John Wesley that they consult with Sharp on lines of common action. Benezet and Wesley had discussed the idea of some weekly publication in the newspapers on the subject of the slave trade, since many well-minded people were ignorant of the facts and could not be expected to act until informed. Sharp could count on Franklin to use his influence wherever possible.[33]

It was through this correspondence and the reading of Benezet's works that Wesley was led to write his *Thoughts upon Slavery* in 1774. Benezet took the same liberty in abridging it as he had with Sharp's work, and he quickly arranged for publication in Philadelphia the same year it came out in London. Actually, Wesley's tract contains much repetition of material from Benezet's *Some Historical Account of Guinea;* in fact, some of it appears to have been lifted bodily. But since all of these men were thinking of the cause they were serving rather than indulging their egos as authors, there was appreciation rather than hard feelings over such borrowings. Wesley, too, appealed to the spirit of the times: "Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air. And no human law can deprive him of that right, which he derives from the law of nature." [34]

In addition to the exchange of publications and to an active transoceanic correspondence, another vital bond was formed between American and British abolitionists by travelers who acted as a sort of personal diplomatic corps for Benezet. For example,

33. Benezet to Sharp, May 14, 1772, and to Samuel Allinson, Nov. 5, 1770, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 290–293 and 280; Prince Hoare, ed., *Memoirs of Granville Sharp . . .* , 2 vols., 2nd ed. (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), I, 145, 150–154 (hereinafter cited as Sharp, *Memoirs*).

34. John Wesley, *Thoughts upon Slavery* (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1774); Benezet to Wesley, May 23, 1774, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 318–321. See also pp. 84–85.

his letter to Wesley of May, 1774, was carried in person by William Dillwyn, who also made contact on that visit with Granville Sharp. Dillwyn returned to America, but just before the outbreak of the Revolution he went back to England to settle. There he helped to establish an organization of antislavery Friends, and just at the end of the Revolution he was called on again by Benezet, this time to deliver a letter to Queen Charlotte to the American painter Benjamin West, who had volunteered to present it to Her Majesty.[35] Another of Benezet's emissaries was Samuel Fothergill, brother of John Fothergill, the royal physician of antislavery persuasion. As a Quaker minister Samuel had traveled in the American colonies in 1754–1756 and by the 1770s was traveling in Great Britain. He operated, therefore, in a manner which was ideal for publicizing Benezet's work.[36]

The Gurney family of Norwich exemplifies an Anglo-American connection that was to last through several generations from the time Benezet began his correspondence with them in the prerevolutionary period. Right down to the American Civil War the Gurneys continued to correspond with, and exchange visits with, American abolitionists. Benezet was confident that if Friends moved ahead, other religious people would follow.[37] The Gurneys responded wholeheartedly and, once involved, were to remain in the forefront of antislavery activity.

Benjamin Franklin's presence in England as an agent of the colonies in the early 1770s proved to be a distinct advantage to the abolitionists. It is remarkable that he had time or mind to devote the attention he did to the antislavery cause while he was so involved in attempting to explain and justify colonial opposition to Great Britain's post–French and Indian War "New Policy." Benezet acknowledged to Franklin his realization of the

35. Bowden, *History of the Society of Friends in America,* II, 217; Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 85, 100; Benezet to Charlotte, Queen of Great Britain, Aug. 25, 1783, in Vaux, *Memoirs of . . . Benezet,* 38–41.

36. Benezet to Samuel Fothergill, Oct., 1771, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 280–281.

37. Benezet to John Henry Gurney, Jan. 10, 1772, copy in Gurney Mss, Sect. I, 50A, Friends House Library. Benezet uses practically identical wording in another letter, to Richard Shackleton, an Irish philanthropist, June 6, 1772, printed in the *Non-Slaveholder,* Apr., 1846.

"full business on thy hands" but nonetheless did not hesitate to ask him to "deeply consider whether something may not be in thy power towards an effectual step, & a kind of basis layd for the removal, in time (if not at present) of that terrible evil."[38] At Benezet's suggestion Franklin made the acquaintance of Granville Sharp and reported to his friend that "we shall act in Concert in the Affair of Slavery."[39] He made a point of calling on Phillis Wheatley, the Negro poetess from New England, and offered her his services while she was in London. Her poems, first published there in 1773, attracted wide attention and furnished another piece of evidence for the antislavery contention that the Negro was not inherently inferior.[40] Thomas Clarkson later remarked that if slavery should be determined by ability, in comparison with Phillis Wheatley most of the inhabitants of Great Britain must lose their claim to freedom.[41]

From time to time Benezet supplied Franklin with copies of his pamphlets for distribution where they would do the most good, and Franklin used parts of Benezet's letters as springboards for articles of his own. One article of his, published in the *Public Advertiser* in 1770, employed the device of an imaginary conversation between an Englishman and an American on the topic of slavery.[42] Another, appearing in the *London Chronicle* in the summer of 1772, taunted the British about their hypocrisy in priding themselves on having set one Negro free but all the while continuing and encouraging the slave trade.[43] Franklin's refer-

38. Benezet to Franklin, Apr. 27, 1772, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 287–290.

39. Franklin to Benezet, Feb. 10, 1773, in *ibid.*, 423–424.

40. Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 187; Edward D. Seeber, *Anti-Slavery Opinion in France during the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century*, extra vol. X of the *Johns Hopkins Studies in Romance Literatures and Languages* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1937), 127.

41. [Thomas Clarkson], *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, Particularly the African . . .* (London: James Phillips, 1786), 172–175.

42. This letter of Franklin's, appearing over the signature "N.N.," has been identified by Professor Verner W. Crane in "Benjamin Franklin on Slavery and American Liberties," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, LXII (1938), 1–11.

43. Franklin to Benezet, Aug. 22, 1772, quoted in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 91.

enees were to the slave Somerset, freed by judieial decision in 1772 on the ground that "free soil makes free men," and to the government's refusal almost immediately thereafter to act favorably on the Virginia petition to remove the legal encumbranees which prevented that eolony from prohibiting further importation of slaves. The two almost simultaneous deeisions definitely left the British wide open to the eharge that they were quite willing to be humanitarian at home but would not allow their eolonists to be so if vital economic investments were threatened.

Eaeh of these decisions evoked strong reaetions in the Amerieaan eolonies. The Somerset judgment was, of eourse, hailed with delight by antislavery leaders, who felt that their efforts might have had some influenee in the matter. Just before the case was tried in the Court of King's Beneh, eopies of Benezet's abridgment of Sharp's book arrived in London under the eare of John Fothergill. They were immediately distributed to Lord Mansfield, the judge in the ease; Lord North, the First Lord Commissioner of the Treasury; and to four of the eounsel who had undertaken to plead for Somerset. Between the time the case was tried in February, 1772, and June, when judgment was given, Benezet's abridgment was published in London, and his most reeent pamphlet, *Some Historical Account of Guinea,* had just eome off the press in late 1771.[44]

Onee the deeision had been handed down that slavery eould not legally exist on the soil of England, was it not reasonable to expeet the next step: to end it in the colonies? At least so the abolitionists hoped, and Granville Sharp suggested as mueh in a letter to Lord North. Sharp was especially worried that the West Indian planters might aet to obtain definite legislation to seeure their slave property before any move eould be made to extend the applieation of the Somerset deeision to the whole empire.[45] In

44. Sharp, *Memoirs,* I, 104–117, 122; Franeis Hargrave, *An Argument in the Case of James Somersett, a Negro* . . . (London: W. Otridge, 1772); Benezet to Samuel Fothergill, Oct. 24, 1771, and Sharp to Benezet, Aug. 21, 1772, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 280–281 and 418–422.

45. Sharp, *Memoirs,* I, 117–120. The deeision applied to England, Wales, and Ireland but not to Scotland. Slavery in Scotland was ended by the Knight deeision of 1778. An English Tory, writing on the American Revolution and accusing the

fact, he reported to Benezet that Lord Mansfield himself had recommended such action to the planters. All along Judge Mansfield had seemed personally inclined against Somerset. Several times he had adjourned the case and counseled the owner to set his slave free in order to avoid a judicial decision. However, both sides were confident of victory and insisted on continuing, and Mansfield was then forced by the argument to render judgment in favor of Somerset. Following Mansfield's advice to the planters, a motion was introduced in the House of Commons that provided guarantees for slave property in the West Indies. It failed, but there was every possibility that the attempt would be renewed in the next session.[46]

Sharp was determined that antislavery opposition should stand ready and was doing what he could to marshal votes in Parliament. One of his tactics was to persuade the bishops to present memorials to the king, but he insisted that the colonists must exert their energies too. His advice to the Americans demonstrated that he was thoroughly aware of the debate then being waged over the distinction between parliamentary and royal power as they applied in the colonies, and it revealed that he was sympathetic to the American point of view. He reminded Benezet that while all petitions concerning the slave trade (an "external" question) should properly go to Parliament, those dealing with the question of internal slavery must be submitted to the king if the colonial legislatures wanted to maintain consistency between their actions and their arguments. Moreover, such petitions ought to be presented by the colonial agent, because adhering to regular channels would more favorably impress the government. In addition, he suggested that pressure on Lord Dartmouth, Secre-

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Americans of inconsistency in not extending the liberty they cried about to Negro slaves, contended that the Somerset decision applied to English colonial soil as well as to the mother country. See Arthur Zilversmit, *The First Emancipation: The Abolition of Slavery in the North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 97.

46. Klingberg, "Evolution of the Humanitarian Spirit in Eighteenth-Century England"; Sharp to Benezet, Aug. 21, 1772, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 418–422.

tary of State for the Colonies, might be efficacious "were he applied to from your side of the water." [47]

It was in April, 1772, while judgment was pending in the Somerset case, that the Virginia House of Burgesses submitted its petition to the king, the first such colonial plea against the slave trade since that of South Carolina had been rejected in 1760. The Virginia address implored His Majesty's assistance in averting a calamity of alarming nature. The slave trade, their statement ran, was not only inhumane, but it endangered the safety of the colonies, and the importation of slave labor prevented the settlement of the colonies by "more useful Inhabitants." They hoped the king would weigh the happiness and security of his colonial subjects in the balance against the profits enjoyed by only a few.[48]

Benezet was cheered by the fact that such an address could come from a planting colony, and he found hope in thinking that the iniquity was being noticed even by the "lordly oppressors themselves." [49] When the Virginia Quakers requested aid from the London Friends, the London Meeting for Sufferings appointed a committee under David Barclay to visit the First Lord of Trade to urge the acceptance of the Burgesses' petition. Despite some opposition to this "interference" by the Quakers, the committee continued to visit influential men in the government.[50] The London meeting also exerted pressure by writing to the Maryland Yearly Meeting and the Meetings for Sufferings in Pennsylvania and New Jersey to praise Virginia's efforts, obviously hinting that her action should be emulated. Copies of this London epistle were sent on by the Maryland Friends to both houses of their own legislature.[51]

47. Sharp to Benezet, Aug. 21, 1772, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 418–422.

48. Copy of the address, dated Apr. 8, 1772, Mss Portfolio 21.30, Friends House Library.

49. Benezet to Samuel Fothergill, June 19, 1772, Mss Portfolio 21.30, Friends House Library.

50. Gary, "Political and Economic Relations of English and American Quakers," 221–222.

51. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 86; to Meeting for Sufferings of Friends in Pennsylvania and New Jersey, Oct. 2, 1772, Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

In New Jersey Benezet's friend Samuel Allinson saw to the drawing up of petitions to the king, the House of Lords, and the House of Commons. Benezet circulated the petitions in Philadelphia and evidently had enough signatures to send them, but for some reason at the last minute he and John Pemberton, clerk of the Philadelphia meeting, decided to hold them up, and there is no record of their being subsequently sent.[52] The likeliest explanation seems to be that Benezet became convinced it would be more effective to act through the Pennsylvania Assembly. At any rate, in the spring of 1773 Friends in the area of Philadelphia did submit a petition to their colonial assembly asking that body to petition king and Parliament "to consider the unhappy consequences of continuing the Slave Trade," citing the example set by Virginia. Though admitting the evil of the trade, the Assembly concluded it would be more directly effective for them to pass a law imposing a prohibitive duty on slaves imported and to request the provincial agent, Benjamin Franklin, to solicit the aid of British Quakers in obtaining approval of the law.[53] Benezet wrote to Franklin, to Dr. John Fothergill, and to others who might help, among them the Irish philanthropist Richard Shackleton, who had a "connection" (probably Edmund Burke) in Parliament.[54]

Franklin cooperated by publishing, with remarks of his own, the address Dr. Arthur Lee, brother of Richard Henry Lee, had made in 1771 to the Virginia House of Burgesses on the subject of slavery. One of Dr. Lee's complaints against slavery was its danger to the community, not simply because of the constant threat of insurrection but because it was inherently a destructive system. It operated against the development of the arts and sciences and produced vices in both slave and master.[55] Dr. Lee had earned his M.D. at the University of Edinburgh, and his per-

52. Allinson to Benezet, Nov. 19, 1772, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 422–423; Benezet to Allinson, Nov. 30, 1772, in Vaux, *Memoirs of . . . Benezet*, 47–48.

53. Philadelphia Meeting for Sufferings to London Meeting for Sufferings, Apr. 22, 1773, Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

54. Benezet to John Fothergill, Apr. 28, 1773, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 302–308; Benezet to Richard Shackleton, June 6, 1772, in the *Non-Slaveholder*, Apr., 1846, and in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 293–296. It is Brookes who says the "connection" was Burke.

55. Franklin to Benezet, Aug. 22, 1772, and Benezet to Robert Pleasants, Apr.

sonal friendships with people in Great Britain increased the probability that his words would gain a wide hearing.

Another physician and outstanding philanthropist of the time, Benjamin Rush of Philadelphia, was also persuaded to support the cause. At Benezet's request he wrote *An Address to the Inhabitants of the British Settlements on the Slavery of Negroes in America,* to accompany the petition of the Pennsylvania legislature. Rush, like Lee, went to Edinburgh to complete his medical education, met many prominent people there who were interested in the cause of the slave, and returned home determined to do more for the Negro. One of his ideas was to advocate the cultivation of sugar maples as competition for slave-grown West Indian sugar.[56] Robert Pleasants, one of Benezet's Virginia correspondents, was so pleased with the masterful manner in which "the Phisition" had handled the subject of slavery that he sent Rush's *Address* to be reprinted in the *Virginia Gazette.* On the whole, however, Pleasants feared they were operating in the wrong way by sending petitions to king and Parliament. Despite man's good intentions, he had no illusions that virtue existed in sufficient quantity to withstand the vested interests in the slave trade. His proposal was that the colonies work internally. They could set up a system of indentures for Negroes as for other immigrant labor. This had more chance of being approved by king and Privy Council.[57]

Besides publishing antislavery items in the *Gazette,* Pleasants acted as a sort of Virginia agent for Benezet. Among other things, he visited and delivered books to Patrick Henry in the hope of drawing him into the cause. Yet, despite an unqualified denun-

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8, 1773, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 422 and 298–302; [Arthur Lee], *Extract from an Address in the Virginia Gazette, of March 19, 1767* (n.p., n.d.).

56. George W. Corner, ed., *The Autobiography of Benjamin Rush: His "Travels through Life" together with His Commonplace Book for 1789–1813* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1948), 82–83; Rush to Sharp, May 1, 1773, and Sharp to Rush, Feb. 21, 1774, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 445–447 and 93–95. Although Rush's pamphlet had a wide circulation in the United States and stirred up a heated exchange with a West Indian planter in Nevis, Granville Sharp was unable to find an English editor to reprint it.

57. Robert Pleasants to Benezet, Feb. 22, 1774, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 425–426.

ciation of slavery, Henry confessed that he had bought and owned slaves and was "drawn along by the general inconvenience of Living without them." [58] Patrick Henry, like many of his contemporaries who signed their names to the Declaration of Independence, with its "truths" about inalienable rights and equality, was not able to match philosophy with practice.

One of the influential Britishers who took note of Franklin's attack on English hypocrisy in their willingness to set one Negro slave free while refusing to stop the trade in human beings was Samuel Johnson, long an outspoken advocate of abolition. As early as 1756 he had described Jamaica as "a den of tyrants and a dungeon of slaves," and at Oxford in a company of notables he gave the toast: "Here's to the next insurrection of the negroes in the West Indies." Now, on the eve of the American Revolution, he agreed with Franklin that England had no right to reproach America because the mother country shared heavily in the guilt of establishing slavery in the colonies and had neglected to try to remedy that wrong when she refused to accept Virginia's non-importation attempt. After the Declaration of Independence he was more critical of Americans. "How is it," he asked, "that we hear the loudest *yelps* for liberty among the drivers of Negroes?" [59]

By 1774 it was clear that petitions to king and Parliament were a waste of time. Not only was the Virginia plea rejected, but the 1773 attempts of Pennsylvania and Georgia to tax the slave trade had been disallowed. In Massachusetts the royal governor re-

58. "Patrick Henry's Letter on reading Anthony Benezet's Treatise on the Slave Trade," Jan. 18, 1773, Mss Portfolio 17/28, Friends House Library. It is Brookes who identifies the letter as written to Robert Pleasants.

59. James Boswell, *Life of Johnson,* ed. George Birkbeck Hill, rev. and enlgd. ed. by L. F. Powell, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1934), III, 200–201, Appendix A, 476–477. Darold Wax has pointed out that in at least one colony, Georgia, it was the Americans who insisted on having slavery and slave importation over the protests of the British. See Darold Wax, "Georgia and the Negro before the American Revolution," *Georgia Historical Quarterly,* LI (Mar., 1967), 63–77. Since this chapter was written, another article by Darold Wax supports the idea of colonial responsibility for the slave trade. See Darold Wax, "Negro Import Duties in Colonial Virginia: A Study in British Commercial Policy and Local Public Policy," *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography,* LXXIX (Jan., 1971), 29–44.

fused to sign a bill prohibiting slave importations.[60] Consequently, lacking redress through normal legal channels on this issue as on other colonial grievances, the Americans determined to employ more drastic means: economic boycott. Since the slave trade was an important part of the imperial trade, a boycott could be an effective weapon, and with most of the American slave markets overstocked in 1774, there would be no immediate hardship resulting in the colonies. Benezet threw himself wholeheartedly behind the idea and pressured delegates to the Continental Congress to support such a plan.[61] The resolution of Congress and the second article of association read: "We will neither import nor purchase, any slave imported after the first day of December next; after which time, we will wholly discontinue the slave trade, and will neither be concerned in it ourselves, nor will we hire our vessels, nor sell our commodities or manufacturers to those who are concerned in it." [62]

Despite statements of the antislavery people themselves, such as that of Benjamin Rush to Granville Sharp that non-importation "was proposed and defended entirely upon *moral* and not political principles," [63] it is impossible to determine to what extent the boycott reflected genuine concern over the trade per se and to what extent it was being used as a potentially strong lever against the British. With the coming of the Revolution, the focus of abolitionist agitation had to shift, but the habit of Anglo-American cooperation was so firmly established that there was no doubt it would continue to exist despite the severance of political ties.

60. *Acts of the Privy Council,* Colonial Ser., V, 398–399, 403–404; Zilversmit, *First Emancipation,* 102.

61. W. E. B. DuBois, *The Suppression of the African Slave-Trade to the United States of America, 1638–1870,* Harvard Historical Studies, vol. I (New York: Longmans, Green, 1896), 41; Zilversmit, *First Emancipation,* 98.

62. *American Archives,* 4th ser., I (Washington, D.C.: M. St. Clair Clarke and Peter Force, 1837), 686–687, 735; *Journals of the Continental Congress, 1774–1789,* I (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1904), 43, 77.

63. Rush to Sharp, Nov. 1, 1774, in John A. Woods, ed., "The Correspondence of Benjamin Rush and Granville Sharp, 1773–1809," *Journal of American Studies,* I (Apr., 1967), 1–38.

The Impact of the Revolution

II

Instead of succumbing to the antipathies engendered by the war spirit, American and British abolitionists were able to maintain friendly relations with each other and a unity of vision by viewing the American Revolution as evidence of God's judgment on his guilty children in both countries. "If the British Parliament had not given a sanction to the African trade," Benjamin Rush wrote to Granville Sharp, "I should suppose . . . that the colonies only would be punished for making slaves of the poor Africans by a loss of their liberty. But it is to be feared both countries are about to expiate their guilt." [1] Anthony Benezet lamented that "notwithstanding the rights and liberties of mankind have been so much the object of publick notice, yet the same corrupt principles still maintain their power in the minds of most Slave Holders." Guilt toward the Indian as well as toward the Negro, he believed, would surely bring the white man to drink the same "cup of bitterness" that had long been forced on the slave, and, to Benezet, was already apparent in "those heavy judgments, which are now so sensibly displayed over the colonies." [2] The Reverend

1. Rush to Sharp, July 9, 1774, in Woods, ed., "Correspondence of Benjamin Rush and Granville Sharp."

2. Anthony Benezet, *Serious Considerations on Several Important Subjects . . . Observations on Slavery . . .* (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1778).

Samuel Hopkins, pastor of the First Congregational Church in Newport, Rhode Island, saw the war not only as a punishment for the guilty but also as an opportunity for redemption. The year the Declaration of Independence was signed, he published *A Dialogue Concerning the Slavery of the Africans,* in which he charged Congress with the responsibility of bringing universal liberty to both black and white and denounced as shocking the "gross, barefaced, inconsistence" between the struggle with Great Britain for freedom and the simultaneous oppression of thousands of poor blacks by these same "Sons of Liberty." [3]

The Revolution cut off the steady lines of communication established by British and American antislavery advocates. Yet, because of heightened interest in the whole subject of liberty, and because of the role of Negroes, free and slave, in the Revolution, abolitionists in both countries were more than ever simultaneously concerned. While Benezet was exerting most of his wartime energy trying to influence the Continental Congress, his zeal also extended to taking advantage of the presence of British officials in Philadelphia. His idea seems to have been that since it was doubtful which side might prove to be victorious, it was foolish to neglect either one. Consequently, with Lord Howe's headquarters so close at hand, Benezet took the opportunity to ply him with abolitionist literature. Since Benezet's philosophy that American slaveholders were being punished for their guilt admirably suited the British, who could cast themselves in the role of God's avenging angels, it was easy for Howe to make a courteous and sympathetic response. If all the world would but accept Benezet's principles, he agreed, they would be spared the present troubles and miseries, which were God's punishments of wicked men.[4]

Benezet's efforts to influence the Continental Congress began soon after its first meeting in the fall of 1774. His emphasis was on the necessity of stopping the slave trade; but, looking ahead to the postwar period, he also attempted to interest American

3. Quoted in David S. Lovejoy, "Samuel Hopkins: Religion, Slavery and the Revolution," *New England Quarterly,* XL (June, 1967), 227–243.

4. Ambrose Searle, secretary to Lord Howe, to Benezet, June 2, 1778, in Vaux, *Memoirs of . . . Benezet,* 42–44.

leaders in the possibility of colonizing freed slaves somewhere between the Allegheny Mountains and the Mississippi River.[5] As the war was drawing to a close in 1781, he published another pamphlet, *Short Observations on Slavery,* in which he reminded the Congress of its noble pronouncements in the Declaration of Independence and called for serious consideration of the degree to which these self-evident "truths" were not being applied in the case of the black population. His recommendation was a plan for gradual emancipation: the offspring of all present slaves should be declared free as each reached a designated age, or slaves could be given an interest in their labor that would enable them gradually to buy their own freedom—a plan similar to one that Granville Sharp had proposed just before the war interrupted communications.[6]

Without doubt the lapse in Anglo-American antislavery cooperation during the years of the Revolution may be attributed in great measure to the general severing of ties and lines of correspondence between the two countries. Another factor was that the war brought a temporary suspension of the slave trade, and abolitionists were generally optimistic that the prohibition against slave importation by the Continental Congress would become the basis of a permanent policy. Before the war had ended, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Virginia, North Carolina, and Georgia had banned the slave trade, and Pennsylvania had taken the lead in providing for the beginning of emancipation of all slaves within her borders. Many Americans assumed that the use of Negro troops would lay a foundation for emancipation, and in several states it did.[7]

Although it could not be apparent at the time, possibly the greatest significance of the Revolution for the antislavery cause

5. Benezet to [?], Oct. 23, 1774, in *ibid.,* 54; Benezet to John Wesley, May 23, 1774, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 107, 318–321.

6. [Anthony Benezet], *Short Observations on Slavery, Introductory to Some Extracts from the Writing of the Abbe Raynal, on That Important Subject* [Philadelphia, 1781]; Sharp to Rush, July 18, 1775, in Woods, ed., "Correspondence of Benjamin Rush and Granville Sharp."

7. See, for example, William Whipple to Josiah Bartlett, Mar. 28, 1779, in Edmund C. Burnett, ed., *Letters of Members of the Continental Congress,* 8 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1921), IV, 121–122.

lay in the fact of the separation of the empire. This eventually simplified the task of the British government in emancipating slaves in the West Indies because the planters there were not powerful enough alone to oppose successfully imperial policy made in the mother country. Had the empire remained intact, a combination of West Indian and southern continental planters might have been more influential. Moreover, increasing industrialization coinciding with profits from a new cotton kingdom still under the British flag may have been a combination too strong for abolitionist pressure.

By the end of the Revolution plans for gradual but complete emancipation were under way in all of the northern states and were being discussed in some southern states, notably Delaware and Virginia. Emancipationist hopes were badly shaken, consequently, when unmistakable evidence indicated that the slave trade was reviving as the war ended, particularly the English trade between Africa and the West Indies. In the United States, too, there was a renewed demand for slaves at the end of the Revolution, partly owing to losses because of slaves carried off by the British and also because of the anticipation of westward expansion to the new boundary of the Mississippi River. General Lafayette voiced the dismay of the abolitionists generally when he wrote to John Adams to say how much disturbed he was by the news of the perpetuation of the odious slave trade under the flag of liberty, "our dear and noble stripes." [8]

To both British and American abolitionists their task at the end of the war appeared to be clear-cut: they must prevent a reopening of the slave market in the United States by stopping the expansion of slavery into the new western lands and, if possible, by general emancipation. They must also obtain a British law and, in America, federal legislation against the foreign slave trade. Anthony Benezet, although over seventy years old when

8. Lafayette to Adams, Feb. 22, 1786, in Charles Francis Adams, ed., *The Works of John Adams,* 10 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1850–1856), VIII, 376–377. At the end of the war Lafayette bought an estate in Cayenne with the purpose of emancipating the slaves on it, after Washington had rejected his suggestion that they engage in such a venture together. See Washington to Lafayette, May 10, 1786, in Jared Sparks, ed., *The Writings of George Washington,* 12 vols. (Boston: Hilliard, Gray & Co., 1834–1837), IX, 158–160.

the Revolution ended, again provided the leadership. Letters to Granville Sharp, William and George Dillwyn, Morris Birkbeck, David Barclay, and John Gough, among others, were sent off in the first months of 1783.[9] If other religious groups would not help carry the burden, the Quakers must act alone; but action there must be, and immediately, he insisted.

In London the Friends responded quickly. A meeting was held early in the summer of 1783 and a deputation appointed to present a petition to Parliament to ask that a bill then before the Commons restraining officers of the African Company from exporting slaves should be extended to everyone. Sir Cecil Wray presented the petition in Parliament, and Lord North seconded the motion, but the session was too far advanced to allow time to consider it, and the petition was tabled.[10] On July 7, 1783, a small group of Friends—Thomas Knowles, Joseph Woods, Samuel Hoare, Jr., William Dillwyn, John Lloyd, and George Harrison—met in London to consider what steps they could take in regard to West Indian slavery and the slave trade. The result was an organized publicity campaign to influence British opinion. Joseph Woods and John Lloyd were assigned to furnish a weekly article on the slave trade, and arrangements were made for publication in the *London Evening Post.* By September they had extended their publicity to a chain of newspapers throughout England. Items selected for such distribution included extracts from Benezet's works and letters from the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting.[11] Benezet himself made up a packet of American publications that he sent over to the London Committee to Abolish the Slave Trade (as it was now called) in the care of Gaspar Wistar, who

9. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 91; Benezet to George Dillwyn, [1783], and to John Gough, May 29, 1783, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 372–377. John Gough was born in England but taught in a Friends' school in Dublin for twenty-four years. He was the author of a history of the Quakers.

10. Book of Cases, 1739–1806, III, Friends House Library; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 91; [Anthony Benezet], *The Case of Our Fellow-Creatures, the Oppressed Africans, Respectfully Recommended to the Serious Consideration of the Legislature of Great Britain, by the People Called Quakers* (Philadelphia: Joseph Crukshank, 1784).

11. Minutes of meetings, July 7, 1783–July 6, 1784, Thompson-Clarkson Collection, II, 9, Friends House Library.

traveled to England in the summer of 1783, with the suggestion that a fund be raised to republish them in toto.[12]

Reports of seeing new ships being fitted out in Liverpool for the slave trade emphasized the urgency of the situation. The Quakers, Benezet mused, were in a position similar to that of the biblical Queen Esther. If she had held her peace, deliverance for the oppressed might have come from another quarter, but blood would nevertheless have been required of her hands. So it would be with Friends if they did nothing about the slave trade. Moreover, it was not sufficient to think they were doing all they could by working against slavery and the slave trade. Active assistance must be given to free Negroes in America, and English and Irish Friends should help along that line.[13]

No one that Benezet could think of was exempt from his importuning. In August, 1783, he composed a letter to Queen Charlotte pleading with her to become "an advocate for these deep sufferers" and reminding her that the continuance of the slave trade would draw down divine displeasure on the whole British nation. A packet of tracts on the slave trade was enclosed.[14] Similar letters were subsequently sent to the queens of Portugal and France. Another to the countess of Huntingdon protesting that a school for orphans which she had founded near Savannah used slave labor, brought the encouraging reply that she would not countenance such management and would take steps to stop it.[15]

At home in the United States, Benezet began the campaign in March, 1783, by sending to leading politicians in each state copies of his *Short Observations* and by urging Benjamin Frank-

12. Benezet to John Pemberton, Aug. 10, 1783, and to William Dillwyn, Aug. 20, 1783, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 381–384 and 395–399.

13. John Pemberton to John Row, July 23, 1783, Mss vol. 163.7, Friends House Library; Benezet to Pemberton, Aug. 10, 1783, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 395–399.

14. Benezet to the queen, Aug. 25, 1783, Thompson-Clarkson Collection, II, 39; Benezet to William Dillwyn, Aug. 20, 1783, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet*, 381–384; Vaux, *Memoirs of . . . Benezet*, 38–41. The letter to the queen may also be found in the *American Museum*, I (1787), 128–130.

15. Vaux, *Memoirs of . . . Benezet*, 41–42. The school had been built under the direction of George Whitefield.

lin to exercise his leadership in Congress.[16] Pressure on public and Parliament by the British during the summer helped to quicken the efforts of American Quakers, who met in July to organize a committee. By autumn they were ready to present their petition to Congress, and four committee members journeyed to "Prince Town" to be present at its reading.[17]

Both the petition to the American Congress and that to the British Parliament were circulated as widely as possible, along with other publications that might win converts.[18] David Cooper addressed an eloquent one to the "Rulers of America" pleading with them to elect the path of wisdom rather than that of folly; they should demonstrate to Europe and the world that America was in earnest when she said "that *all mankind* came from the hand of their Creator equally free." He bitterly attacked the "mock patriots" during the Revolution who had condoned the confiscation of estates and the selling of slaves to put money into the fund for liberty! Since the war, property rights seemed to have become even more paramount over human rights, in defiance of the principles on which the Revolution was begun. "We expect, mankind expects, you to demonstrate your faith by your works," he challenged Congress.[19] Another appeal came from Thomas Pownall, previously the governor of Massachusetts from 1757 to 1760 and an American sympathizer during the war. He suggested a plan of emancipation accompanied by an apprenticeship period, or immediate emancipation with compensation to

16. Benezet to Franklin, Mar. 5, 1783, in Brookes, *Friend Anthony Benezet,* 384–387.

17. "To the United States in Congress Assembled. The Address of the People Called Quakers," Misc. Mss; Benezet, "To the Meeting for Sufferings in Philadelphia," Oct. 8, 1783, Misc. Mss, Friends Historical Library; John Parrish to John Pemberton, Dec. 12, 1783, Pemberton Papers, XL, 21, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

18. The British petition was published as *The Case of Our Fellow-Creatures, the Oppressed Africans, Respectfully Recommended to the Serious Consideration of the Legislature of Great Britain, by the People Called Quakers* (London: James Phillips, 1783). Benezet had it reprinted by Joseph Crukshank in Philadelphia in 1784.

19. David Cooper, *A Serious Address to the Rulers of America, on the Inconsistency of Their Conduct Respecting Slavery . . .* (Trenton, N.J.: Isaac Collins, 1783).

owners. Moreover, he believed that the blacks ought to be incorporated into American society as full-fledged citizens.[20]

Anthony Benezet died in 1784, but his influence did not. Just before his death, in a last effort to encourage southern Quakers, he sent them copies of the petition of the London Yearly Meeting to Parliament and the address of the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to Congress.[21] In the year of his death the London Committee on the Slave Trade agreed to distribute copies of a pamphlet, *The Case of Our Fellow Creatures, the Oppressed Africans,* to all Members of Parliament, to the queen and the Prince of Wales, to clergymen and justices of the peace throughout the country, and to members of corporations and merchants engaged in the West Indian and Guinea trade. The following year the committee undertook mass circulation of his *A Caution and a Warning,* and in 1788 it reprinted 1,500 copies of his *Historical Account of Guinea.*[22] It was in 1785 that Thomas Clarkson turned to Benezet's works for information for his famous essay on the slave trade, the essay which won him the Cambridge University prize and, more important, launched him on his lifelong crusade against that trade.

Between 1780 and the end of the decade two of Benezet's works came out in French editions, and several French writers paid him tribute with their own pens. Brissot de Warville, one of the outstanding French abolitionists, journeyed to the United States in 1788 and was particularly impressed with the Negro school Benezet had established in Philadelphia, where black children were treated like people with souls and minds. He gathered information on abolitionist leaders, on slave legislation, and on prospects for the future.[23] Undoubtedly British and American influences were significant in the decision to establish the first French antislavery organization, Les Amis des Noirs, which in-

20. John A. Schutz, "Thomas Pownall and His Negro Commonwealth," *Journal of Negro History,* XXX (Oct., 1945), 400–404. Pownall's appeal was entitled *A Memorial Addressed to the Sovereigns of America* and was published in 1783.

21. John Kirk to James Pemberton, Apr. 1, 1784, Pemberton Papers, XL, 141.

22. Minutes of Committee on the Slave Trade, 1783–1792, Box F, Friends House Library; William Dillwyn to James Phillips, Jan. 16, 1788, Thompson-Clarkson Collection, II, 121.

23. J. P. Brissot (de Warville), *Nouveau voyage dans les États-Unis de l'Amerique Septentrionale, fait en 1788; par J. P. Brissot (Warville), citoyen français,* 3 vols. (Paris, 1791).

cluded on its membership rolls such illustrious names as Lafayette, Condorcet, Mirabeau, and the Abbés Gregoire, Raynal, and Sieyes. The first works published by them for distribution in France were those of Benezet, John Wesley, and Clarkson.[24]

Brissot de Warville's analysis of the American scene in 1788 appears remarkably accurate to the historian looking backward. On the credit side there seemed to be a good deal of antislavery activity on the part of two organizations: the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, which dated from 1775, and the New York Manumission Society, established ten years later. Efforts were being made by Quakers and a few individuals in other religious groups, although the churches on the whole promised little. There were definite achievements as well as some major disappointments in the legislative field.

There was some attempt to keep alive the cooperation between Methodists and Quakers that had begun with Benezet and Wesley, and it is interesting to note that it was in those two sects, both of which had strong English ties, that there was the most antislavery activity in the immediate post-Revolution period. The Quakers continued to make strides toward weeding out slaveholding and participation in the slave trade among their own members and were steadfast in presenting petitions to Congress and in urging British Friends to continue pressure on Parliament.[25] After the Revolution, when the independent American Methodist-Episcopal church was organized, John Wesley (who lived until 1791) sent Thomas Coke over from England in a supervisory capacity. English Methodists generally were amazed at the Americans, "who had strangely learned to sign with one hand an act of

24. Seeber, *Anti-Slavery Opinion in France*, 160–161, also 118–119, 123–125, 140, 185–186. Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, who had written a play about slavery, declined to join the society, as did Jefferson. Jefferson's excuse was that since he was a public servant and the public he served "n'ayent jamais eu le pouvoir de donner leur voix contre l'esclavage," he must be careful not to take a contrary public stand. See note, p. 160.

25. London Yearly Meeting, Epistles Received, 1778–1801, V, Friends House Library; *The Case of Our Fellow-Creatures;* James Pemberton to Nicholas Waln, July 28, 1784, and John Pemberton to James Pemberton, Aug. 13, 1784, Pemberton Papers, XLI, 142 and 146; Kenneth L. Carroll, "Religious Influences on the Manumission of Slaves in Caroline, Dorchester and Talbot Counties," *Maryland Historical Magazine*, LVI (1961), 176–197.

independence in their own behalf, while, with the other, they brandished the whip over their trembling slaves." [26]

Coke was even more of a firebrand than Wesley on the slavery issue, and undoubtedly his influence at the special Christmas conference in Baltimore in 1784 strengthened the hand of Bishop Francis Asbury to build on the foundation begun in 1780. Then the Methodist conference had acknowledged that slavery was "contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society." In that conference members were advised to free their slaves, while traveling preachers were commanded to do so. The stronger resolution of 1784 stipulated that any Methodist who did not make provision to free his slaves was to be denied communion and expelled. By the following year, however, expediency had regained the upper hand, and a watered-down substitute recommended that the church seek the destruction of slavery by all "wise and prudent" means. This regression was partly due to the fact that a Methodist petition to the Virginia Assembly was pending, and they did not want to prejudice its chances by appearing too radical.[27] Copies of the petition, which asked the legislature to provide for "immediate or gradual" emancipation, were given to each circuit-riding preacher to present to the freeholders for signatures, and Coke and Asbury did all they could to publicize it.

As a result of this stand, Coke quickly discovered that some doors previously open to him were now closed: doors of planters' homes and doors of churches where he had earlier been welcome. On one occasion in the spring of 1785 he narrowly escaped physical violence. While preaching in a barn on a Sunday afternoon, he offended some of his audience by his sermon on slavery, and a small group of them walked out to organize an attack on him when he emerged. The protesters were egged on by a lady "of fashionable appearance" who promised them £50 if they would seize Coke and punish him with a hundred lashes. Evidently the mob would have complied, had it not been for the interference of

26. Samuel Drew, *The Life of the Reverend Thomas Coke . . .* (New York: T. Mason and G. Lane, 1837), 109–110.

27. Donald G. Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism: A Chapter in American Morality, 1780–1845* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), 10–12, Appendix, 296; Drew, *Life of Coke,* 144.

a magistrate and a military officer who were in the congregation. Coke claimed the victory, for the magistrate was so moved that he immediately freed his own fifteen slaves, and others professedly followed suit.[28]

In the course of circulating the Methodist petition, Coke and Asbury decided to try to win the support of America's most honored citizen. They managed to obtain an invitation from General Washington to dine at Mount Vernon, and after dinner they made their request that he sign their document. Like Lafayette before them, they were unsuccessful in getting Washington to commit himself to the antislavery cause by taking so definite a public stand. While insisting that he shared their opinions on slavery, he declined to sign, but he did promise that if the legislature agreed to consider the petition, he would "signify his sentiments" by a letter. The Assembly's refusal to consider the matter relieved him of the obligation.[29] In a letter to Lafayette Washington reported that the petitions could hardly get a reading, as if this were a matter of disappointment to him; yet he had refused to add the weight of his own leadership when it might have changed the balance. He also declined to manumit his own slaves during his lifetime, as Lafayette had done, despite the fact that in 1782 Virginia had simplified its manumission procedure. As a matter of fact, the same legislature that rejected the Quaker and Methodist petitions attempted to repeal the 1782 law.[30]

Despite such setbacks, Wesley himself remained optimistic to the end, secure in his faith that "He that dwelleth on high" was mightier than the slaveholders and slave merchants. His very last letter was written to William Wilberforce, urging him to "Go on, in the name of God, and in the power of His might, till even American slavery (the vilest that ever saw the sun) shall vanish away before it."[31]

28. Drew, *Life of Coke,* 138, 141–142.

29. *Ibid.,* 142–143; Robert McColley, *Slavery and Jeffersonian Virginia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1964), 151.

30. Washington to Lafayette, May 10, 1786, in Sparks, ed., *Writings of Washington,* IX, 158–160; McColley, *Slavery and Jeffersonian Virginia,* 162. Professor McColley believes the "liberal" 1782 law has been much overrated.

31. Wesley to Thomas Funnell, Nov. 24, 1787, in Wesley, *Works,* XI, 507, XIII, 153–154; Frank J. Klingberg, *The Anti-Slavery Movement in England: A*

In Virginia Methodists and Quakers joined in petitions to the legislature to abolish slavery, and in North Carolina they cooperated in an attempt to obtain repeal of the law that prohibited manumission.[32] In Virginia one of the most active of people was the Quaker Robert Pleasants, who drafted petitions to both state and federal governments and made personal appeals to such professedly sympathetic men as Patrick Henry, Jefferson, Madison, and St. George Tucker. Washington, particularly, was subjected to pressure. The same year that Coke and Asbury visited the general, Pleasants also appealed to him to set an example by liberating his slaves. Such an act would be less of a sacrifice or inconvenience, Pleasants entreated, than those Washington had undergone for the liberty of his country.[33]

The Episcopal church had been dealt such a severe blow by the Revolution that it was still in the doldrums during this period, and any antislavery activity within that denomination came from the Anglicans. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, cut out of its missionary work in continental America, concentrated its endeavors in the West Indies. Bishop Beilby Porteus, the Reverend George Gregory, and William Paley preached against slavery as well as the slave trade and urged some system of religious instruction for West Indian slaves.[34] James Ramsay, vicar of Teston in Kent, who had lived in St. Kitts for twenty years, aroused considerable attention with two essays published in 1784: *An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African*

Study in English Humanitarianism (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1926), 47.

32. Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 14–19.

33. McColley, *Slavery and Jeffersonian Virginia*, 159.

34. Joseph Lowell Ragatz, *The Fall of the Planter Class in the British Caribbean, 1763–1833: A Study in Social and Economic History* (New York: Century Co., 1928), 244. Dr. Samuel Hopkins noted in a letter to Moses Brown of Apr. 29, 1784, that he was having extracts from their writings reprinted in the weekly newspaper in Newport. See Elizabeth Donnan, ed., *Documents Illustrative of the History of the Slave Trade to America*, 4 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1930–1935), III, no. 285. While the SPG was active in Christianizing slaves, it was an organization that itself owned slaves. Writing of the SPG in a sarcastic vein in 1754, Horace Walpole had asked, "Did one ever hear a more truly Christian charity, than keeping up a perpetuity of three hundred slaves to look after the Gospel's estate?"

Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies and *An Inquiry into the Effects of Putting a Stop to the African Slave Trade, and of Granting Liberty to the Slaves in the British West Indies.* A letter from Samuel Hopkins to Moses Brown indicates the eagerness with which such publications were awaited by those in the United States sympathetic to the cause. In addition to his proposals for the West Indies, Ramsay took the opportunity to castigate Americans for the inconsistency of their profession of the equality of all men and their continuing the practice of slavery. He branded them "as inconsiderate masters to as miserable slaves as can anywhere be found."[35] In England he solicited funds to finance the Committee to Abolish the Slave Trade, and with the approval of the bishop of London he prepared an address to be distributed in both houses of Parliament.[36]

Another high Anglican churchman, Robert Nickolls, dean of Middleham and a native of the West Indies, added his voice to those calling for decent treatment of the slaves: it was a way to encourage natural increase and thus do away with the need for further importation. By this method the slave trade would die a natural death. Another of his arguments was that if a successful experiment in the cultivation of sugar with free labor could be made in the West Indies, it would set an example that America might follow. It would also do honor to George III and presumably help to vindicate him after the accusations of the American revolutionists that he was a soulless tyrant.[37]

In writing his prize-essay at Cambridge in 1785, Thomas Clarkson called attention to Ramsay's essays and took up the theme of

35. Samuel Hopkins to Moses Brown, Oct. 22, 1787, in Donnan, ed., *Documents,* III, no. 289; James Ramsay, *An Essay on the Treatment and Conversion of African Slaves in the British Sugar Colonies* (London: James Phillips, 1784).

36. James Ramsay to Samuel Hoare, Aug. 11, 1787, Thomas Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library, San Marino, Calif.; Ramsay to [?], Sept. 6, 1788, Thompson-Clarkson Collection, III, 157.

37. Robert Nickolls, *A Letter to the Treasurer of the Society Instituted for the Purpose of Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade* (London: James Phillips, 1787). For a discussion of Baptist and Presbyterian antislavery leaders and activities during this period, see Dwight L. Dumond, *Antislavery: The Crusade for Freedom in America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), 90–95. Since I have found no evidence of a direct Anglo-American connection in these denominations, I have omitted them from this study.

using free instead of slave labor on the plantations. Encouraged by reports of manumissions, especially by Quakers in the United States, he concluded, with characteristic optimism, that the employment of free labor was "daily gaining ground."[38] It was the research he did for this essay, much of it in the writings of Benezet, that converted Clarkson and gave to the British abolitionist cause one of its most dedicated leaders over the next half-century. Although not a Quaker, he often referred to himself as "half Quaker," or Quaker in principle if not in profession. Like Benezet, he was one of those men who could surmount the barriers between different sects and schools of thought. Like Benezet, he carried on an active correspondence with powerful men in the political world as well as with philosophers and religious leaders, and his pamphleteering pen was seldom idle. In a very real sense, therefore, he was Benezet's successor as the busiest, if not the major, figure in the antislavery movement, influencing both Americans and French along with his fellow Britishers. William Wilberforce, of course, shared the position of leadership, but his activity was more concentrated in the political field.

Communication was quickly established between Clarkson and the abolition societies in America. Although the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery had been established in 1775 (known as the Pennsylvania Abolition Society), the outbreak of hostilities had hindered any Anglo-American connection, and it was really not until after its reorganization under a new constitution in 1787 that the society began to flourish. It was then that Benjamin Rush, as one of its secretaries, was instructed to open a correspondence with Clarkson, with Dr. Richard Price in London, and with the Abbé Raynal in France. He was also assigned to see to the distribution of the society's constitution, along with Clarkson's recent essay on slavery, to the governor of each state.[39]

38. [Thomas Clarkson], *An Essay on the Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species, Particularly the African* . . . (London: James Phillips, 1786), x. For reports on manumissions, see London Yearly Meeting, Epistles Received, 1778–1801, V, Friends House Library.

39. Edward Needles, comp., *An Historical Memoir of the Pennsylvania Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery; the Relief of Free Negroes Unlawfully Held in Bondage, and for Improving the Condition of the African Race* (Philadel-

Actually, the younger New York Manumission Society, organized early in 1785, was ahead of the Pennsylvania society in this respect. Under the leadership of John Jay it had voted in 1786 to buy and distribute 200 copies of Clarkson's essay.[40] Two years later it voted to subscribe to 300 copies of his second book, *An Essay on the Impolicy of the Slave Trade*, and to see to it that each member of the New York legislature received a copy.[41] Clarkson, Granville Sharp, and Samuel Hoare (secretary of the London Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade) were all made honorary members of the New York society, and Hoare, at least, reciprocated with a £20 donation to the society's school for free colored children. Sharp was also an honorary member of the Pennsylvania society and in addition was granted honorary Doctor of Laws degrees by Harvard, William and Mary, and the College of Providence in Rhode Island.[42]

In London the newly established Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was helping to pay Clarkson's expenses for traveling to such seaports as Bristol and Liverpool to collect evidence on the slave trade, and it requested the Pennsylvania society to furnish all the information it could amass regarding the effects of manumissions on southern plantations. All of the material gathered was destined to be presented to Parliament to influence action there. The English committee evinced particular interest in the account Benjamin Rush sent of free Negroes who had demonstrated marked intelligence in such fields as medicine,

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phia: Merrihew and Thompson, 1848), 28–32. The constitution of the Pennsylvania society may be found in the *American Museum,* I (1787), 460–462. Rush had already written at least one letter to Price expressing his pleasure that the dissenters in all denominations in England had united with the Quakers to petition Parliament to stop the slave trade. See Rush to Price, Oct. 15, 1785, in the *American Museum,* I (1787), 132–134.

40. New York Manumission Society, minutes for Jan. 25, Feb. 10, 1785, Nov. 9, 1786, New York Historical Library, New York City.

41. *Ibid.,* minutes for Nov. 20, 24, 1788; Thomas Clarkson, *An Essay on the Impolicy of the African Slave Trade* (London, 1788). The society bought an additional hundred copies in 1789. See minutes for May 17, 1789.

42. New York Manumission Society, minutes for Aug. 28, Nov. 20, 1788; John Jay to Thomas Clarkson, Sept. 1, 1788, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library. The collection also contains certificates of membership for Clarkson dated 1790 and 1792. See Sharp, *Memoirs,* I, 376–379.

mathematics, and art.[43] Benjamin Banneker, Negro mathematician and almanac maker of Baltimore, especially commanded attention.

Abolitionists made a point of seeing that copies of Dr. Richard Price's pamphlet, *Observations on the Importance of the American Revolution, and the Means of Making It a Benefit to the World* (published in 1784 in London), reached men who wielded power in the new government in America. Richard Henry Lee sent a copy to George Washington and several copies to the president of the Congress, to be distributed among the members.[44] Price himself forwarded several to Chief Justice John Jay, explaining that his purpose was to promote measures for gradual abolition of both slavery and the slave trade. He had been sorry to hear that his views offended some of the leading men in South Carolina, for if their attitude was typical, it would appear "that the people who have struggled so bravely against being enslaved themselves are ready enough to enslave others." Friends of liberty in Europe would be sadly disappointed.[45] Jefferson was stirred enough to write to Price and admitted that he feared the pamphlet would find few readers south of the Chesapeake. Still, he insisted, there was a "respectable minority" ready to listen, and he had great hopes for Virginia as the next state "to which we may turn our eyes for the interesting spectacle of justice in conflict with avarice & oppression." Most of the young men in Virginia in whom he had faith were now at William and Mary preparing for public life under the tutelage of Dr. George Wythe, whose antislavery opinions were well known. Jefferson thought that if Price were to address an exhortation to those students, its influence might be decisive.[46]

43. Proceedings of the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 1787–1819, Fair Minute Book, entries from May 22 to Dec. 11, 1787, Add. Mss 21254, British Museum; Capel Tofft to Samuel Hoare, Dec. 23, 1787, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Needles, comp., *An Historical Memoir*, 32–35.

44. Lee to Washington, Jan. 16, 1785, in Burnett, ed., *Letters of the Continental Congress*, VIII, 7.

45. Price to Jay, July 9, 1785, in Henry P. Johnston, ed., *The Correspondence and Public Papers of John Jay*, 4 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1890–1893), III, 158–159 (hereinafter cited as *Jay Papers*).

46. Jefferson to Price, Aug. 7, 1784, in Paul Leicester Ford, ed., *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson*, 10 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1894), IV, 82–84.

As the Constitutional Convention got under way in the United States in the spring of 1787, new hopes were awakened for legislative action on that side of the Atlantic. The Pennsylvania Abolition Society prepared an address to the convention, copies of which were circulated in London to keep allies informed of, and encouraged by, American efforts. The London committee appointed Joseph Woods and George Harrison to supervise its insertion into the newspapers.[47] To the abolitionists the prospects looked promising. Indeed, their optimism was not without foundation, for the record in the post-Revolution period seemed to augur well. On the state level between 1780 and 1787 Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Rhode Island had made some provision for either gradual or immediate emancipation. Maryland was added to the list of those prohibiting the slave trade, and in 1782 Virginia liberalized her laws on manumission.[48] A look at the confederation furnished grounds for hope too, for in 1787 an explicit clause was written into the Northwest Ordinance that forbade slavery or involuntary servitude in the Northwest Territory. It was not irrational to expect that the prohibition would establish the precedent to be followed in the case of other territories.[49] Moreover, many of the men who had voted for the Northwest Ordinance as congressmen were also delegates to the Constitutional Convention. If they had been willing to stop the expansion of slavery into the West, surely they could be counted on to outlaw the foreign slave trade. In England, too, in 1787 the Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, backed by prominent men both in and out of Parliament, felt confident of success. The year 1787 was in many ways the zenith of abolitionist hopes that had blossomed in the atmosphere of revolutionary ideals.

47. Richard Price to James Phillips, Aug. 23, 1787, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

48. Letter from yearly meeting, Wyon-Oak, Charles Co., Va., May 18–20, 1783, Epistles Received, 1778–1801, V, Friends House Library.

49. See Staughton Lynd's essay "The Compromise of 1787" in his *Class Conflict, Slavery, and the United States Constitution* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1967) for the thesis that the Northwest Ordinance was really part of the compromise between the North and South that was consummated at the Constitutional Convention. Lynd's case is convincing, but the abolitionists were not in a position to see the ordinance as a compromise at the time.

Abolition of the Slave Trade

III

It was not without reason that English and American abolitionists alike looked hopefully toward the gathering in Philadelphia that was to become the Constitutional Convention. Writing to Benjamin Franklin from London, Richard Price acknowledged that the delegates would be the "first men in respect of wisdom and influence" in the United States, and he prayed that God would guide their deliberations, for "the happiness of the world depends in some degree on the result." [1] Price, like many other men of the time, attributed the general ferment over liberty and human rights that seemed to be effervescing in the western world largely to the American Revolution. Could not the same men who had made that revolution, meeting now to consider the reshaping of their government, be expected to take an advanced stand on the issue of freedom for all men?

In view of such high expectations, there was bound to be consternation and dismay over the outcome. Granville Sharp voiced the grave concern of British abolitionists in a letter to Franklin in January, 1788. The constitutional clause providing for the re-

1. Price to Franklin, Sept. 26, 1787, in John Bigelow, ed., *The Works of Benjamin Franklin*, 12 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1904), XI, 358–361 (hereinafter cited as Franklin, *Works*).

turn of fugitives escaping from one state to another was troubling, but they were particularly perturbed over the section that prohibited Congress from interfering with the slave trade before 1808.[2] No mention was made of the three-fifths clause, but emphasis on the slave trade was only natural, for it was the subject currently absorbing the attention and energy of the British abolitionists. Brissot de Warville reported that Europe also was amazed that such an otherwise admirable constitution would tie the hands of Congress for twenty years.[3]

Professor Staughton Lynd has indicted the Founding Fathers on grounds of evasiveness, ambivalence, and indecisiveness in failing to "grasp the nettle" of slavery.[4] Even Franklin, although accused of persecuting the South, believed the continuation of the Union to be the paramount concern.[5] Rufus King objected to the three-fifths clause but based his argument on the political advantage it would give the South rather than on humanitarian antislavery grounds.[6] Washington exerted no leadership in the matter, despite the fact that he had frequently voiced the wish that slavery should be abolished and as recently as 1786 had written to Robert Morris, ". . . there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be accomplished, and that is by legislative authority; and this as far as my suffrage will go, shall never be wanting."[7] Even many of those delegates who made some antislavery argument in Philadelphia felt obliged to defend the finished product of the convention in urging its ratification. Speak-

2. Sharp to Franklin, Jan. 10, 1788, in Sharp, *Memoirs*, I, 377–378; Sharp to the president, vice-president, and treasurer of New York Manumission Society, May 1, 1788, in *Jay Papers*, III, 329–332. I have found no expressions of concern over the three-fifths clause.

3. Brissot de Warville, *Nouveau voyage*, II, 15.

4. Staughton Lynd, "The Abolitionist Critique of the United States Constitution," in Martin Duberman, ed., *The Antislavery Vanguard* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1965), 209–239.

5. Jonathan Elliot, ed., *The Debates in the Several State Conventions, on the Adoption of the Federal Constitution* . . . , 5 vols. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott Co., 1836), IV, 410.

6. Joseph L. Arbena, "Politics or Principle? Rufus King and the Opposition to Slavery, 1785–1825," *Essex Institute Historical Collections*, CI (1965), 56–77.

7. Washington to Morris, Apr. 12, 1786, in Sparks, ed., *Writings of Washington*, IX, 158–160.

ing in the City of Brotherly Love, Edmund Randolph had stressed that the slave-trade clause would repulse Quakers, Methodists, and many others, but back home in Virginia the tenor of his argument supported the clause because it did not endanger property in slaves.[8]

As the Founding Fathers must be indicted for betraying the ideals of the Revolution, the abolitionists must be scored for failing to assess the situation properly, thus not realizing the danger. They not only underestimated the degree to which some southern delegates would insist on constitutional guarantees for slave property, but they overestimated the willingness of northerners and upper South liberals to persist against such pressures. They seem to have been the victims of their own hopes and optimistic claims as well as of the propaganda of the Declaration of Independence. They undoubtedly accepted the words of the politicians too literally because that was what they wanted to believe, and consequently they did not exert themselves to organize public opinion on their side in order to present a strong demand to the Founding Fathers. Instead, they seem to have taken it for granted that such men as Washington, Franklin, Madison, Jay, and Gouverneur Morris could be trusted to do their utmost without such pressuring. Perhaps, too, they were thrown off by the strong protests against the slave trade emanating from the upper South, and they erroneously equated anti–slave trade speeches with antislavery conviction. It was Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina who pointed out that the markets of Virginia were saturated, and her slaves would therefore rise in value if foreign importation should stop.[9]

Perhaps a mitigating factor in the failure of the abolitionists to exert themselves was that the general public did not know precisely what was being said in the debates at the federal convention. When they did learn what compromises had been made, it was too late. But there is no such extenuating circumstance to excuse them when it comes to the ratifying conventions. There,

8. Max Farrand, ed., *The Records of the Federal Convention of 1787*, 4 vols. (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1937), II, 374, Appendix A, CCXVII, 334.

9. *Ibid.*, III, Appendix A, CLVIII, 210–211; II, 371.

too, surprisingly few voices were raised in opposition to either the fugitive-slave or the slave-trade clauses.[10]

The enormity of the setback, once the Constitution was adopted with its legal recognition of slavery, seems not to have been nearly so apparent to contemporary Americans as it was to the British. Instead, they seem to have accepted the defenses extended by the delegates in whom they had put their trust. In responding to Granville Sharp's criticism, John Jay stood on the ground that the Constitution was the best they could do and still preserve the Union.[11] James Madison argued more positively that the settlement on the slave trade was a real victory. Under the old Articles of Confederation, he pointed out, there was no authority for the general government to interfere. Now there was a positive authorization to be exercised in twenty years, and meanwhile a head tax could be imposed to discourage the trade.[12] John Adams and Judge Francis Dana of Massachusetts joined in the optimistic point of view and rejoiced that a door was now opened for the eventual annihilation of that odious trade, as did James Wilson of Pennsylvania, who emphasized that the time limitation laid a firm foundation for abolition in 1808. While not resting his case specifically on the Constitution, Roger Sherman of Connecticut observed that the abolition of slavery "seemed to be going on" in the United States and that "the good sense of the several States would probably by degrees compleat it." [13]

Patrick Henry and George Mason, in expressing their fears and opposition to powers granted the federal government, also elaborated constitutional interpretations that gave false hope to the antislavery people. Mason argued that slave property was not secure under the new government because of Congress's taxing

10. It was beyond the scope of this study, but I should like to see a more thorough search made for evidence of antislavery opposition to ratification.

11. Jay to English Abolition Society, [1788], in *Jay Papers,* III, 340–344.

12. Farrand, ed., *Records,* III, Appendix A, CCXII, 324–325. In the Philadelphia convention Madison had argued against such a tax because it would be a shameful admission of the right of men to hold property in men. But while taking a moral stand against the slave trade, Madison was careful to agree with Randolph that the Constitution did not endanger slave property and that the fugitive-slave clause was an improvement over the old Articles of Confederation for the very reason that it provided for the return of escaped slaves.

13. Farrand, ed., *Records,* II, 369–370; Elliot, ed., *Debates,* II, 107, 451.

power, which could tax slavery out of existence. Patrick Henry envisioned the general defense and welfare clause of the Preamble as giving the government the power to emancipate as well as to abolish the slave trade. From his point of view, Congress had the authority "in clear, unequivocal terms, and will clearly and certainly exercise it." This was exactly the position later to be taken by those abolitionists of the 1840s and 1850s who argued that the Constitution was not a proslavery document if read in the light of the Preamble and did give the federal government power to abolish slavery in the states where it existed as well as to prevent its extension into the territories. Henry argued, moreover, that the fugitive-slave clause did not say that persons escaping *must* be delivered up but simply that the state into which they escaped should not protect them—again, a precise statement of the logic used by later abolitionists in passing the "personal liberty laws" of the northern states after the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850.[14]

Abolitionists in 1787 seem to have believed that the tide of freedom was still running strong enough to erode the constitutional bulwark set up in defense of slavery. Efforts continued on all fronts—religious, benevolent, and political—looking toward that year of opportunity, 1808, when the next big, definite step could be taken. An attitude of inevitable success pervaded their thinking rather than a realization of the actual difficulties they were up against. Almost all of the letters written from the Friends' yearly meetings in America—whether from New England, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, or the Carolinas—mentioned the growing feeling against slavery and the slave trade and gave examples of the disownment of Quakers who continued to hold slaves.[15] A few perceptive observers noted that all was not so promising. John Jay admitted to Sharp that while antislavery feeling seemed to be growing, it still constituted but a small bit of leaven in the whole mass.[16] Perhaps it was Luther Martin of Maryland who put his finger on the reality of the matter. "When our

14. Elliot, ed., *Debates,* III, 452, 590. I have discovered no evidence that such antislavery lawyers as James G. Birney, William Goodell, or Alvan Stewart got their ideas from reading Patrick Henry, although it is certainly possible.

15. London Yearly Meeting, Epistles Received, 1778–1801, V, Friends House Library.

16. Jay to Sharp, [1788], in *Jay Papers,* III, 340–344.

own liberties were at stake we *warmly* felt for the *common rights of man,*" but now that such danger was past, he confessed, "we are daily growing more insensible to those rights." [17]

In contrast to the almost complacent optimism of American abolitionists, in 1787 the London Committee for the Abolition of the Slave Trade was busy with real spade work in preparing for that year's session of Parliament. In the summer they sent out a circular, and having located friends of the cause in thirty-nine counties, set them to work circulating petitions. Over a hundred, chiefly from London, Oxford, and Cambridge, were ready for Parliament when it sat in November—quite a difference from the one petition from Pennsylvania presented to the Constitutional Convention.[18] Nor was petitioning the only strategy employed to arouse public support. Wedgwood cameos depicting an African in chains kneeling in a posture of supplication were sold for the cause (although Josiah Wedgwood himself gave them away because he never wanted it said of him that he had sold a Negro), and several of them were sent to Benjamin Franklin for display in America.[19] New printings of old books were made and circulated: 1,500 of Benezet's *Account of Guinea,* 5,000 *Summary Views,* 3,000 of the dean of Middleham's *Letters,* and 2,000 of Clarkson's enlarged edition of *Slavery and Commerce of the Human Species.* John Newton, now rector of St. Mary Woolnoth in London but onetime slave trader to the coast of Africa, composed his *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade,* and the committee published 3,000 copies. Newton's "confession" minced no words about the brutal treatment of slaves on shipboard, especially if there was any attempt at insubordination or insurrection, and left no doubt about the sexual abuse to which the women were subjected. In addition, he refuted the argument that the slave trade

17. Farrand, ed., *Records,* III, Appendix A, CLVIII, 212.

18. Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the Slave Trade, by the British Parliament,* abridged by Evan Lewis (Wilmington, Del.: R. Porter, 1816), 129–130; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 251.

19. [Frances] Julia Wedgwood, *The Personal Life of Josiah Wedgwood the Potter,* rev. and ed. C. M. Herford (London: Macmillan, 1915), 252; Lodwick C. Hartley, *William Cowper, Humanitarian* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1938), 90.

was a good training ground for British sailors by emphasizing the effects of such a brutal business on the minds of those engaged in it and the mortality rate in that trade as compared with others. Three thousand copies were also printed of another account of the slave trade recently written by Alexander Falconbridge, who had made four voyages to Africa.[20]

As a result of the widespread efforts of the committee and the publicity given to the horrors of the slave traffic, the British public was becoming much more visibly aroused upon the subject than the American public. In February, 1788, George III felt obliged to direct that a committee of his Privy Council should constitute a board of inquiry into the manner in which slaves were procured, transported, and sold, and report to him their observations and conclusions. Although George III was no friend of abolition, this action in itself was more than George Washington took. Although Wilberforce was at the time too ill to participate in the investigation, Clarkson went to London to confer with Pitt and Lord Grenville and to gather evidence and witnesses in order to present an effective case for abolition. Meanwhile more petitions were circulated. The Presbyterians, Independents, and Baptists petitioned collectively, and the Quakers repeated their applications.[21]

A valuable spokesman for the cause was the British poet Hannah More, friend of Wilberforce and his "Clapham Sect." As she moved in the fashionable circles of London society, she carried with her a print of Clarkson's drawing of a slave ship, complete with instruments of torture, with which to arouse her friends. Hearing of the upcoming motion in Parliament, she wrote a poem, "Slavery," at breakneck speed, she confessed; " 'but good or bad,' she told her sisters, 'if it does not come out at this particular moment, when the discussion comes on in Parliament it will not be worth a straw. . . . Time is everything.' " [22] The poem was

20. Clarkson, *History,* 134–135; John Newton, *Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade* (London: J. Buckland, 1788).

21. Clarkson, *History,* 137–139, 147; Sharp to Jay, May 1, 1788, in *Jay Papers,* III, 329–332.

22. M. G. Jones, *Hannah More* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1952), 84; Hannah More, *Slavery, a Poem* (Philadelphia: Joseph Jones, 1788).

quickly reprinted in Philadelphia in 1788 but was not used there in any direct way as political propaganda.

It was on May 9, 1788, that Pitt (in the absence of Wilberforce) presented the motion that the House of Commons should consider the petitions. But because it was a subject that required "cool, patient, and diligent examination," and the session was far advanced, he proposed they wait until the report of the Privy Council should be finished.[23] Although complete discussion was postponed until the next year, an interim victory was gained by the passage of Sir William Dolben's bill to limit the number of slaves carried in proportion to the tonnage of the ship. It also required that a ship carry a doctor aboard and held out bonuses of £50 and £100 to ships which kept their mortality rate at 2 percent or lower. This act was renewed in 1789 with an additional clause to safeguard the lives of seamen.[24]

It was almost exactly a year after Pitt had introduced his motion in Commons that official debate on the petitions began. By that time (May, 1789) Wilberforce was back in his seat to lead the anti–slave trade forces, and Sir William Dolben sat as chairman of the committee of the whole into which the House had resolved itself. It was on that occasion that Wilberforce made his famous three-and-a-half-hour speech, culminating with twelve propositions condemning the trade. He was backed by the powerful coalition of Burke, Pitt, Fox, and Grenville, who vied with one another in expressing detestation of the trade. But there were so many witnesses to be heard and such a huge pile of evidence to assess that the ensuing debate lasted two years.[25]

23. Clarkson, *History*, 152, 158. In 1780 Burke had prepared a code for the mitigation and eventual abolition of the slave trade, but the American Revolution and lack of interest in Parliament at that time had diverted him. See F. T. H. Fletcher, "Montesquieu's Influence on Anti-Slavery Opinion in England," *Journal of Negro History*, XVIII (Oct., 1933), 414–425.

24. "An Act to Regulate the Carrying of Slaves," Donnan, ed., *Documents*, II, 582–589, no. 278. See *Parliamentary History of England, from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803*, 36 vols., XXVII, 573–599, 638–650, for the debates; Clarkson, *History*, 162–174; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 251–252. In 1797 a further act required a minimum perpendicular space of 4 ft. 1 in. between decks of slavers.

25. Romilly to M. Dumont, May 15, 1789, in *Memoirs of the Life of Sir*

There is no doubt that antislavery opinion was organized much better in England than in the United States, both politically and nonpolitically. One is inclined to allow for extenuating circumstances in assessing the leadership of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Adams, and Jay, all theoretically opponents of slavery, on the grounds that they were overwhelmed with the burden of putting a new government on its feet. None of them could play the role of a Wilberforce in hewing to a single line of legislation. But one must also remember that antislavery opinion in the United States, even in so mild a form as that of Washington or Jefferson, was a minority point of view, and those men felt obliged to represent their constituents. Franklin was too old, and antislavery was by no means the consuming interest of such other potential northern leaders as Gouverneur Morris or Rufus King. In England, on the other hand, while Wilberforce's "Saints" were religious and humanitarian leaders, they were also practicing politicians with seats in Parliament, or they held other government appointments. Wilberforce, James Stephen, Sir Samuel Romilly, Zachary Macaulay, and Henry Brougham were typical, and they could usually count on the abolitionist sympathies of such powerful figures as Pitt, Fox, Burke, and Grenville. American Quakers and Methodists might petition Congress, but they did not have a Bishop Porteus who was in a position to give political as well as moral support to the cause.

In organizing a propaganda attack, the British abolitionists had the advantage of a smaller area to cover, easier communication, and a population that represented greater homogeneity, even then, than was to be found in the diverse peoples stretching over what had been the thirteen colonies. Above all, in contrasting the two situations, one must keep in mind the actual physical presence of the black population of America, which always meant the injection of racial fears into any consideration of abolition. What is

Samuel Romilly, Written by Himself; with a Selection from His Correspondence, 3 vols. (London: John Murray, 1840), I, 344–348 (hereinafter cited as Romilly, *Memoirs*); Clarkson, *History,* 192–218, 219–289; *Parliamentary History of England,* XXVIII, 42–102, for the complete speech and debate of May, 1789, and XXIX, 250–359, for the debates of Apr. 18 and 19, 1791; "From the Report of the Committee of the Privy Council, 1789," Donnan, ed., *Documents,* II, 593–598, no. 281.

sometimes forgotten is that the early group of British abolitionists did not go on record as opposed to slavery itself but only as committed to the destruction of the slave trade. Taken on that basis, American politicians compare more favorably. Despite the differences in the two nations, in general, antislavery endeavor moved along parallel lines. Each group kept abreast of the other's progress by exchanging letters and publications, and each stood by with encouragement.[26] Although their specific battles were fought separately (and must therefore be reported separately), the big concentration in each country was on the slave trade.

As Parliament began its first long debate on the trade, four American state legislatures provided for the complete extinction of slave importation (Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, and Connecticut, all in 1788), and two more (South Carolina and Delaware) suspended it temporarily. In 1789 the federal Congress considered a $10 head tax on slaves imported which, it was hoped, might act as a deterrent to the trade; but the bill did not pass.[27] That same year the Pennsylvania Abolition Society sent letters to the governors of all the states requesting complete information on their laws dealing with the slave trade. The Pennsylvania society was already advising the London committee that the time had come, for them at least, to progress to a program calling for complete emancipation. On this point American abolitionists were a good twenty years in advance of their British counterparts.

During the years 1789–1791 the London committee labored diligently to publicize the parliamentary debates and to keep antislavery sympathizers alert. In December, 1790, the London Meeting for Sufferings urged all Friends to make personal contact with Members of Parliament during the recess and to impress their minds with "a just abhorrence" of the trade.[28] In addi-

26. Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

27. DuBois, *Suppression of the Slave-Trade*, Appendix B, 231–288; *Annals of Congress*, 1 Cong., 1 sess., 937–938.

28. "Meeting for Sufferings, London, 24th of the 12th month, 1790," Minutes of the Committee on the Slave Trade, 1783–1792, Friends House Library. An abolitionist pamphlet to which Clarkson ascribed much influence was C. B. Wadstrom's *Observations on the Slave Trade, and a Description of Some Part of the*

tion to the writings of avowed, active abolitionists, they capitalized on any antislavery or anti–slave trade sentiments expressed by leading poets, scientists, and philosophers of the day. Adam Smith and Jeremy Bentham had both recently asserted that slave labor was uneconomic; Joseph Priestley, Rousseau, Condorcet, and Montesquieu could all be quoted; and among the poets were Samuel Johnson, Alexander Pope, James Thompson, and Richard Savage. Above all, William Cowper became *the* British antislavery poet in much the same way that John Greenleaf Whittier later became *the* American antislavery poet.[29]

In the United States, meanwhile, one aspect of antislavery endeavor was the attempt to help the free people of color, especially in Philadelphia under the leadership of Benjamin Franklin. In 1789 he offered the hope that attention to the free blacks would become "a branch of our national policy," and he wrote to President Washington to outline for him the organization of a special committee in Philadelphia to be concerned with their education and employment.[30] Although Thomas Jefferson was still dubious about experiments in freeing slaves and leaving them to their own management, he wrote from Paris in 1789 to announce that on his return to Virginia he would try such a plan. His idea was to import German colonists in equal number to the slaves and settle them all on fifty-acre plots, intermingling Germans and Africans.[31]

Coast of Guinea, during a Voyage Made in 1787, and in 1788, in Company with Doctor A. Spaarman and Captain Arrehenius (London: James Phillips, 1789), which was an exposé of atrocities. Wadstrom was a Swedish scientist on his way home from Africa. He consented to be a witness before Parliament. See also Donnan, ed., *Documents,* II, 599–602, no. 282. Wilberforce referred to Wadstrom's pamphlet and testimony in his speech of Apr. 18, 1791. See *Parliamentary History of England,* XXIX, 252.

29. Cowper to Walter Bagot, June 17, 1788, in Thomas Wright, ed., *The Correspondence of William Cowper,* 4 vols. (London: Hadler and Stroughton, 1904), III, 281–282 (hereinafter cited as Cowper, *Correspondence*); William Cowper, *The Poetical Works . . . with a Biographical Notice by the Rev. H. F. Cary, A.M.* (New York: Leavitt and Allen Bros., n.d.), I, 252–256, II, 37; Hartley, *William Cowper,* 66, 70–71, 79–80, 89.

30. Franklin, *Works,* XII, 135–137, 157–159; Pennsylvania Abolition Society to London Committee, May 3, 1790, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; London Yearly Meeting of Women Friends to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, May, 1791, Misc. Mss, Friends Historical Library.

31. Ford, ed., *Writings of Jefferson,* V, 66–69.

Jefferson's scheme was to remain only a dream, but rumors of such projects, even if they failed to materialize, served to bolster abolitionist optimism.

Acknowledging that they hoped to "acquire some strength from the proceedings of Parliament in Great Britain," the Pennsylvania Abolition Society decided to send a memorial against slavery, signed by their president, Benjamin Franklin, to both houses of the federal Congress.[32] Almost simultaneously a petition against the slave trade was agreed upon by the Friends' yearly meetings of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland, and Virginia, with a separate document from the New York Society of Friends stating their desire to cooperate with their "southern" brethren. The two petitions were presented to Congress on successive days, February 11 and 12, 1790. That of the Quakers recalled their petition of 1783, when the Congress had decided it was not vested with the power to act. Now several states had acted on their own, and the petitioners hoped the new Congress would exercise its "Christian endeavors to remove reproach from the land." While the petition of the Quakers was directed against the slave trade, that of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society was against slavery itself. In fact, they had seized upon the interpretation of the Constitution that Patrick Henry had predicted, based on the welfare and security clause of the Preamble.

Both memorials provoked immediate opposition and pointed up dramatically the much bigger handicap which Americans had to face as compared with the British. There never was any real doubt about the authority of the British Parliament to abolish either the slave trade or slavery whenever it could command the votes to do so. But in the United States there was not only the obvious constitutional clause prohibiting congressional action before 1808 but the whole problem of state versus federal power.

Several congressmen, including Thomas T. Tucker of South Carolina, fulminated about the danger to property rights; sounding remarkably like a "fire-eater" of the 1850s, he swore that the South would never submit to the freeing of the slaves unless com-

32. Pennsylvania Abolition Society to Committee of the Society at London for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, June 24, 1789, Feb. 28, 1790, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

pelled to do so by a civil war. Others directed their attacks against the Quakers, accusing them of having failed to fight in the Revolution and maintaining that therefore they were not entitled to be heard.[33] Madison, on the other hand, held that since Congress could regulate commerce, it did have regulatory power over the slave trade and over the introduction of slaves into the western territories; therefore the petition should be committed. Madison did not, however, acknowledge that the federal government had the power to emancipate, and in 1791 he advised Robert Pleasants of the Virginia Abolition Society not to submit a general emancipation bill in that state. Like Jefferson, Madison fell back on the rationalization that those who had put him in office were "greatly interested in that species of property" and would disapprove of his backing emancipation. He also reiterated the usual polite phrases that the subject was one of delicacy, its consequences ought to be weighed carefully, and it might do more harm than good.[34]

Elbridge Gerry saw nothing in the petition submitted to Congress that called for a violation of constitutional authority. He reminded his colleagues that the power to tax was a regulatory power and went so far as to suggest that it lay within the authority of Congress to purchase all the slaves in the southern states. This might be done, he suggested, with the money from the sale of western lands.[35] His proposal was one that was to be repeatedly revived by the abolitionists and repeatedly rejected by southern politicians, but ironically it was the abolitionists who were later criticized for rejecting compensated emancipation, while southern refusal to consider such proposals has been largely overlooked.

The fact that the petitions were referred to a committee rather than tabled was in itself a victory for the abolitionist point of view. On March 8 the committee reported: (1) Congress could not interfere with the slave trade before 1808; (2) by a fair con-

33. James Pemberton to Edward Prior, Feb. 4, 1790, Mary Wood Collection, Friends Historical Library; *Annals of Congress,* 1 Cong., 2 sess., 1224–25, 1240–48.

34. Elliot, ed., *Debates,* IV, 406–411; Madison to Robert Pleasants, Oct. 30, 1791, in Gaillard Hunt, ed., *The Writings of James Madison* . . . , 9 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900–1910), VI, 60–61.

35. Elliot, ed., *Debates,* IV, 407.

struction it was restrained from any measure of emancipation. (3) Although Congress could not interfere in the internal regulations of the states, it had confidence that the state legislatures would revise their laws from time to time to promote the object (welfare of slaves) mentioned in the memorials as well as support every other measure to promote the happiness of the slaves. Congress could (4) lay a tax; (5) prohibit U.S. citizens from supplying slaves to foreigners; (6) make provision for humane treatment in passage; and (7) prohibit foreigners from fitting out slave vessels in U.S. ports. The memorialists were to be informed that Congress would exercise its authority "wherever it extends" for the humane objects of the petitions so far as they could be promoted on the principles of justice, humanity, and good policy.[36]

On March 16 the House resolved itself into a committee of the whole to discuss the report. Virtually all the arguments that were to become standard in the southern defense of slavery down to the Civil War were brought out. There was the economic contention that slave labor was indispensable, the constitutional support of states' rights and property rights, the historical argument that the great civilizations of Greece and Rome were based on slavery. Jefferson was quoted on the inferiority of the Negro race, and it was averred that the slaves themselves were better off than if they were free. As always, the culmination of the attack involved racial fear: would even the Quakers want to marry Negroes?

Many of the arguments degenerated into attacks on the Quakers, using the time-honored device of attempting to destroy the character of the witness (petitioner) in order to discredit his position. Their loyalty in the Revolution was repeatedly questioned, and the charge was made that since they by choice were nonpolitical, they should not have recourse to petitioning a political body. One aroused southerner contributed the reminder that at the time of union each section took the other, bad with good: the North had to take the South with its slaves, but the South had to accept the North with its Quakers. Despite protests, however, discussion continued, and on March 23 the House decided that while it could not prohibit the slave trade for twenty years nor interfere with the issue of emancipation or treatment of slaves in

36. *Ibid.*, 411; *Annals of Congress*, 1 Cong., 2 sess., 1465–66.

the states, it did have the power (as Madison especially had argued) to prevent American citizens from furnishing slaves to the foreign trade and could require provisions for humane treatment in passage.[37]

Within the space of two years the British Parliament and the American Congress had both arrived at essentially the same position. Neither was ready for complete abolition of the trade, but both had declared their power to regulate it. Parliament passed bills restricting the numbers of slaves carried and the space allotted them; Congress reiterated its right to tax the trade and in 1794 forbade the export of slaves. To the abolitionists this represented the gradual progress in which they had put their faith.

Several strong attacks on the slave trade were published shortly in both America and England. One was written by Benjamin Franklin as a letter to the *Federal Gazette*.[38] Another was that of Jonathan Edwards, *The Injustice and Impolicy of the Slave Trade, and of the Slavery of the Africans,* which was a sermon preached in 1791 at the annual meeting of the Connecticut Abolition Society, the substance of which indicated that he had been reading Thomas Clarkson's essay of similar title.[39] The same year saw the publication of William Fox's *Address to the People of Great Britain on the Consumption of West Indian Produce,* one of the most successful pamphlets in promoting the idea of an economic boycott. The following year Samuel Bradburn's *An Address to the People Called Methodists; Concerning the Evil of Encouraging the Slave Trade* came out in Manchester. It, together with Wesley's *Thoughts,* was one of the tracts most circulated among Methodists. Perhaps the most widely read of any antislavery pamphlet published at that time was one written by "Father" David Rice of the Presbyterian church. Father Rice had moved from Virginia

37. *Annals of Congress,* 1 Cong., 2 sess., 1500–1526.

38. Franklin, *Works,* XII, 187–192. See also "Dr. Franklin an Abolitionist," broadside (n.p., n.d.). Franklin's letter was dated Mar. 23, 1790, but the broadside carries the stamp of Isaac Knapp, Boston, which indicates that the broadside was a republication of the letter, sometime after 1830.

39. Jonathan Edwards, *The Injustice and Impolicy of the Slave Trade, and of the Slavery of the Africans* . . . , 3rd ed. (New Haven, Conn.: New Haven Anti-Slavery Society, 1833). This was the son of *the* Jonathan Edwards.

to Kentucky, where he led the fight to prohibit slavery in that new state. His pamphlet, *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy,* was one of the most eloquent ever written on behalf of the slave and, for its time, one of the most radical. Rice did not back away even from miscegenation as the eventual and inevitable solution to the race problem. Published first in the United States in 1792, and within a year by M. Gurney in London, it went through several editions.[40]

In 1791, writing to the London abolitionist publisher James Phillips, Moses Brown of the Providence, Rhode Island, Abolition Society exuded typical American eagerness and faith that such publications would bring results: "We hope to hear the British Parliament has set the example." [41] Wilberforce's motion of 1789 against the slave trade finally came to a vote in the spring of 1791, but it was defeated. One Member of Parliament actually argued in defense of slavery on the grounds that it afforded a market for refuse fish and corrupted food, which could be fed to "no other description of persons"! Far from giving up in despair, the London committee increased its circulation of petitions, organized committees of correspondence modeled after those of the pre-Revolution American colonies, and sent out more lecturers. A year later, when Wilberforce tendered his second measure to the Commons, anti–slave trade efforts seemed rewarded. This time his proposal carried, 230 to 85, although the supporters of the slave trade were able to secure pledges for gradual rather than immediate action. The blow came when, after the Commons had actually set a terminal date for the trade (January 1, 1796), the bill was lost in the Lords. In the upper house the Society of West India Planters and Merchants wielded considerable influence, and that organization had been busy issuing pamphlets and arguments to counter those of the abolitionists. They made a point, for example, of publicizing the speeches made in the French National Assembly

40. Patrick C. Lipscomb, "William Pitt and the Abolition of the Slave Trade" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1960), 569; [David Rice], *Slavery Inconsistent with Justice and Good Policy . . .* (London reprint, 1793).

41. Michael Kraus, "Slavery Reform in the Eighteenth Century: An Aspect of Transatlantic Intellectual Cooperation," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* LX (1936), 53–66.

by the deputies from Santo Domingo.[42] Undoubtedly both the uprising in that island and the French Revolution itself were significant factors in the hardening of sentiment in favor of preserving the status quo, thereby strengthening the hand of the West Indian planters.

One of the abolitionist reactions to the rejection of the slave-trade bill in Parliament took the form of a movement to boycott West Indian (slave-produced) sugar. If the legislature would not act, Clarkson exhorted, the responsibility devolved upon the people, and they had it within their power to strike a death blow. Although his finances were strained, he volunteered to write and travel as necessary to enlist support.[43] Several pamphlets were put out on the subject in the years 1791–1793, two of which Clarkson considered to be vitally influential: one by William Bell Craften of Tewkesbury entitled *A Sketch of the Evidence, with a Recommendation on the Subject, to the Serious Consideration of the People in General,* and the other by William Fox of London, *On the Propriety of Abstaining from West India Sugar and Rum.* Fox's pamphlet went through at least twenty-five London editions and several others in various English towns. Another pamphlet, *Considerations on the Slave Trade; and the Consumption of West Indian Produce* by Thomas Cooper, was a renewal of his discussion of the efficacy of such a boycott which had been printed in Manchester as *Letters on the Slave Trade.*[44]

In his "Pity for Poor Africans" William Cowper reminded the

42. *Parliamentary History of England,* XXIX, 259, 1055–1158, 1203–93, 1350–55; Samuel Romilly to Madame G———, May 20, 1791, in Romilly, *Memoirs,* I, 424–427; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 267–271.

43. Clarkson to James Phillips, Mar. 6, [1795], Thompson-Clarkson Collection, III, 203. The letter is mistakenly dated 1895. Actually Clarkson did not pay his own expenses. Julia Wedgwood's biography of Josiah Wedgwood contains a letter from Clarkson dated Apr. 18, 1794, asking if Wedgwood would like to contribute to his expenses, and another of Apr. 30, 1794, thanking for the contribution and naming other donors as well.

44. Clarkson, *History,* 294; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 260. There are several copies of Fox's pamphlet in the collection "Tracts on Slavery" in the Friends House Library, running up to the twenty-fifth edition. The full title is: *An Address to the People of Great Britain, on the Utility of Refraining from the Use of West India Sugar and Rum* (London: James Phillips, 1791).

British people that not only the merchants but all who enjoyed the produce of slave labor were guilty:

> I pity them greatly, but I must be mum
> For how could we do without sugar and rum?
> Especially sugar, so needful we see?
> What! give up our desserts, our coffee and tea?

When it was rumored that Cowper had refused to sign one of the anti–slave trade petitions because he had changed his mind after reading that Africa's overpopulation was resulting in cannibalism, he denounced the report vehemently. "I think it would be better the negroes should have eaten one another than that we should carry them to market," he retorted.[45]

On July 4, 1793, the London committee passed a resolution to abstain from the use of West Indian sugar and rum, and Clarkson reported with delight that wherever he went, he found people abstaining. They were of all ranks and parties, he observed, and the total number was probably 300,000. Professor Lowell Ragatz has estimated that the increase in the sale of East Indian sugar from 4,047 hundredweight in 1791 to 43,205 hundredweight in 1793 was due in part to the growing demand for free-labor sugar.[46] Wilberforce inquired of Zachary Macaulay if bees could be raised in Sierra Leone. He thought honey from "free bees" might supplant slave-produced sugar![47]

Of course, the invitation to join the boycott was extended to the American abolitionists, and especially among the Quakers there was a good response, probably because the idea was not new to them. Benjamin Lay and John Woolman had both advocated abstinence from slave-produced goods.[48] In 1792 James

45. Cowper to Reverend J. Jekyll Rye, Apr. 16, 1792, in Cowper, *Correspondence,* IV, 189–191.

46. Fair Minute Book 3, entry for July 4, 1793, Add. Mss 21256, British Museum; Clarkson, *History,* 295; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 264. In evaluating these figures one must keep in mind Clarkson's ever-present optimism.

47. Robert Isaac Wilberforce and Samuel Wilberforce, *The Life of William Wilberforce,* 5 vols. (London: John Murray, 1838), II, Appendix, 413 (hereinafter cited as Wilberforce, *Life*).

48. Ruth Ketring Nuermberger, *The Free Produce Movement: A Quaker*

Mott reported from the Westbury, New York, Yearly Meeting to the London Yearly Meeting that the idea was catching on; Elias Hicks's New York Yearly Meeting discussed the subject in 1793 and 1794 and each year from 1807 to 1810.[49] In 1811 Hicks published his *Observations on the Slavery of the Africans and Their Descendants, and on the Use of the Produce of Their Labor.* The third American Convention for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery and Improving the Condition of the African Race, held in Philadelphia in 1796, recommended that preference be given to goods produced by free labor. Both Benjamin Rush and Thomas Jefferson evinced interest in the possibility of substituting the sugar from maple trees for cane sugar, and Jefferson was reported to have planted a grove of maples with that in mind.[50] Although no concrete evidence affords an estimate of Americans who abstained, it seems likely that there were fewer than could be counted in England. In a later stage of the abolition movement the idea was to be revived with greater participation.

The rest of the decade of the 1790s in both England and the United States was characterized by efforts to keep the slave-trade issue alive and to win whatever ameliorative legislation was possible. In Great Britain Edmund Burke presented a plan of registration that provided for the supervision of ships engaged in the trade as well as requiring the attorney general in each colony to supervise the conditions and "rights" of the slaves. For example, they were to be supplied with churches and schools; they were not to be compelled to work on Sunday; they should be "secure" in property, life, and limb; legal marriage and church attendance could not be denied them; punishments were regulated; and provision was made for purchasing freedom.[51] Sir Henry Dun-

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Protest against Slavery (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1942), in *Historical Papers of the Trinity College Historical Society,* ser. XXV, 5–6.

49. London Yearly Meeting, Epistles Received, 1778–1801, V, Friends House Library; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 115–116. Drake says it was absurd of Lydia Child to say (in 1853) that the issue of slave produce was what caused the Hicksite split.

50. Nuermberger, *Free Produce Movement,* 7–11.

51. Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England,* Appendix A, 321–325; William L. Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition, 1823–1838* (London, 1926), 16.

das, an opponent of immediate abolition, also had a plan that included abolishing the trade which supplied foreign colonies, refusing to license any new slave ships, importing males and females in equal number, and fixing age limits for each. His plan called for the trade to cease completely on January 1, 1800.[52] Lord Grenville strongly backed an import tax on slaves as a method of restriction, and Wilberforce carried on with proposals to regulate and limit importation and the supplying of slaves to other nations' colonies.[53] Reaction against even these halfway measures was intense enough to defeat them. The Jamaican Assembly, for example, followed in the footsteps of the mainland colonies by denying Parliament's right to enact such internal legislation for the colonies or to tax their slave imports.[54]

In the United States attempts centered on accomplishing something within the framework of the regulatory powers Congress had defined for itself and on sustaining pressure on the states. By 1793 there were state abolition societies stretching from Rhode Island to Virginia dedicated to this aim.[55] Although several states barred the slave trade, enforcement was not always efficient, and vigilance was imperative. For example, a bad situation developed in North Carolina, where slaves manumitted by Quakers were seized by the state and sent off to the West Indies to be resold. This evoked a special memorial to Congress in 1797 asking for a renewal of the "solemn engagements" of 1774 against importing and purchasing slaves and hiring vessels from or selling goods to those occupied in the trade. Congress, however, decided that this case called for judicial rather than legislative redress and "allowed" the memorialists to withdraw the petition.[56]

52. Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition,* 18. Given Dundas's record, one concludes that he was motivated by a wish to delay rather than facilitate abolition; but if this is true, it is significant that he must have believed it would be impossible to delay indefinitely.

53. Wilberforce, *Life,* II, 23, 337–338, 367–368; III, 166–167, 184.

54. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 266.

55. James Pemberton to Granville Sharp, May 21, 1793, Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Correspondence, I. The constitution of the Virginia Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and the Relief of Free Negroes, Or Others, Unlawfully Held in Bondage, and Other Humane Purposes was published as a broadside in 1795 and may be found in Evans's Imprints (no. 29803).

56. William Allen to John Pemberton, Mar., 1791, Ms Box 7.10, Friends

Frequent petitions were sent by the abolition societies to the state legislatures asking redress for free Negroes, and sometimes extended research involving transatlantic cooperation was carried on to establish proof of freedom. On one occasion the Pennsylvania society appealed to Granville Sharp on behalf of an Asian claimed as a slave who insisted he had been a free man in London, where he had indentured himself, but was sold as a slave when his master died. Sharp put the East India Company to work to find the proof that would enable the Pennsylvania society to win its lawsuit.[57] In 1792 the Pennsylvania legislature denied an appeal by settlers from the West Indies that their Negro domestics should be exempt from the operation of the state law abolishing slavery, a case in which the abolition society was quick to commend the state's "laudable step."[58] A particular example of English-American cooperation involved the slaves from the Jamaican plantation of David Barclay, a British abolitionist. David and John Barclay (founders of Barclay's bank in London) had received the plantation as payment of a debt. Being opposed to slavery, they instructed the agent in charge of the estate to manumit the slaves, but he refused on the grounds that it would make him too unpopular with the neighboring planters. He freed only two of the thirty-two. After John's death David Barclay engaged an Englishman, William Holden, to go to Jamaica to free the rest and to conduct them to Philadelphia, where a special committee of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society was appointed to

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House Library; Pennsylvania Abolition Society to London Committee, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; "Memorial and Address of the People Called Quakers, from their Yearly Meeting held in Philadelphia by Adjournment from the 25th of the 9th month to the 29th of the same inclusive, 1797. To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled," Ms Box 5.22 (3), Friends House Library; *Annals of Congress*, 5 Cong., 2 sess., 656–658, 945–946.

57. James Pemberton to Granville Sharp, n.d., and Sharp to Pennsylvania Abolition Society, n.d. (but internal evidence suggests both letters were written in 1792), Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Sometimes delegates were even sent to the West Indies to obtain evidence.

58. Report of the committee in the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, Dec., 1792, and "To the Senate and House of Representatives of the State of Pennsylvania—the Address of the People Called Quakers," Feb. 21, 1793, Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

help them find jobs and establish themselves as free men. Barclay, well pleased with the eommittee's work, sent eaeh man "a pipe of brown stout, a eopy of Barelay's Apology, Backwille's quarto edition, and a Cheshire eheese." This act of liberation eost him over $13,000.[59]

The federal fugitive-slave law of 1793 seems to have passed without a great deal of publieity from the antislavery forces, although the Friends of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and the Eastern Shore of Maryland sent a memorial to Congress against it.[60] Perhaps antislavery advoeates had already absorbed the shock of the provision for such a law when the Constitution was ratified. But as early as 1793 Granville Sharp was advising Amerieans to stand on the "higher law" doetrine. In a letter to the Maryland Abolition Soeiety he pointed out that English law eould never be in eonfliet with divine law; therefore, even eolonial laws for returning fugitives had been uneonstitutional.[61]

On New Year's Day, 1794, delegates from the various state antislavery soeieties gathered in Philadelphia for the first of a long series of Ameriean eonventions. A eommittee headed by Benjamin Rush proposed a new petition asking Congress to bar U.S. citizens from supplying slaves to the foreign trade and to prohibit foreigners from fitting out slave ships in U.S. ports. It was delivered to Congress at the end of the month along with another from the Providenee Abolition Soeiety, just following a similar one from the New England Yearly Meeting. Early in March "an act to prohibit the earrying on the slave trade from the United States to any foreign plaee or country" had passed, and the abolitionists naturally took the eredit.[62]

59. Benjamin Kite, "The Autobiography of Benjamin Kite," Ms, Friends Historical Library.

60. Copy of the memorial accompanying a letter from Philadelphia Yearly Meeting to London Yearly Meeting, Dec. 20, 1816, Letters to and from Philadelphia, II, Friends House Library.

61. Granville Sharp, *Letter from Granville Sharp, Esq. of London, to the Maryland Soeiety for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and the Relief of Free Negroes and Others, Unlawfully Held in Bondage* (Baltimore: D. Graham, L. Yundt, and W. Patton, 1793).

62. *Minutes of the Proeeedings of a Convention of Delegates from the Abolition Soeieties Established in Different Parts of the United States . . .* (Philadelphia, 1794); Pennsylvania Abolition Society to Sharp, May 21, 1793, Correspon-

Aetually, the major motivation for passing the bill may have been fear rather than benevolenee—fear of involvement in the explosive Santo Domingo situation. Undoubtedly this played a part in the enaetment of laws against importation by North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and New Jersey and in the two time extensions of the South Carolina statute. It probably also played a role in the 1798 prohibition of slave importation into the Mississippi Territory. Maryland and North Carolina prohibited importation even by interstate trade, and both Georgia and South Carolina interdieted the entry of free Negroes.[63] Despite the laek of eompletely benevolent motives, the laws were eause for abolitionist rejoieing. Samuel Hoare, Jr., wrote for the London eommittee that sueh aetion in Ameriea would assist them in pressuring Parliament beeause it would destroy the eontention that even if the English quit the trade, the Amerieans would earry it on. Aeeording to Granville Sharp, this had been a major exeuse of Parliament.[64] Hoare suggested that the next step should be to eonfront Congress with some plan for effieient enforeement.[65] Granville Sharp wrote to eongratulate the Amerieans on their sueeess and to let them know that it was planned for Wilberforee to introduee the issue again in Parliament right after Christmas. "The example Ameriea has shewn us respeeting the Slave Trade is truly laudable," he wrote. "I wish you had been equally sueeessful in abolishing slavery itself."[66] Wilberforee was inelined to think that beeause of similar fears of insurreetion, West Indian planters might be willing to go along with the abolition of the British slave trade if they could have an assuranee preeluding emaneipation, and eonfessed that he would not be "indisposed" to

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dence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; *Annals of Congress*, 3 Cong., 1 sess., 36–39, 64–72, 448–455, 469, 483; *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Seeond Convention* . . . (Philadelphia: Zachariah Poulson, 1795).

63. DuBois, *Suppression of the Slave-Trade*, 71–73, 80–81, Appendix B.

64. Sharp to Jay, May 1, 1788, in *Jay Papers*, III, 329–332.

65. Samuel Hoare, Jr., to Pennsylvania Abolition Society, July 10, 1794, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania. The penalty was to be forfeiture of the ship, a fine of up to $1,000 for each person engaged, and $200 per slave. See DuBois, *Suppression of the Slave-Trade*, 81.

66. Sharp to Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Aug. 20, Nov. 24, 1794, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

such a compromise. In 1794 both Wilberforce and William Pitt were added to the list of honorary members of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society.[67]

In following up Hoare's suggestion of a plan to implement enforcement, both the Pennsylvania society and the New York Manumission Society began collecting evidence in all cases they could detect where either federal or state law was being violated. Such evidence was then turned over to the authorities in the hope of initiating prosecutions.[68] The American Convention of 1797 sent letters to both the Secretary of State and the Secretary of the Treasury informing them of efforts made and techniques employed to evade the law. After the National Convention in France in 1795 had declared all blacks and people of color to be free with full rights of citizenship, the American abolition societies became vigilant in watching out for and reporting cases of attempts to smuggle slaves out of the West Indies to America.[69]

In England through the years 1794–1799 Wilberforce annually renewed his motion to consider the slave trade, but each year it was voted down, sometimes by narrow margins. In 1796, for example, the vote was only 74 to 70 and could have been carried, Wilberforce charged bitterly, had several Members of Parliament attended the session instead of going to a new opera that had just come to London.[70] Samuel Hoare reported to his American correspondent that the House of Commons had been persuaded by the "arts and sophistry of interested men" to desert its duty, and the American Convention in 1796 responded with a formal resolution regretting the lack of success in London.[71]

In the period when Wilberforce was acknowledged as the un-

67. Wilberforce to William Smith, Oct. 29, 1794, Thompson-Clarkson Collection, I, 319; Wilberforce to Pennsylvania Abolition Society, May 30, 1794, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

68. New York Manumission Society, minute for June 2, 1795; Pennsylvania Abolition Society to London Committee, Mar. 2, 1795, Feb. 29, 1796, Apr. 26, 1797, Correspondence, II, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

69. *Minutes of the Second Convention; Minutes of the Proceedings of the Third Convention . . .* (Philadelphia: Zachariah Poulson, 1796); *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fourth Convention . . .* (Philadelphia: Zachariah Poulson, 1797).

70. Wilberforce, *Life*, II, 141–142.

71. *Minutes of the Third Convention.*

rivaled leader of the abolitionist movement in British politics, and Thomas Clarkson was becoming accepted as its nonpolitical hero, the U.S. abolition movement, after Benezet, produced so such outstanding leaders before 1808. The coordination of activities fell instead to the American Convention of Delegates from the various state and local societies, which, beginning in 1794, met annually (skipping 1799, 1802, and 1807) in Philadelphia. In addition to encouraging and directing activities at home, it was also the body which kept contact with the London committee, regularly reporting its plans, successes, and failures. The years 1794–1808 are generally not associated with great antislavery activity in the United States, perhaps because of the absence of any colorful leader to dramatize the cause and keep it in the forefront of public consciousness. Yet it was a period of steady, unyielding pressure by the antislavery minority on national and state governments and also one of practical projects aimed at helping free Negroes.

All of the abolition societies kept a close watch over such things as the illegal seizures and sales of blacks and instituted suits for relief, kept registers of manumissions achieved through their efforts, distributed antislavery publications, and regularly petitioned their state legislatures regarding slave laws. Letters were repeatedly sent to state officials in an attempt to collect a complete body of information on state laws and on the numbers and condition of the free colored. In 1794 antislavery memorials were presented to the legislatures of Connecticut, New Jersey, and Delaware, but those written from the American convention to Georgia and South Carolina "somehow" went astray. The following year New York and Virginia abolitionists circulated petitions advocating gradual emancipation bills. The one in Virginia lost, but that of New York finally succeeded in 1800. In New Jersey a similar attempt begun in 1798 achieved success in 1804. Delaware abolitionists were not optimistic for their state and, after a futile attempt to pass a gradual bill, concentrated on laws for the relief and protection of free blacks. Almost all of the reports of the state societies to the American Convention contained news of continuing manumissions and liberations.[72]

72. *Minutes of the Fourth Convention.*

But above all was the problem of the slave trade. While the first committee appointed by the American Convention in 1795 to study the federal law of 1794 (which forbade exports of slaves) reported satisfaction with it, it was not long before the vigilance of member societies began to detect evasions, spot the loopholes, and recommend amendments. Members of the New York Manumission Society went so far as to board vessels in the harbor and consequently brought about several arrests. In 1797 the convention decided to correspond with the governor of Sierra Leone in order to receive information he might have on American citizens violating the law.[73] After consideration, Congress in 1800 plugged one loophole in the slave-trade law by forbidding American citizens to invest capital in any vessel carrying slaves from one foreign country to another or to serve in any capacity on such a ship. Moreover, any such ship would be liable to seizure by commissioned vessels of the United States. As late as 1806 the American Convention petitioned that anyone found guilty under the 1794 law as amended in 1800 should be disqualified from holding office.[74]

The years 1803–1804 saw an acceleration in the pace of legislative activity in both the United States and Britain. Renewed fears because of the inflamed situation in Santo Domingo, coupled with the repercussions following the Gabriel conspiracy in Virginia in 1800, may have been more responsible than abolitionist pressures for the reopening of debates on the slave trade. But abolitionists were not above capitalizing on those fears to push for the legislation they desired. In July, 1804, William Dillwyn of the London committee wrote to James Pemberton of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society that in view of similar fears in both countries, it behooved abolitionists to use the opportunity to try to secure some sort of American-British pledge of cooperation.[75] The recent acquisition of the Louisiana Territory by the United

73. *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Sixth Convention . . .* (Philadelphia: Zachariah Poulson, 1800).

74. *Annals of Congress,* 6 Cong., 1 sess., 668, 676, 686–690, 697, 699, 9 Cong., 2 sess., 992–993; DuBois, *Suppression of the Slave-Trade,* 81–84; *British and Foreign State Papers,* I, pt. II, 985–986.

75. William Dillwyn to James Pemberton, July 27, 1804, Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Correspondence, II.

States further complicated the picture. On the one hand, it increased the demand for more slaves to supply labor for the new territory, but on the other it aggravated fears over what the result of unrestricted importation might be. William C. C. Claiborne, the governor of Louisiana, reported to President Madison in May, 1804, that many slaves were being brought in, and he feared it would amount to "thousands" by autumn. There would be another Santo Domingo, he predicted, if Congress continued to indulge the people by allowing such importation.[76] The American Convention of that year petitioned Congress to prohibit importation into Louisiana, reminding that body of the precedent of the Northwest Ordinance. The Quakers sent a memorial asking for a complete cessation of importation into any part of the United States.[77] Thomas Branagan, one of the more radical of the early nineteenth-century antislavery writers, called for a part of the Louisiana Territory to be made into a separate state for blacks. At the same time Thomas Pownall, the former governor of Massachusetts colony, warned that unless blacks were allowed to own their own land and exercise political power, the English West Indies would become another Santo Domingo.[78]

It is impossible to ascertain to what extent such fears influenced the votes in Congress in favor of the prohibition law passed in 1807. But the fact that those fears were very real is evident in the passage, early in 1806, of an act to suspend commercial intercourse between the United States and those parts of Santo Domingo not acknowledging French control.[79] Another important factor, but equally difficult to weigh, was the internal slave trade and the degree to which profits from it may have determined the votes of the upper South cast against the foreign slave trade. The Jeffersonians from that area, now in power, were fortunate

76. Claiborne to Madison, May 8, July 12, 1804, in Donnan, ed., *Documents,* IV, 662–663, nos. 440, 441.

77. *Annals of Congress,* 8 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 1596–97; "To the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States in Congress Assembled. The Memorial of the People Called Quakers," copy in Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

78. Thomas Branagan, *Serious Remonstrances* . . . (Philadelphia: Thomas T. Stiles, 1805); Schutz, "Thomas Pownall and His Negro Commonwealth."

79. *Annals of Congress,* 9 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 1262.

in that their liberal ideals and their economic interests dovetailed nicely on this issue.

In England a factor of great importance in the renewal of the slave-trade discussion in 1804 was the change in political complexion of the government. Pitt returned as prime minister, and Fox returned to Commons. The addition of the new Irish members after the union of the two parliaments that year also brought hope to the abolitionists because they believed they could count on Irish votes for the cause. Wilberforce was convinced, moreover, that in the interim period since 1796 fears which had associated abolition with revolutionary Jacobinism had died away. Meanwhile some of the West Indian planters of the older "saturated" islands had come to recognize that abolition was a means of cutting down competition from the newer, undeveloped sugar islands. Consequently the old opponents would be weakened by division.[80] In 1802 James Stephen had published a pamphlet, *The Crisis of the Sugar Colonies,* to which was attributed much influence in "exposing" the economic troubles arising from overproduction and continued importation.[81]

In both countries, then, it was a combination of fear, economic interest, abolitionist pressures, and a changed political picture that launched their respective legislative bodies into the final debates of 1804–1807 which were to lead to the laws banning the slave trade. The fact that the debates ran concurrently was in itself an advantage for those favoring prohibition, for it weakened the argument of the opposition that there was no point in one nation acting alone in the matter. It is necessary now to summarize the course of events in each country.

The argument in the United States centered around the question of whether the trade should be restricted and regulated or completely prohibited. As we have noted, steps to restrict had been taken in the 1794 law amended in 1800. In 1803 the next step was to make it a federal offense for anyone to land slaves in any state that prohibited importation, thus giving federal protec-

80. Wilberforce, *Life,* III, 163–164; George R. Meller, *British Imperial Trusteeship 1783–1850* (London: Faber and Faber, [1951]), 64–65.

81. Wilberforce, *Life,* III, 43; [James Stephen], *The Crisis of the Sugar Colonies . . .* (London: J. Hatchard, 1802).

tion to those states wishing it without interfering with the sovereignty of those that did not.[82] The issue of taxation as a means of restriction was also now revived, but even the antislavery ranks were divided on this method. While some believed that such a tax would at least proclaim to the world that the country was trying to limit the trade, others feared it would give legal sanction to the idea that slaves were property and not persons. It was argued that a tax would, by sanctioning the trade, logically enable the slave trader to demand federal protection. Still others were worried that once the government began to enjoy a revenue from such a tax, it would be more difficult to pass a total abolition bill when the twenty-year period ended, especially if the demand for more slaves in the Louisiana Territory continued.[83]

While all of these measures for regulation were being discussed, Massachusetts decided to ask for a constitutional amendment authorizing Congress to prohibit the trade completely even before 1808. Resolutions to that effect passed by the state legislature were forwarded by the governor and were introduced in the House of Representatives by Joseph B. Varnum. But evidently most congressmen felt that the amendment process was too slow and cumbersome and the time left of the twenty-year period too short for that method to be efficient. In any case, before the Massachusetts proposal had been considered, in December, 1805, Senator Stephen R. Bradley of Vermont introduced a bill providing that all importation should cease as of January 1, 1808.[84]

Opponents of prohibition immediately raised another legal block: could Congress even legislate on the matter before 1808? President Jefferson's influence now became important, and he used it by raising the issue in his message to Congress of December 2, 1806. He congratulated Congress on the approach of the period when it could interpose its authority to withdraw all U.S. citizens from further participation in those "violations of human rights" so long continued against the "unoffending inhabitants of Africa." He also suggested that the period intervening before

82. *Annals of Congress*, 7 Cong., 2 sess., 424, 459–467; *British and Foreign State Papers*, I, pt. II, 986–987.

83. *Annals of Congress*, 8 Cong., 2 sess., 820, 991–1010, 1011–20, 1024–36.

84. *Ibid.*, 1221–22; 9 Cong., 1 sess., 20–21.

1808 was not so long but what Congress could stop expeditions that could not be completed before January 1 of that year.[85]

The next day Bradley's bill was brought in for long and bitter debate. Two arguments nearly produced an impasse: should the federal or the state government have jurisdiction over the slaves aboard vessels seized? And should the penalty for violations be death or only fine and imprisonment? In order to get a law at all, it was finally necessary for the supporters of the bill to give in, allowing state jurisdiction (which meant retaining Negroes as slaves if the ship landed in a slave-state port) and accepting the lighter penalty.[86] Still another disagreement was over whether or not to include the coastwise trade. In a vehement outburst John Randolph declared that he would rather lose all the laws passed by the federal government since its inception than give in to a prohibition of the coastwise or internal slave trade. Such a move would certainly be a step toward general emancipation. If disunion ever came to the nation, he predicted, the line of severance would be between slaveholding and nonslaveholding states.[87] Virginia's profits from the internal slave trade not only influenced her delegates against the clause including the coastwise trade but also influenced their support of the measure as a whole. Necessity had made strange bed-fellows for the antislavery forces, but at that point they were glad to accept help from any source to attain their long-sought goal. The bill passed on February 13, 1807, to go into effect on January 1, 1808.

In Great Britain, meanwhile, the course of abolition ran far from smoothly, although hopes had been high after the change in government in 1804. Delaying tactics, such as leaving the Commons without a quorum, were repeatedly used by the opposition, and there was trouble keeping the Irish vote, largely because of Castlereagh. Wilberforce, Henry Brougham, James Stephen, and

85. Edwin Williams, comp., *The Addresses and Messages of the Presidents of the United States . . .* , 2 vols. (New York: Edward Walker, 1846), I, 187–192.

86. *Annals of Congress,* 9 Cong., 2 sess., 167–190, 200–203, 220–228, 231–244, 264–267, 270–274, 483–485, Appendix, 1266. DuBois says that the antislavery men were out-generaled by the southerners.

87. *Annals of Congress,* 9 Cong., 2 sess., 626–627, 636–637. To be on the safe side, when the bill abolishing the slave trade passed, Randolph submitted a resolution reaffirming right to slave property.

Zachary Macaulay kept a zealous watch and careful count of the voting strength so that they could move quickly to utilize it at any moment; and when they did, the bill passed by the overwhelming vote of 99 to 33. Their victory was short-lived, however, for once again the Lords rallied for a negative vote. "It was truly humiliating," Wilberforce lamented, "to see in the House of Lords, four of the Royal Family come down to vote against the poor, helpless, friendless Slaves." [88]

Pitt's narrow majority in Commons at this time made him reluctant to push divisive measures, but despite his remonstrances, Wilberforce decided to forge on with another motion in 1805, only to be defeated by the narrow margin of seven votes. It was not until 1806 that Britain passed a bill, similar to the American one of 1794, preventing merchants and British capital from being employed in the foreign slave trade, and shortly thereafter came the victory for total abolition in 1807. By then Pitt was dead, and Lord Grenville was prime minister. This time the abolitionist strategy was to capitalize on Lord Grenville's influence and leadership in the upper house and to introduce the legislation there first. Early in February, 1807, it was dramatically passed at four o'clock in the morning by a vote of 100 to 36 and within a month had passed the Commons (283–16) as well. There was still some worry about what King George would do, but a special commission was appointed to obtain the royal assent. The law provided that after May 1, 1807, no ship could clear for slaves from a British port, and after March 1, 1808, no slaves could be landed in a British dominion.[89]

It is hard to say to what extent the passage of these bills in both Britain and the United States, almost simultaneously, influenced each other. Although the British bill was voted on first, the American bill had been introduced earlier, lending weight to the

88. Wilberforce, *Life*, III, 176–182. Sir Samuel Romilly says that a third of the opposing votes in the Lords came from the king's sons: the dukes of York, Clarence, Cumberland, Kent, Sussex, and Cambridge. The duke of Gloucester, on the other hand, spoke and voted for the bill. See Romilly, *Memoirs*, II, 140.

89. Wilberforce, *Life*, III, 211–212; Blake, *History of Slavery and the Slave Trade*, 238–249; Clarkson, *History*, 328–348; Donnan, ed., *Documents*, II, 659–669, no. 301.

argument that while many Englishmen saw no point in acting alone, they were willing to try abolition in conjunction with a similar attempt in America. Another point is that the British were optimistic that universal outlawing of the slave trade would be one result of a general peace settlement in Europe.[90] Certainly the abolitionists were well aware that positive action in one country would strengthen their chances of success in the other. In London Zachary Macaulay was appointed to keep the newspapers informed on the progress of the American bill; each issue of the *Christian Observer,* which he edited, carried an article on America. When it appeared that the successful vote would come first in England, the London committee made arrangements to notify Benjamin Rush in Philadelphia immediately and to send him copies of the bill as soon as they could be obtained.[91]

It is perhaps natural that the abolitionists gave themselves the credit and tended to overlook any ulterior motives in the passage of the laws. "It is truly grateful," James Milnor, Federalist of Pennsylvania, exulted in a letter to the London committee, "that two nations the most distinguished for commercial activity should have united in abolishing the cruel traffic in slaves, and that the progress and principles of rectitude and humanity in each nation should be so uniform as to lead to the enaction of laws for that purpose reciprocally taking effect on the same day."[92] London Quakers, writing to Friends in Philadelphia, rejoiced that while progress might appear small, "every step is a step in the path of Justice and Mercy."[93]

90. See Betty Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe, 1814–1822," *Journal of Modern History,* XXXVIII (Dec., 1966), 355–373; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Report on the Manuscripts of J. B. Fortescue, Esq., Preserved at Dropmore,* [William Wyndham Grenville Papers] (London, 1910–1915), VIII, 262 (hereinafter cited as *Grenville Papers*).

91. Fair Minute Book 3, entries for Feb. 20, Mar. 10, 1807, Add. Mss 21256, British Museum.

92. Pennsylvania Abolition Society to London Committee, Apr. 7, 1808, Correspondence, II, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; London Yearly Meeting to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Apr. 1, 1808, Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

93. London Yearly Meeting to Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, Apr. 1, 1808, Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

While contemporary abolitionists were willing to overlook ulterior motives, historians, of course, cannot. The thesis has been propounded by Professor Eric Williams that abolition of the British slave trade resulted directly from the economic distress of the British West Indies. This was due to overproduction, owing in turn to an oversupply of slave labor. The only answer, then, was to cut off the supply. By 1807, Professor Williams argues, the slave trade had declined in relative significance, partly because of the disruptive effects of the American Revolution, which shifted the center of gravity of the British empire from the Caribbean Sea to the Indian Ocean. In 1787 the East India Company began the cultivation of sugar in India, and in the same year Pitt gave his support to Wilberforce's introduction of the measure to abolish the slave trade. When it seemed probable that England might acquire Santo Domingo, however, Pitt's enthusiasm for abolition waned, and only after that was no longer a possibility could a British government return to the support of abolition.[94]

While Williams's explanation appears eminently logical because we can look back with the benefit of historical hindsight and see that economic change did take place during that period, there are several questions left unanswered. In the first place, if the slave trade was no longer profitable, why did it continue to flourish illegally (i.e., under even greater handicaps) after 1808? If the law was passed as a response to or an acknowledgment of a decline that was already apparent, there would hardly have been the wholesale attempts to evade it. It is undoubtedly true that some West Indian planting interests were aware of the problem of the "saturated" older colonies' danger from competition with the younger, undeveloped colonies, and some credit should go to such abolitionists as James Stephen for driving home this point and suggesting abolition as a solution. But the fact remains that there was no clear-cut split between the planting interests of the older and newer colonies when it came to supporting or opposing abolition. Both Trinidad (a new colony) and Jamaica (the major

94. Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944), especially 38, 96, 121, 146, 149, 152, for specific statements.

old one) petitioned against the bill of 1807, and Jamaica instructed its agent in London to work against it.[95]

Moreover, it is inaccurate to consider only the sugar interests. In a letter to Lord Grenville of January 16, 1807, Edward P. Lyon explained the alarm in Jamaica over the prospect of abolition and emphasized the need for new labor imports to man the coffee estates, which had been developing over the last seven or eight years. He also deplored the decrease in the Negro population, largely owing, he thought, to the disproportion of male to female slaves imported and to the high death rate from disease among children. Still another reason for alarm was the fear that the slaves would immediately assume a connection between abolition of the trade and emancipation. If they were disappointed, insurrection would be inevitable.[96] The example of Santo Domingo was all too evident. In the West Indies, as in the United States, racial fears sometimes worked at odds with economic interests.

Moreover, one cannot assume that traders or planters in 1807 were able to analyze their economic trouble as anything more than a temporary decline or depression. This is supported by the fact that they rejected even a temporary suspension of the trade for fear it would lay the groundwork for permanent abolition. After studying their political opposition, I am inclined to agree with C. M. MacInnes's conclusion that the West Indians did not face up to economic truths but continued to think of themselves as the "cornerstone of British prosperity, as they had been regarded in the eighteenth century." [97] If one assumes economic interests to have been the paramount factor in the abolition bill of 1807, the traders and planters should have initiated the action. On the contrary, the leadership came from the same men who had

95. Wilberforce, *Life,* III, 260. Ragatz concludes that cutting off the supply of slaves did hurt the old as well as the new colonies. See *Fall of the Planter Class,* 346.

96. *Grenville Papers,* IX, 14–20.

97. C. M. MacInnes, *England and Slavery* (Bristol: J. W. Arrowsmith, 1934), 157. Lillian M. Penson concludes in her article "The London West India Interest in the Eighteenth Century," *English Historical Review,* XXXVI (July, 1921), 373–392, that from 1788 on the whole force of the West Indian interests was given to opposing the attack on the slave trade.

long been dedicated to the cause for humanitarian reasons. Fox and Grenville were not speaking for the traders and planters in any positive sense, but they were capitalizing on a declining zeal for fighting any longer on the part of some of those interests.

The matter of political balance was vital. Lord Grenville was able to put together a cabinet with fewer opponents of abolition than Pitt's cabinets had ever held. The House of Lords had long been a stumbling block to abolition, but since Grenville was a Lord himself, his influence in that body was much stronger than Pitt's.[98] Professor Williams leaves the impression that the report of the parliamentary committee to study the situation in the West Indies was an important factor in the vote for abolition. The fact is that the vote was taken in Parliament before that committee had acted or presented its report. The vote was in February, but the committee was not set up until March 12, and its report was not published until the following summer.[99]

It seems, then, that in both Great Britain and the United States the abolition of the slave trade was supported by several groups with a variety of motives. The situation made temporary allies of abolitionists who opposed slavery and the slave trade on humanitarian grounds, those who wanted to cut off importation because of racial dangers inherent in the increase of black populations, and those who would benefit economically by removing the competition of the foreign slave trade. In England, particularly, a large measure of credit must be given to the leadership, pressure, propaganda, and political maneuvering of the abolitionists, but they needed the right combination of government support and economic discontent to give them the necessary votes.

In the American situation it is harder to ascribe credit to abolitionist leadership, possibly, as we have noted before, because there were no prominent antislavery leaders in Congress as there were in Parliament, and because, in this case, the economic interests of the upper South coincided nicely with humanitarian opposition to the foreign slave trade. And even in the deep South

98. Lipscomb, "William Pitt and the Abolition of the Slave Trade," 504ff.

99. Roger T. Anstey, "Capitalism and Slavery: A Critique," *Economic History Review*, 2nd ser., XXI (1968), 307–320. This article was kindly lent to me before publication by its author.

racial fears revitalized by Santo Domingo and the Gabriel conspiracy were very strong. Yet one can certainly not discount altogether the activities of the antislavery societies and the ferment of liberal ideas. Their petitions and remonstrances at both the state and federal levels stirred discussion, provoked reactions, and contributed to the development of a concern out of which action could blossom. From the vantage point of history we are apt to look back on the period of the early nineteenth century as one of failure for the antislavery movement because we know that the legal outlawing of the slave trade did not actually end it and had very little effect on slavery itself. But to the people of 1808 the view looked quite different. They could not anticipate its failure. They were quite confident that the slave trade would, in fact, end, and once importation had stopped, slavery itself could be contained and eventually abolished.

Colonization Projects

IV

The period after 1808 has generally been portrayed by historians as the low point in antislavery activity. It is true that this was a transition period between two peaks: the optimistic enthusiasm of the revolutionary era, culminating in the abolition of slavery in the North and of the slave trade, and the revitalized, organized, more aggressive movement of the 1830s. Yet to label it a "low" period is in many ways an unfair characterization. There was no falling off of antislavery conviction and zeal on the part of those convinced of the righteousness of the cause, but the difficulty lay in the fact that they faced a new set of problems in both America and Great Britain.

The reformers looked on the passage of the slave-trade acts of 1807 as decisive victories that would mark the decline and, eventually, the termination of slavery. Several years had to pass before they could properly assess the lack of effectiveness of this legislation, face up to its failure, and organize for battle on a new front. When they did so, another weakness proved to be their lack of agreement on what the new focus should be. Consequently, what followed was a long period of trial and error in experimenting with a variety of solutions: "ameliorative" measures within the slave system, registry systems, plans for gradual emancipation, schemes of improvement for the free blacks to convince whites of their

intelligence and capacity for freedom, and colonization. Not until all of these had proved impractical and unavailing did the antislavery movement decide that the axe must be laid to the root of the evil and, in consequence of that decision, turn to immediatism. But, as Professor David B. Davis has pointed out, the shift to immediatism was more than a shift in strategy. It was also the result of the changing views of human nature and history and of the new conceptions of individual responsibility, heightened by the impact of the religious revival spirit of the early nineteenth century.[1] The fact that the development of the antislavery movement took the same course in both Britain and the United States indicates how closely they were connected in thought as well as in deed.

In both countries there was a thermidorean reaction against "radical" revolutionary ideals—a reaction that probably would have come in some measure in the wake of the American Revolution alone but which was emphasized and prolonged because of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars. In Great Britain there was a reluctance on the part of some abolitionist politicians to push the government too hard for fear of detracting from the unity of the war effort. In both countries fears aroused by the race wars in Santo Domingo were of tremendous significance in strengthening the conservative point of view. Above all, perhaps, was the factor of new profits from cotton, enjoyed in both the United States and England, which accompanied westward expansion and rapidly growing industrialization.

It should not be surprising, therefore, that the antislavery movement was forced, or thought it sagacious, to operate along nonradical lines. Amelioration, mitigation, and gradualism were the keynotes. The very fact that abolitionists eschewed agitation of a decidedly radical nature has made the period look unimpressive, and historians have been guilty of neglecting it in favor of the more exciting times that came later. Another factor in the mislabeling of the period lies in the fact that the later abolitionists themselves discounted it by refusing to accept amelioration and

1. David B. Davis, "The Emergence of Immediatism in British and American Antislavery Thought," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, XLIX (Sept., 1962), 209–230.

mitigation, and more particularly colonization, as representing "true" antislavery effort. Pro-abolitionist historians have tended to perpetuate this exclusion. It is true that after 1820 colonization schemes passed more and more under the control of people motivated by racial fear and prejudice rather than by genuine antislavery conviction, but at the turn of the century both British and American abolitionists were exploring its possibilities as a solution to the slavery problem.

Proposals for colonizing freed slaves had been made by several eighteenth-century abolitionists: as early as 1715 by John Hepburn and by Benjamin Lay in 1737.[2] Writing to John Fothergill in 1773, Anthony Benezet ventured to hope that slaves would gradually be released, possibly by the intervention of the government, and might be settled somewhere in the vast territory between the Appalachian Mountains and the Mississippi River. He did not, however, want them confined to segregated colonies. They should be mixed among the white settlers.[3] The same year the Reverend Samuel Hopkins of Newport, Rhode Island, proposed that instead of proceeding with ordinary missionary work in Africa, friends of the Negro should establish a colony. The idea was advertised in sermons and circulars, and by 1776 funds were being collected so that two Negro students could be trained at Princeton to undertake the work. The American Revolution ended the effort, but the idea did not die, although as events worked out, it was to be revived first by the British rather than by the Americans.[4]

Although there were several experiments with small settlements for freed slaves, the first large-scale overseas project was initiated by the same British humanitarians who had been influential in the Somerset decision and in the push to abolish the slave trade, principally the group known as the Clapham Sect or, in politics, as the Saints. One of the unfortunate consequences of freeing the slaves in England had been that many masters immediately relinquished

2. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 121.

3. Benezet to Fothergill, Apr. 28, 1773, in Gibson, Friends' Autographs, I, 27, Friends House Library.

4. J. H. T. McPherson, *History of Liberia,* vol. IX of Herbert B. Adams, ed., *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1891), 14–15.

their responsibility, and several thousand blacks, set adrift on their own, gravitated to London, where they lived in great poverty, often reduced to beggary. In 1786 the Committee for Relieving the Black Poor was established by these humanitarians with social consciences, and almost simultaneously Dr. Henry Smeathman proposed that they might be resettled in Africa. He had spent some years in Sierra Leone himself and believed it would make a suitable place.[5]

Granville Sharp was immediately inspired by the suggestion, arranged for a cession of land from the native chiefs of that area, and supervised the rounding up of and transportation for some 450 potential settlers, both black and white.[6] As in so many colonization projects, enthusiasm outran practical arrangements; several died in passage, and the fever carried off nearly half of those who landed.[7] King Tom, from whom the land had been purchased, took advantage of the colony's weakness to seize some settlers to sell as slaves. Others wandered into the interior, died of fevers, or were caught in outbreaks of violence between British commercial vessels and the natives. In 1790, after British sailors had burned an African town, the natives retaliated by burning the Sierra Leone settlement.[8]

In 1790 the colony's backers shifted to a commercial basis by organizing the St. George's Bay Association to trade with Africa, and the following year they succeeded in getting a charter of incorporation from Parliament that transformed them into the Sierra Leone Company, with Granville Sharp as president and other Saints, including Wilberforce, on the board of directors. Their first move was to persuade the government to pay for the trans-

5. Ernest M. Howse, *Saints in Politics: The "Clapham Sect" and the Growth of Freedom* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1952), 45–46.

6. The figure is approximate. Sharp, in a letter to Dr. John Coakley Lettsom, Oct. 13, 1788, says 441 sailed in the first expedition. See Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library. In *Substance of the Report Delivered by the Court of Directors of the Sierra Leone Company, to the General Court of Proprietors, on Thursday, March 27, 1794* (Philadelphia: Thomas Dodson, 1795), the figure given is 460.

7. Adam Hodgson, in *A Letter to M. Jean-Baptiste Say, on the Comparative Expense of Free and Slave Labour*, 2nd ed. (Liverpool: James Smith, 1823), says that only 130 settlers arrived alive in Sierra Leone, but Sharp and the *Report* of the Sierra Leone Company cited in note 6 are in closer agreement.

8. See Sharp's letter to Lettsom and the *Report* cited in note 6.

portation of between 1,100 and 1,200 emigrants from Nova Scotia, former slaves from the United States who had been induced to enlist in the British Army during the Revolution by the offer of freedom.[9] Ill treated by local authorities in Nova Scotia and denied the rights of British subjects, they sent Thomas Peters, who had been a sergeant under Sir Henry Clinton, to intercede with the British government for their cause.[10]

Thomas Clarkson's brother John, an officer in the British Navy, was sent to supervise their embarkation in February, 1792, and was appointed to be the first governor of the Sierra Leone colony. Hard times still prevailed during his administration, with fevers, tropical insects, shortage of provisions, and troubles with native Africans taking their toll. It was not until the middle of the decade, under the governorship of Zachary Macaulay, that the colony achieved any measure of stability, and in 1794 it was able to survive an attack by a French squadron. Even then it was never a success financially, and its acceptance as a crown colony in 1808 did little to change the status quo.[11] Yet for the abolitionists, who "reckoned not as the world did," it was a success. In 1819 Clarkson reported that nearly 10,000 Africans had been rescued from slave ships and settled there, and therefore "the colony at Sierra Leone . . . has repaid us for our labours."[12]

Even when the prospects looked most discouraging and the Saints were admitting as much to themselves, their letters to the United States invariably evinced faith that the idea was sound

9. Again the accounts vary as to exact number. The Sierra Leone Company's *Report* says 1,196.

10. Henry Noble Sherwood, "Paul Cuffe and His Contribution to the American Colonization Society," *Proceedings of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association*, VI (1912–1913), 370–402. Sherwood says 16 vessels with 1,131 colonists left Nova Scotia. Quarles in *The Negro in the American Revolution*, 180, quotes Thomas Clarkson as reporting 1,190. Five hundred maroons from Jamaica augmented the number in 1800.

11. Clarkson, *History*, 292; Sir Reginald Coupland, *Wilberforce* (London: Collins, 1945), 225–228; J. Holland Rose, A. P. Newton, and E. A. Benians, eds., *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940), 210.

12. Clarkson to King Henry [Christophe], Sept. 28, 1819, in Earl L. Griggs and Clifford H. Prator, eds., *Henry Christophe–Thomas Clarkson: A Correspondence* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1952), 161–163.

and hope in its ultimate triumph.[13] In the spring of 1789 Samuel Hoare, Jr., reported from the London Abolition Committee to the Pennsylvania Abolition Society that all was going well in Sierra Leone and that favorable reports were being communicated to other prospective emigrants and to friends in America.[14] James Pemberton's answer revealed less optimism and the opinion that it was not likely that many settlers could be found to go from America;[15] yet several Americans offered their aid and cooperation. The New York Manumission Society, which was in correspondence with Granville Sharp, set up a committee to consider communications from the governor and first councillor of the Sierra Leone Company and from Henry Thornton of the court of directors in London. One of their purposes was to collect all available information respecting violations of the American and British slave-trade laws.[16] Matthew Clarkson, onetime vice-president of the New York Manumission Society, wrote from Philadelphia to Thomas Clarkson asking how he could help, and William Thornton offered his services as superintendent for the new colony.[17]

William Thornton is one of the most colorful figures connected with the colonization enterprises.[18] Born in Tortola, he studied medicine in England and Scotland under Dr. John Coakley Lettsom, an emancipationist who supported the colonization idea. Thornton came to the United States in 1786 determined to devote his life to the colonization of blacks, beginning with seventy or eighty inherited slaves of his own. Full of energy and enthusiasm,

13. Wilberforce, *Life,* II, 271; III, 43–44, 50, 187.

14. "From the Committee of the Society Instituted at London for effecting the Abolition of the slave Trade—To the Committee of the Pennsylvania Society for promoting the abolition of slavery, etc., at Philadelphia," Mar. 3, 1789, Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Correspondence, I.

15. Pennsylvania Abolition Society to London Committee, June 24, 1789, Correspondence, I, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

16. New York Manumission Society, minutes for May 21, 1789, June 2, 1795.

17. Matthew Clarkson to Thomas Clarkson, Nov. 16, 1791, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; P. J. Staudenraus, *The African Colonization Movement, 1816–1865* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1961), 253, note 10.

18. Gaillard Hunt, "William Thornton and Negro Colonization," *Proceedings of the American Antiquarian Society,* n.s., XXX (1920), 32–61; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 123–124; Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement,* 253, note 10.

he traveled to Newport, Rhode Island, to consult with Samuel Hopkins and Moses Brown, and to Massachusetts to lay his plan before Samuel Adams. He corresponded with Madison and Jefferson and kept in touch with English abolitionists as well as the leaders of Les Amis des Noirs in Paris.

While in New England Thornton appealed to the free Negroes there to join him, and he prepared a written address "To the Black Inhabitants of Pennsylvania, Assembled at one of their stated Meetings in Philadelphia." In each case he outlined British plans for Sierra Leone, described the area, appealed to their desire for freedom and independence as well as free land, and asked them to provide names, sizes of families, ages, and trades of prospective settlers. Yet, despite all this expenditure of energy, his efforts came to naught. Evidently there was some reaction to him as flighty and unstable, and Granville Sharp vetoed his request to be made superintendent of Sierra Leone. Dr. Lettsom advised him to go back to Tortola, which he did, but not even his plan to liberate and colonize his own slaves was carried through. Several years later, when he returned to the United States (having won the prize for his architectural plans for the new Capitol in Washington, D.C.), his energy was again thrown into the colonization scheme. He was a charter member of the American Colonization Society and one of its directors until his death in 1828. In 1802 he suggested that the United States buy Puerto Rico from Spain and make it a colony for the resettlement of free blacks.

Almost simultaneously with the passage of their 1807 act to abolish the slave trade, English abolitionists, rather than disbanding once their goal was achieved, organized themselves into a new society called the African Institution. It was often represented as a colonization society because its strength was drawn from the same individuals who had established Sierra Leone, but in truth its main object was to be a "watchdog" group to check on the enforcement of the new abolition laws. Should its members discover infractions, they would present suggestions from time to time on how to make execution more effective. As a matter of fact, when William Allen wrote to Wilberforce in 1811 to suggest settling a tract of land in Africa with worthy families, Wilberforce replied that the funds of the African Institution could not be used for

such a purpose.[19] At the first meeting of the society on April 14, 1807, secondary goals were also announced: to disseminate information about Africa, to aid the instruction of Africans by reducing African languages to writing, to introduce medical knowledge, and to promote agriculture. While the directors denied that they would become involved in either religious missions or economic speculations, they did point out that civilizing Africa and helping to increase her production of marketable goods would help to kill the slave trade by substituting legitimate trade.[20]

Professor Thomas P. Martin has seen the economic motive as the major one, definitely linked to the disruption of British trade resulting from the Napoleonic wars, and states that it was Jefferson's embargo that stimulated the efforts of the African Institution to encourage cotton growing in Africa.[21] Granted that such economic stimulation may have been important, the fact remains that "legitimate" development of West Africa had been a goal of the same group of Englishmen long before the disruption of trade with the United States and long before they organized the African Institution. Zachary Macaulay had worked along these lines as governor of Sierra Leone, and when he returned to England in 1799, he took with him twenty-one African boys and girls to train as teachers.[22]

The Executive Committee of the African Institution included the bishops of London, Durham, Bath, and Wells and an impressive list of notable statesmen-philanthropists: William Pitt, George Canning, Sir Samuel Romilly, Zachary Macaulay, Henry

19. Wilberforce to William Allen, Aug. 10, 1811, Mss Portfolio 27.38, Friends House Library.

20. Jedidiah Morse, *A Discourse, Delivered at the African Meeting-House, in Boston, July 14, 1808, in Grateful Celebration of the Abolition of the African Slave Trade, by the Governments of the United States, Great Britain and Denmark* (Boston: Lincoln and Edmonds, 1808); *Report of the Committee of the African Institution, Read to the General Meeting on the 15th July, 1807. Together with the Rules and Regulations Which Were Then Adopted for the Government of the Society* (London: William Phillips, 1807).

21. Thomas P. Martin, "Some International Aspects of the Anti-Slavery Movement, 1818–1823," *Journal of Economic and Business History*, I (1928–1929), 137–148. Oddly enough, Eric Williams in *Capitalism and Slavery* does not mention the African Institution.

22. Sharp, *Memoirs*, II, 58.

Brougham, William Huskisson, Thomas Babington, James Stephen, William Roscoe, and, of course, William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson, and Granville Sharp. The duke of Gloucester consented to be their patron.[23]

One American who became stirred by visions of happy prospects in the Sierra Leone settlement was Paul Cuffe, who was of African descent, though never a slave. Born of free Negro and Indian parents on one of the Elizabeth Islands off the coast of Massachusetts, Cuffe got his start in coastwise trade and eventually became a prosperous merchant with several ships of his own. Self-educated, he was convinced of the importance of schools for his people and helped to start one in his own community; but on the whole he despaired for the future of the black race in America. In 1811 he decided to sail to Sierra Leone on one of his ships to observe the colony for himself and to investigate the possibility of American Negroes being admitted as settlers. While in Sierra Leone he received an invitation from the officers of the African Institution to visit England. Leaving his nephew to help instruct the colonists in agricultural methods in exchange for an African, Aaron Richards, who would be taught navigation, he sailed for Liverpool with a cargo of African products. English abolitionists received him cordially, and Wilberforce personally saw to it that he obtained the necessary license authorizing him to transport settlers to Africa. An embarrassing tangle occurred when Aaron Richards was seized for impressment into the British Navy, but luckily the officers of the African Institution could use their friendship with the right men in high places, including the First Lord of the Admiralty, to obtain his release.

After returning to the United States via Sierra Leone, Cuffe wrote his *Brief Account of the Settlement and Present Situation of the Colony of Sierra Leone,* which was published in both New York and Philadelphia. Unfortunately, the War of 1812 interfered with his project, though during the time he was waiting, he presented a memorial to Congress asking permission to transport free blacks from the United States. The Senate acted favorably on his request, but the House decided it was British, not American,

23. *Report of the Committee of the African Institution;* Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 384–385.

authorization he needed. Since he already had that, as soon as the end of hostilities permitted, Cuffe sailed from Boston with thirty-eight emigrants, paying the expenses of thirty of them from his own pocket. He died in 1817 before another expedition could be made, but he, too, had helped to publicize the idea and to encourage the people and the American government to interest themselves in such a project.[24]

While some Americans were concerning themselves about Sierra Leone, others were working toward a similar venture. As in the case of the British, arguments were made that such a colony would benefit not only the freed blacks. Aspects of the idea would appeal to many groups for a variety of reasons. It would relieve the race problem in the United States, provide a base for missionary activities in Africa, and open the door to expanding profits in trade. A good bit of the impetus came from Virginians. In the last decade of the eighteenth century Fernando Fairfax had made the suggestion that such a colony should be set up by the U.S. government rather than by private enterprise, and shortly thereafter St. George Tucker's plan for gradual emancipation included provisions that would severely restrict free Negroes, thereby "encouraging" them to emigrate.[25] The subsequent discovery of the Gabriel plot in Virginia in 1800 intensified fears and produced a debate in the state legislature that led to a resolution directing Governor Monroe to correspond with President Jefferson on the subject of purchasing land to which dangerous or "obnoxious" persons might be sent.

Since Jefferson had long doubted that blacks would ever operate on a basis of equality with whites, it was not surprising that he reiterated his support of the principle of colonization and agreed that American settlers could be the means of civilizing Africa.

24. Sherwood, "Paul Cuffe and His Contribution to the American Colonization Society"; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 124–125. For Wilberforce's role, see Wilberforce, *Life,* III, 501. For the note on Aaron Richards, see Clarkson to William Allen, July 7, 1817, Charles Francis Jenkins Autograph Collection, Friends Historical Library.

25. Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement,* 2–3. St. George Tucker suggested that free Negroes be prohibited from bearing arms except under specific authorization in emergencies, from marrying whites, from being jurors, trustees, or attorneys, and from making wills.

Since the British had already established Sierra Leone, he thought it might be advisable to send Afro-Americans there or, as alternatives, to one of the Portuguese possessions in South America or to Santo Domingo. Acting on the approval of Congress, in 1802 Jefferson instructed Rufus King, U.S. minister in London, to negotiate with the Sierra Leone Company, and King opened a correspondence with a "Mr. W . . ." (obviously Wilberforce) and Henry Thornton. Their frank answer was that the company was having such a hard time that the British government would have to take it over, and they were in no position, therefore, to welcome colonists from the United States. In fact, they added, it was people from the United States who had kept Sierra Leone in a state of turmoil.[26] The reference may have been to the former slaves from Nova Scotia or to the alleged participation of two American ships (under the commands of David Newell of Massachusetts and Peter Williams of New York) in the French attack and plunder of Sierra Leone in 1794. There were repeated complaints from the governor of the colony about American slavers operating off the coast.[27]

The Monroe-Jefferson correspondence was not made public at the time, but in 1816 Charles Fenton Mercer, who was then representing Virginia in the federal Congress, had his attention called to these secret journals, became enthusiastic, and revived the proposal.[28] Meanwhile, the Reverend Samuel J. Mills of New England and the Reverend Robert Finley of New Jersey were taking active steps to persuade fellow clergymen, well-known philanthropists, and men in political life to join in a meeting in Washington, D.C., to organize a society. The gathering, held during December, 1816, to January, 1817, resulted in the forma-

26. Monroe to Jefferson, June 15, 1801; Jefferson to Monroe, Nov. 24, 1801; and Jefferson to John Lynd, Jan. 21, 1811, all in *House Reports*, no. 283, 27 Cong., 3 sess.; Jefferson to U.S. minister to Great Britain [Rufus King], July 13, 1802, in Ford, ed., *Writings of Jefferson*, VIII, 161–164. Jefferson's letter to Monroe of Nov. 24, 1801, together with another of June 2, 1802, are in Ford, VIII, 103–106 and 152–154.

27. Lord Grenville to [George] Hammond, Apr. 15, 1795, in Bernard Mayo, ed., *Instructions to the British Ministers to the United States 1791–1812*, American Historical Association, *Annual Report* (1936), III, 81; Henry Thornton to Samuel Adams, 1795, in Donnan, ed., *Documents*, III, 99–101, nos. 77, 79.

28. McPherson, *History of Liberia*, 16–18.

tion of the American Colonization Society, with Bushrod Washington (the nephew of George Washington) as its first president and such notable figures as Henry Clay, William Crawford, John Taylor of Caroline, Andrew Jackson, Richard Rush, Francis Scott Key, and Samuel Stanhope Smith lending the luster of their names as either vice-presidents or managers. Two weeks later John Randolph read their memorial to the House of Representatives asking Congress to create a colony in Africa. Despite the roster of illustrious politicians backing it, the Slave Trade Committee reported unfavorably. It would be considerably less expensive, they recommended, to cooperate with the British by furnishing settlers to their colony. This method would, equally as much, open the doors of African trade to the United States, and it would forestall such trouble as might develop between rival American and British colonies.[29]

In addition to this setback in Congress, opposition appeared from another source: the free Negroes. In Philadelphia James Forten, the Reverend Richard Allen, Absolom Jones, and Robert Douglass led a meeting in Bethel Church to protest the action of the American Colonization Society and the way it had stigmatized free Negroes as people the country would be well rid of. This was somewhat surprising to the British, since James Forten had told the African Institution that free blacks were in accord with its aims, and he had volunteered to serve as an emigration agent for them.[30] What the white colonizationists had not taken into consideration was the free blacks' fear that emigration might be made compulsory or, as St. George Tucker had suggested, that harsh restrictions on their rights as Americans would be the method used to "encourage" them to leave. From this standpoint the free blacks had infinitely more to fear from an American than from a British colonization society. By the same token, the British were not handicapped in their own country by black opposition to colonization because there were few Negroes left in England. In

29. Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 30–34; *Annals of Congress*, 14 Cong., 2 sess., 481–483, 639, 939–941.

30. Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 32; Herbert Aptheker, ed., *A Documentary History of the Negro People in the United States* (New York: Citadel Press, 1962), 70–72.

the United States a major mistake of the colonizationists was that they had not bothered to consult the free blacks nor include their leaders in the formulation of plans. It was an indication that this society was to be more anti-Negro than antislavery.

Opposition of white emancipationists was also quick to appear. Roberts Vaux, prominent Quaker of Philadelphia, wrote to Thomas Clarkson that the colonization scheme was a slave-state plan to rid the country of free Negroes and thereby strengthen slavery itself. While the organization might include some well-motivated and benevolent men, he thought they were being used by those with less altruistic motives.[31] Members of the London Society of Friends, Samuel and Susan Emlen, wrote to Vaux to extend their wholehearted endorsement of his position. The fact that Henry Clay and Andrew Jackson, both slaveholders, were supporting the organization ought to be enough, they thought, to arouse anyone's suspicion. Furthermore, they asserted, an American colony in Africa would furnish a pretext for the southern states to pass laws prohibiting free blacks from residing in them.[32]

Despite such initial opposition the colonizationists resolved to persevere, starting with the collection of information that could be laid before Congress to present such an overwhelming case that the legislators would relent. Here they were obviously copying the strategy used by the English in presenting evidence on the slave trade to Parliament. In fact, they now wrote directly to both Wilberforce and Clarkson asking for advice, and they requested President Monroe to instruct the American minister in London to collect what data he could from the African Institution. They also desired that an agent of the colonization society be allowed to sail with Richard Rush, just appointed minister to England, and that Monroe should authorize Rush to aid their agent in any way necessary.[33]

Although Thomas Clarkson was later to denounce the American Colonization Society, at this stage he seems to have taken it at

31. Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 32–33.

32. Samuel and Susan Emlen to Roberts Vaux, Sept. 19, 1817, Vaux Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

33. Proceedings of Board of Managers, Mar. 14, Oct. 18, 1817, American Colonization Society Papers, Library of Congress (hereinafter referred to as ACS Papers).

face value as sincerely antislavery in motivation. Since in England the colonizationists and the abolitionists tended to be the same people, it was natural to assume that the same was true in America. Certainly the lines between the two groups were in no way so clearly drawn as they were to become in the 1820s, after the debates over Missouri, or in the 1830s, after the organization of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Many of the men who were to become leaders in that society got their start, so to speak, in the colonization society. Even by the 1830s, when the battle had been joined between colonizationists and abolitionists, some abolitionists, notably Benjamin Lundy, refused to abandon the idea of colonization. Thomas Clarkson's lack of first-hand contact with free blacks and their problems also helps to account for his failure to comprehend immediately all that was involved for them in the practical consequences of colonization if undertaken as a national policy. Moreover, only the summer before the organization of the American Colonization Society, Evan Lewis of the Wilmington, Delaware, Abolition Society had reported to Clarkson that the American Convention had considered the idea of a colony for free blacks in the South or West but had given it up because they foresaw too much prejudice leading to trouble between whites and blacks in the frontier districts.[34] It was natural for Clarkson to assume they would have no such objections to colonies elsewhere.

In response to a letter from Francis Scott Key and other inquiries, Clarkson congratulated the colonizationists on their organization and concurred in the view that Africa would be a wiser choice than some territory in the West. The latter would provide nothing more than a repetition of the Indian problem. He suggested that territory near Sierra Leone might be acquired and that they should consult with Paul Cuffe, now back in the United States. Land should be bought before the settlers departed from America, he cautioned, and they must have provisions not only for the voyage but for a whole year after landing. Meanwhile, in America, steps should be begun to prepare the slaves for freedom.[35] If Clarkson's advice had been followed as

34. Lewis to Clarkson, June 12, 1816, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

35. Clarkson to Francis Scott Key, Mar. 18, 1817, and to [?], Mar. 18, 1817, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library. The book by William Dickson to which

well as asked, lives, money, and friendly relations with the Africans might all have been saved. His practical suggestions for the settlement went unheeded; his point that the slaves should be prepared for freedom was never considered.

Meanwhile the colonization society had decided to send Samuel J. Mills and Ebenezer Burgess on a mission of inquiry: first to England to confer with leaders there and then on to Sierra Leone to inspect neighboring areas for possible colony sites. Bushrod Washington sent along a letter of introduction to the duke of Gloucester, patron of the African Institution; Henry Clay supplied one to Lord Gambier, whom he had met during the Ghent peace negotiations; and William Thornton wrote Sir Joseph Brooks, president of the Royal Society. Both E. B. Caldwell, secretary of the American Colonization Society, and Francis Scott Key advised Clarkson of the arrival of their agents and asked him if he would furnish a letter of introduction for them to the governor of Sierra Leone. In England meetings were arranged with Wilberforce and Earl Bathurst, Secretary of State for the Colonies, both of whom supplied letters to Sierra Leone officials.[36] The two agents arrived in Africa in March, 1818, and stayed until the next spring, making their investigation and preparing their report. It is hard to see how they could have survived, much less carried on such explorations, without the aid and hospitality of the British officials. Even so, no one could protect them from the fever, and Mills died on the homeward trip.

By the time Burgess arrived back in the United States, the American Colonization Society had already proceeded to reopen the campaign to obtain backing from the federal government. They saw their opening in the passage of the new slave-trade bill of 1819, which authorized the president to appoint persons re-

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Clarkson referred was probably *Mitigation of Slavery,* published in 1814, but Dickson had also written, in 1789, *Letters on Slavery,* which was addressed to the former governor of Barbados, Edward Hay.

36. McPherson, *History of Liberia,* 20; Francis Scott Key to Clarkson, Nov. 8, 1817, and E. B. Caldwell to Clarkson, Nov. 10, 1817, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; *Eleventh Report of the Directors of the African Institution* (London: J. Hatchard, 1817); *House Reports,* no. 283, 27 Cong., 3 sess., 191. George Canning, while British minister to the United States, donated $50 to the American Colonization Society.

siding in Africa to act as agents to receive the Africans from vessels seized. The colonizationists chose to construe the clause broadly: if the president could appoint agents, it implied the authority to acquire land on which those agents would reside. Knowing Monroe to be predisposed in their favor, they were hopeful he would accept their interpretation. On March 4, 1819, a deputation waited on him with this in view.

Realizing that acquiescence would involve the constitutional issue of acquiring a colony, Monroe insisted that he must consult with his cabinet before deciding. While the Louisiana Territory had already been added by broad interpretation of the Constitution, there was no precedent for acquiring territory not contiguous to the United States, and in the eastern hemisphere. Although there was as yet no Monroe Doctrine to act as a deterrent to such action, neither was there any positive support in previous national policy, and the precedent set could be one of tremendous significance.

In the cabinet meeting it was John Quincy Adams who raised the constitutional issue and, in addition, questioned the "benevolent" motives of the colonizationists. Undoubtedly, also, he was reacting against another member of the cabinet, William Crawford, a vice-president of the colonization society and already a political rival. The next year was an election year.[37] For the moment Adams prevailed, carrying with him both Attorney General William Wirt and Secretary of War John C. Calhoun. Again the American colonizationists had run into a hurdle that their British counterparts did not have to face, for by the nineteenth century one more colony posed hardly a question at all, let alone one of constitutional dimensions, for Great Britain.

But Attorney General Wirt could be, and was, won over to the other side. By the fall of 1819 he obligingly gave his official opinion that the president could establish an "agency" without its being a "colony," could support and protect the agency station, and could provide a government for the freed slaves transported

37. Proceedings of Board of Managers, Mar. 4, 31, 1819, ACS Papers; Charles Francis Adams, ed., *Memoirs of John Quincy Adams, Comprising Portions of His Diary from 1795 to 1848*, 12 vols. (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott & Co., 1877), IV, 292–294 (hereinafter cited as Adams, *Memoirs*).

there.[38] Acting immediately, Monroe informed Congress in his message of December, 1819, that such was his intention and then proceeded to appoint as agents the men who had been chosen by the American Colonization Society: the Reverend Samuel Bacon and John P. Bankson. According to a tacit agreement they would start a settlement on the spot chosen by the colonization society, and $33,000 was furnished by the government to take care of initial expenses. Legally there was no connection between this "station" or "agency settlement" and the colonization society, but in actuality they were one. When the *Elizabeth* sailed early in February, 1820, with eighty-six settlers, the U.S. sloop of war *Cyane* was assigned as convoy.[39]

One would suppose that the American colonists would have profited enough by the British experience in Sierra Leone to be able to avoid a repetition of catastrophes, but such was not the case. There was, of course, no medical protection against the fever at that time, but in other respects trouble could have been avoided. They had not learned the lesson of negotiating with the native chiefs for land, of selecting a high location rather than a low, marshy one, of equitable distribution of land to the settlers, of furnishing adequate provisions, including arms for defense, or how to win the friendship rather than the animosity of the local tribes. In the end the land that became Liberia was ceded not by friendly and fair negotiation but at gun-point, and the colony suffered all the calamities bound to result from the ensuing hostility. It probably could not have survived native attacks in 1822 had not the English come to the rescue, helped to tide them over with supplies, negotiated a peace, and assisted them in rebuilding.[40] Had the Americans persisted in their first efforts to establish

38. Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 56; Benjamin F. Hall, comp., *Official Opinions of the Attorneys General of the United States, Advising the President and Heads of Departments in Relation to Their Official Duties*, 40 vols. (Washington, D.C., 1852–1941), I, 314–316, 317–320.

39. Monroe's special message to Congress, Dec. 17, 1819, in James D. Richardson, ed., *A Compilation of the Messages and Papers of the Presidents, 1789–1902*, 10 vols. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1886–1907), I, 632–634; McPherson, *History of Liberia*, 22–23.

40. Proceedings of Board of Managers, June 4, 1823, ACS Papers; Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 62–65, 89; McPherson, *History of Liberia*, 26.

themselves on Sherbro Island, just off Sierra Leone, the British might not have been so solicitous; but they were better disposed toward the whole venture when a point farther away down the coast at Cape Mesurado was chosen.[41] There was some suspicion on the part of the British that an American motive might be to "contain" their Sierra Leone settlement by blocking it on the south while the French on the Gambia blocked them to the north. Some Americans believed that the English motive in befriending Liberia was to control her trade and, through her, the hinterland of Africa.[42]

As the result of a mounting crescendo of voices accusing the American Colonization Society of being motivated by prejudice rather than benevolence, already by 1819 Thomas Clarkson had altered his opinions on the advisability of colonization in Africa, particularly if it involved any measure of compulsory emigration for blacks. The United States, he insisted, was as much their country as it was the whites'. To Roberts Vaux he admitted that he had been misled earlier when he lent his support to the American Colonization Society. Now he was more in favor of giving the free blacks land in the United States where they would be settled as independent farmers with the usual representation in Congress, or, if they consented, sending them to Haiti. Whichever course was adopted, for Clarkson an essential element in the whole program must be to begin immediately to educate slaves for freedom and to make some arrangement with the planters to insure that for every group of free blacks sent off, there should be an equal number of slaves released. In other words, there must be a definite connection between colonization and emancipation so that colonization would not result in making slave property more secure.[43]

41. C. MacCarthy [governor of Sierra Leone] to Earl Bathurst, Mar. 12, 1820, Foreign Office Archives, F.O. 5/155, Public Record Office, London.

42. Report on the Coast of Africa, Dec. 27, 1821, F.O. 84/19, PRO; David Christy, *Ethiopia: Her Gloom and Glory, as Illustrated in the History of the Slave Trade and Slavery, the Rise of the Republic of Liberia, and the Progress of African Missions* (Cincinnati: Ricky, Mallory and Webb, 1857), 40–58.

43. Thomas Clarkson to Prince Sanders, Feb. 3, 1819, and to Roberts Vaux, Mar. 8, 1819, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Clarkson to Vaux, Mar. 8, 1819, Vaux Papers.

Many American abolitionists, especially among the Friends, concurred with Clarkson's support for colonization if dissociated from the American Colonization Society, which was dominated by proslavery and racist attitudes. Practical considerations also favored some site closer to the United States than far-off Liberia. Clarkson's preference for Haiti stemmed from his enthusiasm for King Henry Christophe, especially the latter's attempts at education for his people. Ever since the revolution in Santo Domingo, friends of the African race had been watching this "experiment" in black rule, but in its early stages they were handicapped in any overt act of sympathy by the overwhelming recoil of public opinion as atrocity stories spread. Indeed, a great many abolitionists in both Europe and America shared in the general reaction of panic.

With the defeat of Napoleon and the restoration of peace in Europe, the leaders of both halves of divided Haiti, Henry Christophe and Alexander Pétion, hoped for a recognition of Haitian independence as a part of the general peace settlement. When it became clear that such recognition was not to be forthcoming, Christophe (who by then had proclaimed himself King Henry) realized that he needed friends who would carry his case to the world and turned to the English abolitionists in the African Institution. In 1814 he wrote to Wilberforce requesting his help, and Wilberforce in turn enlisted the support of the rest of his Clapham Sect. They saw here a chance to prove that if the seeds of Christianity and civilization were properly sown, free black people were capable of self-government and progress. Elementary teachers, professors of medicine, languages, and mathematics, scientists, and farmers who could teach modern agricultural methods were recruited and sent over.[44]

In 1815 Christophe wrote to Clarkson thanking him for his efforts on behalf on the African race and received the expected enthusiastic response. Almost immediately Clarkson was playing the role of King Henry's "foreign agent." He reported on public opinion toward Haiti, diplomatic plans, the likelihood of French intervention, and the role England hoped Haiti would play in

44. Thomas Clarkson to King Henry, Jan. 24, 1820, in Griggs and Prator, eds., *Christophe-Clarkson Correspondence,* 186–188, also 61–62.

the West Indies. By 1820 the Haitian king so trusted Clarkson's judgment and ability that he sent official credentials to authorize his new English friend to open negotiations for a treaty with France that would acknowledge the island's independence and restore trade. Clarkson, in turn, consulted Wilberforce and James Stephen, both experienced politicians. The last communication Christophe received from Clarkson before his death was their combined advice on what his position vis-à-vis France should be.[45]

Clarkson also offered advice, in generous quantities, on domestic affairs, ranging from education and religion to agriculture and defense. For example, King Henry's militarism worried him, and he proposed that the standing army should be reduced and the disbanded soldiers be given land grants and should comprise a citizen militia. Although Christophe was obviously a dictator as well as a monarch, Clarkson was willing to accept this as a necessary intermediate step, since the Haitians had so recently emerged from slavery and the threat of a French invasion still hung over the island. Clarkson's faith seemed to be justified when, as the French threat receded, King Henry did follow his advice on the army and the land grants.[46] Clarkson was quick to associate the idea of American black settlers with these plans for building up agriculture and strengthening defense, and he used this as a major argument in writing to King Henry of the proposals on foot in the United States.[47]

Since Haiti was divided, however, Clarkson feared trouble might ensue if American colonists were sent only to that part governed by Christophe. Perhaps it would be wiser, he suggested, if the U.S. government would buy the Spanish part of the island and then divide it equally between King Henry and General Jean-Pierre Boyer (who had succeeded Pétion), so that both would get settlers. The Haitian Revolution had depopulated the island badly, and labor was much in demand. Having fought the French,

45. Duke of Limonade to Clarkson, Nov. 20, 1819, and Clarkson to King Henry, Jan. 24, July 10, 1820, in Griggs and Prator, eds., *Christophe-Clarkson Correspondence*, 171, 186–188, 200–207, also 66–67.

46. Griggs and Prator, eds., *Christophe-Clarkson Correspondence*, 67, 268–271.

47. *Ibid.*, 68, 124–125.

the English, and the Spanish, Haitians would be very reluctant to risk coming under the control of another white colonial power. This was why Clarkson emphasized that any land purchased by the United States must be given outright to the two Haitian governments. He suggested that agents be sent there to investigate the possibilities as Mills and Burgess had been sent to Africa (seeming to forget how many of the mistakes in Africa were due to the wrong assessment these two men had made).[48]

In Philadelphia Clarkson's correspondent, Roberts Vaux, summoned a meeting of antislavery people to consider these recommendations. Richard Peters was given the job of writing to the members of the Acting Committee of the American Convention to get their opinions, and Evan Lewis, encouraged by Clarkson's letter, contemplated making a visit to King Henry. Vaux reported to Clarkson that African colonization had now been thoroughly exposed as a "hypocritical measure."[49] The debates over the admission of Missouri had aided in this exposure because they pushed colonizationists openly to disavow abolitionist connections or sentiments. Some leaders, including such southern statesmen such as Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, withdrew from the American Colonization Society rather than risk attack as friends of emancipation.[50]

Two Americans who specifically influenced many fellow abolitionists in favoring Haiti over Africa were Stephen Grellet and Prince Sanders (or Saunders). Grellet's observation of Santo Domingo was of several years' standing, and as early as 1816 he indicated his interest in making a trip there to study the condition of the free, self-governing blacks. Since he was of French background and might easily be suspected of being a French agent, he sought a letter of introduction to King Henry from Clarkson, whose recommendation would relieve him of suspicion. Clarkson's letter to Christophe identified Grellet as a lifelong friend of the Africans and related how the American Quaker had accompanied Wilberforce to a meeting in London with Czar Alexander

48. Clarkson to Roberts Vaux, Mar. 8, 1819, and to Richard Peters, June 14, 1819, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

49. Vaux to Clarkson, May 1, 1820, Vaux Papers.

50. Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 74–75.

of Russia to plead the cause of the Africans against the slave trade. Clarkson also instructed the king on the long record of Quaker sympathy for the slaves and help to the free blacks. Christophe responded with a hearty welcome for Grellet.[51]

Prince Sanders was a New England–born Negro who, like Cuffe, had decided to devote his life to helping his race. Having won the backing of several influential whites, he was sent to England and from there to Haiti to assist in organizing schools. Once in Haiti he became an enthusiastic follower of Christophe and until the latter's death worked for the cause of Haitian improvement. In an effort to build up a favorable "image" of the king, Sanders's *Haytian Papers* were published as a book in London in 1816 and in Boston two years later.[52] He did his utmost through his travels in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia to correct the rumors of Christophe's bad character. An incident is told in connection with Prince Sanders's visit to England and a banquet held at the Freemasons' Tavern. After the usual toasts to the British royal family were drunk, Wilberforce proposed a toast to "King Henry of Hayti." The waiter, whose duty it was to repeat the toasts from behind the chairman, was evidently not informed about the new king and gave out in a loud voice, "King Henry the Eighth." Amidst much confusion and laughter the mistake was rectified and the toast drunk—with only one departure from form: while they had sat for the toasts to British royalty, they stood for the one to King Henry.[53]

While positive sentiment for Haitian colonization seemed to be increasing in the United States, Clarkson continued to counsel

51. "Copy of a Letter from Thomas Clarkson to the Sovereign of Haiti," May 4, 1816, Misc. Mss, Friends Historical Library; Richard M. Smith to Roberts Vaux, June 1, 1816, Vaux Papers; King Henry to Clarkson, Nov. 18, 1816, in Griggs and Prator, eds., *Christophe-Clarkson Correspondence*, 103. For an account of the meeting of the abolitionists with Czar Alexander, see extract from William Allen's memorandum book, June 19, 1814, Misc. Mss, Friends Historical Library.

52. King Henry to Clarkson, Feb. 5, 1816, in Griggs and Prator, eds., *Christophe-Clarkson Correspondence*, 91–93, 45.

53. Joseph Marryat, *More Thoughts, Occasioned by Two Publications Which the Authors Call "An Exposure of Some of the Numerous Misstatements and Misrepresentations Contained in a Pamphlet Commonly Known by the Name of Mr. Marryat's Pamphlet, Entitled Thoughts, &c" and "A Defense of the Bill for the Registration of Slaves"* (London: J. M. Richardson, 1816).

King Henry on the advantages that would result for Haiti. In addition to increasing the labor force and providing more security, these immigrants would bring with them various skills and money; they would build a substantial middle class. Moreover, they would all help to teach English to the Haitians. (In a burst of pro-English enthusiasm Henry had declared that his people should substitute the English language and Protestantism for French and Catholicism.) Clarkson counseled Henry that in return for their contributions the settlers must be assured protection and religious toleration. He frankly warned him that there might be trouble when they discovered that in Haiti they had no guarantee of such rights as freedom to travel without passes, freedom of assembly and discussion, and trial by jury, rights which free Negroes in the North did enjoy. Part of Clarkson's strategy was to remind Henry that if he did not wish to support the emigration plan, probably General Boyer would.[54]

Christophe's response was vigorous and positive. He wrote Clarkson that he had had letters directly from the emancipation society in New York and from Evan Lewis in Delaware, who had been kind enough to send him Clarkson's book on the slave trade. Lewis would be welcome, as would any delegation the American Convention wanted to send. The immigrants could rest assured of religious toleration and of all the help he could give them. To show his good will, he would not wait for negotiations by which the United States might purchase the Spanish part of the island to cede to him (evidently he believed the United States would actually follow Clarkson's proposal) but would immediately furnish a vessel to transport the emigrants and make an initial donation of $25,000 toward their expenses. There is no doubt that Christophe was in earnest. When Prince Sanders arrived from Philadelphia commissioned to make definite arrangements, the two of them drew up a "treaty" that the king would personally sign.[55] But before that final step was taken, Christophe was dead.

54. Clarkson to King Henry, June 28, Sept. 28, 1819, in Griggs and Prator, eds., *Christophe-Clarkson Correspondence*, 140–146, 161–163.

55. King Henry to Clarkson, July 29, Nov. 20, 1819, and Prince Sanders to Clarkson, July 14, 1821, in *ibid.*, 149–152, 164–166, and 226–228.

Rather than live through a rebellion he knew he could not quell, he committed suicide on October 8, 1820.

The death of Christophe was a bitter disappointment to both American and British abolitionists who had been so encouraged by his cooperation. Unwilling to let their plans drop entirely, they decided to turn to General Boyer, who had seized Henry's kingdom and united all of Haiti under his own rule. Under the guise of an expression of concern about Christophe's widow, Clarkson addressed a letter to Boyer immediately declaring that his interest was in the good of all Haitians, thus inviting a correspondence. Boyer's response was a rebuff.[56] He obviously wanted no advice from England.

By 1820 Clarkson was not so optimistic about the possibility of the United States being able to purchase the Spanish part of Santo Domingo, because the Florida negotiations had created ill will among the Spanish and also because the "spirit of slaveholding" seemed to be growing stronger in the South after the Missouri Compromise.[57] Yet although Clarkson had been rebuffed, the question of Haitian emigration did not immediately die. It was raised at the American Convention in 1823, and a vote was taken to authorize their vice-president, Evan Lewis, to visit Haiti.[58] The next year members of the New York Colonization Society, led by Loring Dewey, organized the Society for Promoting the Emigration of Free Persons of Colour to Haiti, and General Boyer sent an agent, Jonathan Granville, to work with them. His government

56. Clarkson to Jean-Pierre Boyer, May 25, 1825 [1821], and President Boyer to Clarkson, July 30, 1821, in *ibid.*, 224–225 and 229–230. Griggs and Prator have corrected the dating of the first letter. Boyer did allow Madame Christophe and her two daughters to go to England, where they were guests in the Clarkson home for nearly a year. Although Clarkson continued to praise them as sweet and lovely people, his letters reveal that he was sorely tried by their impracticality (being used to lavish living) and the extent to which he was nearly displaced from his own house by their wanting to bring in their own maids, coachmen, etc. See especially Clarkson to Zachary Macaulay, Mar. 21, 1823, Zachary Macaulay Papers, Huntington Library.

57. Clarkson to Roberts Vaux, Jan. 31, 1820, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

58. Merton L. Dillon, *Benjamin Lundy and the Struggle for Negro Freedom* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1966), 88; *Minutes of the Eighteenth Session of the American Convention* (Philadelphia, 1824), 28–31.

promised land, citizenship, and equality as well as monetary help for passage.[59] The Pennsylvania Abolition Society reacted cautiously, however, and in the end withheld its support. Their fears were based on the fact that France had not yet recognized Haiti and there might be trouble, and also on their doubts about freedom of religion, since Haiti was predominantly Catholic.[60] Boyer had not extended the assurance of toleration that Christophe had.

The American Colonization Society, not unexpectedly, frowned on the project for Haitian emigration and wrote to caution Loring Dewey that while he remained their agent, he must not take measures "to contravene the fundamental object of the Society," i.e., the colonization of Liberia.[61] They were not unhappy, consequently, when in 1825 the whole Haitian plan collapsed. The attitude of Boyer's government changed abruptly from one of cooperation to the withdrawal of both financial and moral encouragement. There had been some mismanagement of funds, but Boyer was also alarmed over the restlessness of some of the several hundred settlers who had arrived, and he probably feared serious trouble between them and the Haitians, which would disturb his rule. Unwilling to give up, Benjamin Lundy, long an advocate of Haitian emigration, sailed to Haiti in 1826, but he was unsuccessful in his effort to change Boyer's mind. Nonetheless, in 1829 he made a second trip to the island to escort twelve slaves freed by Joseph Smith of Maryland who were allowed entry.[62]

Not until the decade before the Civil War was the idea of Haitian emigration on a large scale to be renewed with seriousness. In the 1860s President Lincoln tried his best to win backing for West Indian and Central American colonization projects but failed to get support at home or from Great Britain, to whom he appealed for cooperation. Lord Russell told the U.S. minister,

59. B. Inginac to James Tredwell, Nov. 21, 1817, in *Niles Weekly Register*, XV, 117–118; Boyer to Loring Dewey, Apr. 30, 1824, in *ibid.*, XXVI, 272–273; Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 82–87; "Emigration to Africa and Hayti," *North American Review*, XX (1825), 203–210.

60. Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Minutes, I, 438–440, entry for Aug. 16, 1824, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

61. Proceedings of Board of Managers, June 11, 1824, ACS Papers.

62. Dillon, *Lundy*, 87–103, 142–143; Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 82–87.

Charles Francis Adams, that Britain did not want to become "entangled" in the problem.[63]

Although Anglo-American cooperation in colonization plans had ended by the middle of the 1820s, the American Colonization Society was far from willing, as we shall see, to let the matter drop. As its rivalry with the American Anti-Slavery Society became more and more vehement in the 1830s, it fought desperately to win British abolitionist backing, thus keeping the issue alive long after the antislavery organizations had rejected colonization as a solution to the slavery problem. By keeping the debate stirred up, the colonizationists actually helped to strengthen the Anglo-American abolitionist bond by provoking a united attack on themselves.

63. C. F. Adams to Seward, Oct. 30, 1862, in *Parliamentary Papers*, 1862, LXXII, 214–215.

Slave-Trade Diplomacy, 1808-1820

V

Almost as soon as the African Institution was set up in 1807, correspondence was initiated with American antislavery organizations to acquaint them with the determination of the society to watch over the enforcement of the slave-trade laws and to request the cooperation of the "friends of Humanity on your side of the Atlantic." Copies of their annual reports were forwarded as a means of keeping abreast of developments. In a letter to Benjamin Rush in 1809 Zachary Macaulay stressed the point that their mutual success in all antislavery endeavors would depend on their effectiveness in abolishing the slave trade and that Great Britain and the United States must obtain the cooperation of other nations to prevent the use of their flags as a cover for the continuation of the trade. As he saw it, this was the most important abolitionist project of the moment, and the only way it could be accomplished was through an international agreement allowing mutual search and seizure. Cooperation to this end not only would help the Negroes but would "draw more closely the bonds of Union between the two countries." [1] A year later Wilberforce addressed John Jay, who was a member of the New York Manu-

1. Zachary Macaulay for directors of the African Institution to Benjamin Rush, president of Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Aug. 1, 1809, Correspondence, II, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

mission Society, giving much the same opinion and similarly emphasizing the need to prevent the trade from being carried on illegally under foreign flags. The first thing the United States could do, he advised, was to pass a law providing for the forfeiture of the ships of any country under any flag fitted out and cleared from a U.S. port.[2] Jay, with his great influence as former chief justice of the United States, could be the "kingpin" in initiating such a measure.

Sincere as the British were, their timing was decidedly inopportune. They tended to forget that American abolitionists were also American patriots and that by 1809–1810 feelings were already high over British impressment resulting from search and seizure. The Pennsylvania society did not hold out much encouragement in view of the "unpropitious aspect" of the current political relations between the two countries, but they were willing to exchange information on violations, and each group should do what it could to prosecute the persons involved.[3] Jay's reaction was equally cautious: he, too, was afraid that the times were not "propitious" for such a convention, and he feared he could do but little. Nonetheless, he promised, "that little shall be done." The proper way to begin, he thought, was for the British government to instruct Mr. Jackson, who was currently engaged in negotiations with the United States, to propose such a measure.[4] Any American who made such a proposal at that time would probably have been branded a traitor, and Jay was already out of favor because of the treaty of 1795 bearing his name, which popular opinion held to have conceded far too much to the British. His failure to insist on compensation for the slaves carried off by the British during the Revolution had provoked a heated debate and had indicated again how quickly sectional lines were drawn as soon as the slavery issue was raised in Congress.[5]

2. Wilberforce to Jay, July 18, 1810, in *Jay Papers*, IV, 330–335.

3. Pennsylvania Abolition Society to Zachary Macaulay, n.d. (but clearly 1809), Correspondence, II, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

4. Jay to Wilberforce, Nov. 8, 1809, in *Jay Papers*, IV, 324–326. Francis James Jackson was appointed British minister to the United States in 1809.

5. Frederic Austin Ogg, "Jay's Treaty and the Slavery Interests of the United States," American Historical Association, *Annual Report* (1901), I, 273–298; Sam-

Despite Jay's pessimism, Wilberforce was not easily discouraged. In 1806 he had approached Monroe, while the latter was in England, on the question of the slave trade. In 1808 he wrote to Jefferson to see what could be done "to obtain some agreement between the two nations, for giving effect to Abolition, by allowing each country to take the other's slave ships." [6] In December, 1810, Wilberforce set down on paper what he considered to be the major "Subjects of Action and Deliberation for Abolitionists." Number 4 on his list was to investigate the present state of friendliness or hostility between his country and the United States and consider the possibility of a reciprocal treaty. The following March he made a journey to London especially to see the American minister, Thomas Pinckney, "for Abolition's sake," but emerged much dismayed over the prospects.[7]

In 1810, when Lord Brougham moved a resolution that Parliament should consider measures to prevent violations of the slave-trade law, he charged that the Spanish trade to Cuba and Brazil was being carried on under the American flag. He proposed, therefore, that the trade be made a felony and that a mutual search agreement with the United States be sought.[8] When Great Britain passed her law in 1811, Americans were stimulated to press for action at home.[9] Roberts Vaux wrote to a Dr. Mitchell in Washington asking him to visit the president to impress him with the magnitude of the subject and to try to get him to introduce the question for congressional action.[10] The New York Manumission Society periodically appointed committees to investigate complaints of evasions and to study state laws to see if amendments to them should be pushed.[11]

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uel Flagg Bemis, *Jay's Treaty: A Study in Commerce and Diplomacy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1962), 248, 290, Appendix B, 463.

6. Wilberforce to Monroe, June 6, 1804, Aug. 21, 1806, Monroe Papers, New York Public Library, from notes courteously furnished me by Professor Harry Ammon; Wilberforce, *Life*, III, 374.

7. Wilberforce, *Life*, III, 503–504.

8. Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England*, 132–135.

9. New York Manumission Society, minutes for Dec. 12, 1814.

10. John Murray to Roberts Vaux, Nov. 8, 1811, Vaux Papers.

11. New York Manumission Society, minutes for Jan. 10, 1809; John Murray to Roberts Vaux, Dec. 3, 1811, Vaux Papers.

The African Institution sent over not only its own reports, and the acts of Parliament, but also extracts from the records of the British courts of admiralty, which revealed eleven cases of loaded slave ships captured in 1810 and 1811. The ships carried foreign flags and foreign papers (Spanish or Swedish), but it was clear in at least one case (the *Amedie,* captured by a British man-of-war in July, 1810) that the ship was really American, and, although less clear, it seemed true in the other cases as well.[12] The *Fortune,* sailing under Portuguese registry but also clearly American, was condemned and its slaves liberated.

Just at the end of the War of 1812, partly because of the war, the efforts of British and American abolitionists veered off in different directions as far as emphasis on the slave trade was concerned. The British saw more chance of success in pressuring France, and after her the rest of Europe, into concerted action against the trade, so for the time being the United States was let go. American abolitionists likewise saw little chance of practical success in pressuring their government for mutual search. While they united in sympathy with their English friends, they decided they should give their own major attention to such needs at home as the education and improvement of the free blacks and the abolition of slavery itself.[13] There were still odds and ends of slavery to be cleared up in some northern states—New York and New Jersey—let alone in the South.

The initiation of Anglo-American diplomatic discussions on slavery and the slave trade at the end of the War of 1812, therefore, actually received their impetus from the proslavery side. Slaveholders insisted that the American negotiators at Ghent must

12. *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Thirteenth Convention* (Philadelphia: Hamilton-Ville, 1812). This report includes extracts from the fifth report of the African Institution, 1811. An abridged edition of Clarkson's *History of the . . . Slave Trade* was published in Philadelphia, and copies were sent to the state library in Harrisburg, to the president, vice-president, and Secretary of State, and to the Library of Congress. See Clarkson to J. Pemberton, July 28, Dec. 29, 1807, Etting Papers, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; circular, Apr. 9, 1808, and minutes, Mar. 15, 1813, Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Correspondence, I, 184; Alice Dana Adams, *The Neglected Period of Anti-Slavery in America (1808–1831),* Radcliffe College Monographs, no. 14 (reprinted, Magnolia, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1964), 158.

13. *Minutes of the Thirteenth Convention.*

demand compensation for slaves lost to the British at the end of the war.[14] This, in turn, reactivated pressure by the British abolitionists on their government. By 1814 they commanded enough power in Parliament, supported by British public opinion, to insist that each time their government made a treaty with another nation it was understood there should be an attempt to reach some agreement on mutual efforts against the slave trade. British antislavery feeling was too strong to be disregarded on this point.[15] Writing to the duke of Wellington in the fall of 1814, Lord Liverpool reported on a letter he had received from Wilberforce "which proves to me that the Abolitionists in this country will press the question in every possible shape. We must do therefore all we can, and at least be able to show that no efforts have been omitted on our part. . . ." [16] Any agreement on mutual search with one country could be used as a lever with other powers, and even though at the time there seemed little to hope for from the United States, it was necessary to make the gesture. So it was that at Ghent the British appealed to the memory of the similar action taken against the trade by the two governments in 1808 as a basis for the insertion of an article into their treaty of 1814 that pledged that both nations would "use their best endeavors" to promote the entire destruction of the trade.[17]

The American decision was to concur in substance, since it was not necessary to spell out what specific action would be required by the phrase. Despite the fact that the final article was a vague,

14. For correspondence on the issue, see Adams to Castlereagh, Aug. 9, Sept. 5, 1815, Feb. 17, Mar. 5, Apr. 30, May 14, 1816, F.O. 5 II/110, PRO; *British and Foreign State Papers,* IV, 267–321; William Jay, *A View of the Action of the Federal Government, in Behalf of Slavery* (New York: J. S. Taylor, 1839), 53–57. F.O. 5/180 contains details of the debates over compensation. The Petersburg Convention may be found in *American State Papers, Foreign Relations,* V, 214, no. 354 (hereinafter cited as *American State Papers, For. Rel.*).

15. See Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe," for details of these pressures.

16. Liverpool to Wellington, Sept. 2, 1814, in Sir Charles Petrie, *Lord Liverpool and His Times* (London: James Barrie, 1954), 197–198.

17. The final wording in the treaty was a tone down from the original British phrasing "to exert every means in their power." See F.O. 5/102, PRO; Adams, *Memoirs,* III, 93–98, 112; Alfred T. Mahan, "The Negotiations at Ghent in 1814," *American Historical Review,* XI (1905–1906), 68–87.

platitudinous expression about doing good, it was not to be as innocuous as it sounded, for it did serve as a basis for future arguments by both abolitionists and American politicians who favored international cooperation. They repeatedly cited the Treaty of Ghent not only as a mandate but as a command to negotiate a slave-trade convention.

By 1816–1817 there was such a mounting pile of evidence that no one could deny that peace had again brought a revival of the slave trade and that the laws prohibiting the importation of more slaves were being violated with growing frequency and, seemingly, more barbarity. During the War of 1812, as during the Revolution, British seizures helped to disrupt the trade; in fact, the African coast had been virtually cleared of it. But what the British ships had been able to do as belligerents they could not justify under international law in peacetime. By 1816–1817 it was extremely difficult to tell how much of the trade carried on under a specific flag was bona fide. After the 1808 prohibition went into effect, much of the American trade shifted its capital to ships flying the Spanish or Portuguese flags, and with the end of the Napoleonic wars, French ships began to reappear. There was also the complication of American ships that engaged in legitimate trade for the most part but picked up just a few slaves on each trip to be carried to the American market.[18] Many of these vessels had been armed as privateers during the war, so were still armed and extremely fast.

Even after the English courts ruled in the prize appeal case of the *Amedie* in 1810 that American slavers were subject to capture and condemnation, evasion was possible. Just before being stopped, the Spanish flag would be run up. Such ships usually carried a few Spanish sailors and a Spaniard who could

18. Amelia Island, off the Florida coast, was notorious as a base for smuggling slaves. The situation became so scandalous that in 1811 Congress had given special authorization to President Madison to use force to suppress its operations. But because of the war and Madison's reluctance to use loose construction in this case, the raid was not carried out until 1817. See DuBois, *Suppression of the Slave-Trade,* 113; Zachary Macaulay to Benjamin Rush, n.d., Pennsylvania Abolition Socicty, Correspondence, II; Madison to Monroe, Dec. 27, 1817, in Hunt, ed., *Writings of James Madison,* VIII, 403–407.

pose as the captain while the real (American) captain would assume some other position or pose as a passenger.[19] Double sets of papers—one set false—were carried for such eventualities. They were not too difficult to procure if one was willing to pay. Havana earned an especially unsavory reputation in this line, and at least one American consul there (Nicholas Trist) was later implicated in such evasions.[20] Such ships seldom anchored at the African ports but hovered out at sea until a complement of slaves was ready. They then slipped in to load as quickly as possible and left immediately.[21] The African Institution estimated in 1816 that nearly 60,000 slaves were still carried annually across the Atlantic and that one-third died in transit.[22] Such information was furnished to the British government with terrifying frequency by the captains of their patrol cruisers and also by officials stationed in Sierra Leone.[23] That colony's location made it an excellent observation point.

The declaration against the slave trade in the Treaty of Ghent had significance in that it furnished a precedent for the British to obtain similar acknowledgments from the European powers, and it provided the springboard needed by those Americans who favored international cooperation as the best strategy in their antislavery efforts. Although British diplomats were not able to persuade their European counterparts at the Congress of Vienna to agree to specific joint action, they did obtain a declaration condemning the trade as disgraceful and as degrading to Europe as it

19. Annexe B to 10th Protocole, "Answers to Queries relative to the Slave Trade" [made by Zachary Macaulay from Sierra Leone], Dec., 1816, F.O. 84/2, PRO. The *Amedie* was condemned by the Lords Commissioners of Appeal in Prize Causes on July 28, 1810. See A. T. Milne, "The Slave Trade and Anglo-American Relations, 1807–1862" (M.A. thesis, University of London, 1930).

20. In 1840 Alexander Everett, a former U.S. minister to Madrid, was sent to Cuba to investigate the allegations against Trist, but his report was a whitewash. See Chapter XIV.

21. Captain Sir James Lucas Yeo to J. W. Croker, Nov. 7, 1816, in "Correspondence of Naval Officers with the British Government, relative to the African Slave Trade—1816–1817," *British and Foreign State Papers*, IV, 127–140.

22. Charles Kingsley Webster, *The Foreign Policy of Castlereagh, 1815–1822* (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1925), 456.

23. *British and Foreign State Papers*, IV, 127–140; Zachary Macaulay to Castlereagh, Dec. 20, 1817, F.O. 84/2, PRO.

was to Africa.[24] This, in turn, became the basis for the British invitation to the ambassadors of the Concert Powers to meet in London for a series of conferences on the slave trade, with special emphasis on persuading the Spanish and Portuguese to outlaw the trade. France had already done so: first under Napoleon upon his return from Elba and then under Louis XVIII, who, under British pressure, could do no less.[25]

That same summer, after the European diplomats had held their meetings, Castlereagh broached the subject with John Quincy Adams, then U.S. minister to the Court of St. James, suggesting that what was needed was some "joint application of power to arrest every ship pursuing the traffic in black slaves." [26] Again in December, 1816, Castlereagh brought up the subject, referring to the great number of vessels still fitting out in American ports, but destined to sail under the Spanish and Portuguese flags, and the increased brutality of this illegal trade. It would be impossible, he insisted, to put down the trade without the right of search, and he outlined a specific formula: each nation should appoint a commissary judge. When a capture was made, the judge of the capturing nation and that of the vessel's nation should try the case. If there was no agreement, a judge of a third nation could be called in. Obviously Castlereagh was putting out a feeler, but Adams chose not to consider it as demanding a reply since Castlereagh did not, in so many words, invite the United States to participate.[27]

In his message to Congress that December, President Monroe admonished the legislators that they ought to feel a greater solicitude regarding the "fullest efficacy" of their own regulations and recommended the amendment of the existing laws to prevent evasions and "collusive importations." [28] In immediate response

24. "Declaration des 8 Cours, relative à l'abolition universalle de la traite des negres. Vienne, le 8 février, 1815," *British and Foreign State Papers,* III, 971–972.

25. Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe." Castlereagh admitted that the basis for his invitation to confer in London was the information received from the African Institution. See *Eleventh Report of the Directors of the African Institution.*

26. Adams, *Memoirs,* III, 427–428.

27. *Ibid.,* 454–455.

28. *Annals of Congress,* 14 Cong., 2 sess., 11–17.

the Senate set up a select committee to deal with the matter.[29] During that session memorials against the slave trade, including the internal trade, were received from the yearly meeting of Friends in Baltimore, representatives of the Society of Friends of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and the Eastern Shore of Maryland, and one from "John Fisher and other Citizens," all of which were referred to the committee.[30]

There were few out-and-out antislavery men in Congress at this time, but the colonizationists, on the other hand, were well represented in both Congress and the cabinet. This perhaps accounts for the fact that it was the colonizationists (of varying shades of antislavery and proslavery sentiment) who were in the forefront of the attempt to outlaw the slave trade either by unilateral action or by international agreement. The man who emerged as the congressional leader was Charles Fenton Mereer of Virginia. Mercer was a colonizationist but not an emancipationist. It is probable that, like John Randolph, he favored cutting off foreign importation so that his state's internal slave trade would not be jeopardized. But whatever Mereer's motives may have been, more distinctly antislavery people were grateful for his efforts, believing that in the long run their own cause would benefit.

It was the Slave Trade Committee in the House of Representatives that was given the responsibility of considering Mereer's proposal that the federal government should aid the newly formed American Colonization Soeiety in setting up a West African settlement as one means of helping to end the slave trade. While the committee reported negatively on the latter proposal and said nothing specific about mutual search, it did recommend that the president be authorized to consult and negotiate with all governments to which U.S. ministers were accredited "on the means of effecting an entire and immediate abolition of the traffic in slaves."[31]

The publication of this recommendation in the London news-

29. *Ibid.*, 33.

30. *Ibid.*, 36, 57, 65. Since Senator Outerbridge Horsey presented the one from "John Fisher and other Citizens," they must have been residents of Delaware.

31. *Ibid.*, 939–941.

papers was the signal for British abolitionists to exert some pressure on Minister Adams. While Castlereagh had never brought the matter of search to the point of an explicit proposal to Adams, Wilberforce and James Babington met with him and put the question directly. Adams was of the opinion that there would be serious objection. Since no American ship engaged in the trade could use the American flag, it could not, if captured, rely on any interference from the United States to rescue it. Consequently any commander would act to his own peril in seizing a ship not actually involved in the trade. Since cruisers adequate to operate effectively in search and seizure were owned only by Great Britain and not by the United States, any diplomatic agreement could not really be mutual. Last, and most important, American fear of British naval power and its arbitrary use would militate against any such agreement. Babington suggested that perhaps ships of each nation could carry officers of the other to prevent arbitrary use of power, but both Adams and Wilberforce saw such a plan as complicated and inoperative.[32]

The year 1818 saw a growth of concern and heightened feeling over slavery problems. Great Britain signed agreements that included the right of search with Spain, Portugal, and Holland; pressed the issue among the Concert Powers at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle; and made a specific proposal to the United States. Proposals from the British, antislavery petitions, and the application of Missouri for statehood forced the U.S. Congress to consider three aspects: international cooperation, revisions in the existing laws on importation and fugitive slaves, and the issue of prohibiting the admission of additional slave states.

Immediately upon the opening of the first session of the 15th Congress, Senator James Burrill of Rhode Island submitted a motion that the committee to which the petition of the Baltimore Society of Friends had been referred should inquire into the expediency of amending the slave-trade law to more effectively prevent American citizens from engaging in the trade under foreign flags. It should also, he proposed, consider whether the United States should take measures in concert with other nations for the

32. Adams, *Memoirs*, III, 557–559.

entire abolition of the trade. Burrill's basis for argument was that Article X of the Treaty of Ghent made such consideration obligatory, and he reminded his countrymen that they did not want to fall behind the rest of the great powers. The principal supporters of Burrill were Rufus King of New York, who was of the opinion that the Senate had a responsibility to act under its advise and consent powers, and Senator David Morrill from New Hampshire, who declared that they were but following the intentions of the Founding Fathers, who had contemplated the abolition of slavery as well as of the slave trade.

The principal objectors were George M. Troup of Georgia and George W. Campbell of Tennessee, who denied that "advise and consent" authorized the Senate to take any initiative in foreign affairs and who warned against entangling alliances into which any agreement on the slave trade might lead. Troup revived John Quincy Adams's earlier interpretation of Article X—simply that each country would enforce its own laws—but Campbell said it did not imply even that. To him it was but a gesture of the British government to make the treaty popular at home because the issue was "fresh" in English public opinion at the time.[33] To any alert person the closeness of the vote in the Senate (17 to 16) was a portent of the tight contest to come.

Another point Burrill had inserted into the debates was that the new governments formed in the Latin American republics ought to be brought into concurrence against the slave trade. The time to do that was now, while their need for the friendship of the United States would make them receptive. The idea was taken up by the abolition societies as one of their pressure points, and by the second session the New York Manumission Society had prepared a memorial asking Congress to use its influence to that end.[34] The idea of making abolition of the slave trade a condition of recognition was later taken up by the English abolitionists, who urged it upon their government particularly in the case of

33. *Annals of Congress*, 15 Cong., 1 sess., 71, 73–78, 94–109.

34. Draft of a letter to U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, Nov. 16, 1818, New York Manumission Society, minutes; *Annals of Congress*, 15 Cong., 2 sess., 430.

Brazil, whose slave trade was among the most flourishing in Latin America.[35]

Another antislavery petition, this one from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society submitted in January, 1818, set off debates on Burrill's resolution, and the cumulative effect is readily apparent in the heightened emotional tone and sharpness of accusations hurled by the contenders.[36] With these debates as openers, it is not surprising that charges and countercharges reached the heights they did in the Missouri debates, which followed in the next session.

The scandal over the use of Amelia Island as a base for the illegal trade had aroused enough attention that President Monroe thought it wise to send a special message to Congress early in 1818 to announce the suppression of such operations.[37] On the same day that an amendment of the fugitive-slave law of 1793 was laid on the table in the House, and without waiting for emotions to subside or tempers to cool, Senator Jonathan Roberts of Pennsylvania submitted a motion that a committee be appointed to inquire into the expediency of taking further legislative steps to prevent the illegal importation of slaves "from any foreign kingdom, place or country." [38] The act that passed in April, 1818, was an experiment to see if the war against smuggling could be waged more effectively by emphasizing penalties against importers (buyers) rather than on traders or sellers. It actually lowered the fine for equipping a slaver or for transporting slaves, but it raised the penalty $200 for each slave illegally bought and further heightened the risk by placing the burden of proof on the defendant.[39] It was a failure from the start, however, and evasions continued.

The New York Manumission Society appointed a special com-

35. Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe," 372; Wilberforce, *Life*, V, 138; George Canning to Wellington, Oct. 1, 1822, F.O. 92/48, PRO.

36. *Annals of Congress*, 15 Cong., 1 sess., 829.

37. *Ibid.*, 111–113.

38. *Ibid.*, 266–267.

39. DuBois, *Suppression of the Slave-Trade*, 118–119; *U.S. Statutes at Large*, II, 450–453.

mittee to meet with that state's U.S. senators and representatives on the problem and also took upon itself the duty of checking ships in New York harbor rumored to have slaves aboard. In one instance they found a sloop loaded with "free" blacks who had been picked up on vagrancy charges and been prevailed upon to indenture themselves to unknown masters in New Orleans, the males for $40 a year and the females for $20. Ten or twelve of them were under the age of twenty-one.[40]

Before the first session of the 15th Congress ended, Representative Arthur Livermore of New Hampshire managed to squeeze in another resolution involving slavery: that an amendment to the Constitution be submitted to the state legislatures that would prohibit slavery in any state hereafter added to the Union.[41] It was read and voted down, but the stage had been set for the big fight to begin in the next session.

The executive branch of the government was not to enjoy relief from the slavery issue even between sessions, thanks to British pressure. Joyful over their success in finally obtaining agreements on search with Holland, Spain, and Portugal, the British were encouraged to try a specific formal proposal to the United States. Should they be lucky in this move, they would have a better chance to get a general commitment from the Concert Powers scheduled to meet at Aix-la-Chapelle in the fall. In June, therefore, Lord Castlereagh addressed a letter to Richard Rush, who had succeeded John Quincy Adams as U.S. minister when the latter returned home to become Monroe's Secretary of State. Copies of the recent treaties with the Iberian countries and the Dutch king were enclosed, with the request that the United States might agree to a similar one. It would be necessary to grant a limited right of search and the power to detain vessels when slaves were actually found on board. He was confident that restraints could be devised to avoid abuses.[42]

It was the end of October before Monroe's cabinet seriously dis-

40. New York Manumission Society, minutes for Nov. 10, 1818.

41. *Annals of Congress*, 15 Cong., 1 sess., II, 1675–76.

42. Castlereagh to Rush, June 20, 1818, and Rush to Castlereagh, June 23, 1818, F.O. 5/137, PRO; *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 72, no. 342; Adams, *Memoirs*, IV, 140–141.

cussed the matter and worked out an answer. The British seizure of an American ship, the *William and Mary,* in Spanish territorial waters in September certainly did not improve the American temper on the issue of search. It did not help that the British declined to accept the American protest on the grounds that according to international law, the claim must be made by the country whose territorial waters are violated; therefore any protest must come from Spain.[43]

The agreements made between the British and the European countries had provided for mixed courts to try the cases of captured vessels. These courts consisted of one judge from each of the two nations involved. If the judges reached different conclusions, an arbiter should be chosen by lot. The courts had authority to condemn slave-trading vessels according to the penalties of their respective laws. Attorney General Wirt immediately cited Article III, Section 1, of the Constitution, which would be violated if American citizens were tried in a court that was partly composed of foreigners and might sit outside the country. Such judges would not be impeachable. Adams countered with the suggestion that such courts would not be constitutionally different from joint commissions to which the United States was a party by her treaties with Great Britain and Spain. There were also similarities to the courts of admiralty that the nation planned to establish in Naples. Despite this point of constitutionality, Adams was really not in favor of an agreement with the British, and the cabinet was unanimous in rejecting the overture.

Other objections were that such an agreement could not really be reciprocal because the United States had no colonies in Africa or the West Indies to furnish a base for the mixed courts, that there could be no guarantee of freedom for slaves taken from such ships because according to American law they were under state jurisdiction, and that the right of search in peacetime was completely repugnant to American public opinion.[44] Rush was instructed to assure Castlereagh of America's continuing solicitude but to inform him that all of the essential articles in the pro-

43. Rush to Bathurst, Sept. 28, 1818, and Bathurst to Rush, Oct. 8, 1818, F.O. 5 II/137, PRO.

44. Adams, *Memoirs,* IV, 150–152.

posed treaty appeared to be "of a character not adaptable to the institutions or to the circumstances of the United States." He was to spell out the objections but also make it clear that while declining the proposition, the United States was intent on doing her part by enforcing her own laws, including the one recently passed in April.[45]

The second session of the 15th Congress could not escape the slavery issue. The president's message reported continued violations of the importation prohibition, and the abolition societies seem to have been particularly conscientious about preparing petitions.[46] On revision of the slave-trade laws there were memorials from Philadelphia (two), York, Carlisle, and Lancaster, Pennsylvania; Newport, Rhode Island; Hartford and Middletown, Connecticut; New Bedford, Massachusetts; Trenton, New Jersey, and "Citizens" of New Jersey; and "a number of citizens" of New York and New Jersey. An American Convention petition not only included the need for revising the slave-trade laws but asked for gradual emancipation in the District of Columbia. A supporting memorial from the Columbian United Abolition Society asked for better protection for the rights of free colored people. The New York Manumission Society wanted not only revisions in slave-trade regulations but also some arrangement for cooperation with Spain and Latin America.[47] A motion was passed early in the Senate session that initiated inquiry into preventing transportation of slaves into states which prohibited slavery, and it was this Congress that began the debates over the admission of Missouri.[48]

At this point the interests of colonizationists and emancipationists coincided, and the colonization society (as well as the various abolition societies) was accumulating evidence on the illegal slave trade, was advocating cooperation with other nations, perhaps including search and seizure, and was arguing that colonization

45. Adams to Albert Gallatin and Rush, Nov. 2, 1818, in Worthington C. Ford, ed., *Writings of John Quincy Adams*, 8 vols. (New York: Macmillan, 1917), VII, 464–472; *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 72–73, no. 342; Rush to Castlereagh and to Bathurst, Dec. 21, 1818, F.O. 5 II/137, PRO.

46. *Annals of Congress*, 15 Cong., 2 sess., 68–69, 292–293.

47. *Ibid.*, 77, 85, 88, 90, 97, 113, 161, 162, 167, 173, 176, 189, 197, 213, 224, 269, 426, 430.

48. *Ibid.*, 78, 192, 252.

was a powerful adjunct to slave-trade abolition.[49] Charles Fenton Mercer presented the incontrovertible statistics on evasions—slavers fitted out in American ports, names of American citizens and business firms still engaged in the traffic—statistics filed in the records of the British courts. The shame of such a record prompted the passage of a resolution that the Secretary of the Navy be directed to report to the House what instructions, if any, had been issued to commanders to enforce the laws, the number of slave ships seized and condemned, the ports from which they sailed, and where the vessels were owned.[50] The report from the Register of the Treasury on January 7, 1819, indicated that there had been *no* forfeitures under the act of 1807.[51]

The Slave Trade Act of March 3, 1819, was a decided improvement. It revived the 1807 authorization of the president to employ armed vessels to cruise the coasts of Africa and the United States with instructions to seize slavers, a provision omitted from the 1818 law. Moreover, seizure was not contingent upon being caught with slaves actually aboard. Under the new definition a ship obviously fitted out for the trade could be arrested. A third improvement was that jurisdiction over slaves removed from ships was taken away from the states and given to the federal government, a provision designed to prevent the slaves from being resold. Now the president was empowered to make arrangements for their safekeeping and removal beyond the limits of the United States and to appoint a person or persons residing on the coast of Africa as agents to receive them.[52] It was this part of the act that Monroe chose to interpret liberally as a means of aiding the colonization society. Although the act did not name the slave trade as piracy, it implied as much, because ships were to be proceeded against as enemy ships and treated as prizes.

The year 1820 proved to be one of turmoil on many aspects of the slavery question. Because of the Missouri controversy, most of the petitions sent in by the abolition societies centered on the point of refusing admission to any new states unless they pro-

49. Proceedings of Board of Managers, Dec., 1819, ACS Papers.
50. *Annals of Congress,* 15 Cong., 2 sess., 442–443.
51. DuBois, *Suppression of the Slave-Trade,* 117.
52. *U.S. Statutes at Large,* III, 532–534.

hibited slavery. Memorials to this effect were numerous and came not only from the abolitionist groups represented by the American Convention but from town meetings and state legislatures.[53]

It was also in 1820 that the American Colonization Society transported its first settlers to Africa. Both Samuel Bacon, the government agent, and the U.S.S. *Cyane,* which convoyed the expedition, sent back startling reports of the brisk trade in slaves still continuing. Ten captures were made of vessels that were obviously American but so covered by Spanish papers that it was impossible to condemn them. The report from the *Cyane* was that at least 300 slave ships were currently operating on the coast, all carrying two or three sets of papers. "You have no idea how cruelly these poor creatures are treated by the monsters engaged in taking them from the coast," one of the correspondents wrote.[54]

Letters from the U.S. customs collectors in Louisiana, Alabama, and Georgia testifying to illegal importations were presented to Congress in January, along with a letter from the Secretary of the Treasury admitting that no specific instructions had been issued under the slave-trade acts and that attention had been confined to cases arising under the revenue laws.[55] Representative John A. Cuthbert of Georgia submitted the idea of a register of all slaves as a means of detecting illegal importations. He argued that it would be no more difficult to set up than a similar registry kept for soldiers and would even facilitate the taxing operation. But John Randolph opposed it on the grounds of loose construction, and this was sufficient to prevent its being put into a formal motion for action.[56] Randolph undoubtedly saw it as providing an opening wedge for federal legislation on the internal slave trade as well.

In May Charles Fenton Mercer introduced a triple resolution in the House of Representatives: (1) that the president be requested to consult with all governments to whom the United States accredited ministers on the means of effecting the entire and immediate abolition of the slave trade; (2) that the president enter into a

53. *Annals of Congress,* 16 Cong., 1 sess., 24, 69, 70–72, for examples.
54. *American State Papers, For. Rel.,* V, 94–95, no. 346.
55. *Annals of Congress,* 16 Cong., 1 sess., 904–910.
56. *Ibid.,* 925–926.

formal declaration with the maritime powers to recognize the independence and permanent neutrality of any colony of free colored people which the United States might establish in West Africa; and (3) that the president make use of public ships to afford every aid to efforts of the American Colonization Society in settling free blacks in Africa. The third of these was somewhat belated, since Monroe had already sent the *Cyane* as a convoy ship three months earlier, and it was the only one which passed.[57] Yet the House and Senate did cooperate in passing the new Slave Trade Act of May 15, 1820, which specifically named the trade as piracy and applied it to Americans serving in the crews of foreign as well as American ships.[58]

The Senate's repeated rejections of the idea of cooperation through treaty with foreign powers (England, specifically), while at the same time passing a series of bills providing for unilateral action against the slave trade, indicate definite awareness of the strength of British influence and fear that cooperation in the abolition of the trade might prove to be the stepping-stone to general emancipation. This fear, and sensitivity to British criticism, come out clearly in the debates over Missouri. There was no doubt in the minds of the proslavery group that the North and Great Britain were in a "conspiracy" aimed at total emancipation, even though, as William Smith of South Carolina said, their language was clothed in other terms to make it appear that their goals were limited to stopping the trade and preventing the extension of slavery. When someone like Senator Prentiss Mellon of Massachusetts pointed out that all laws against importation, all attempts to increase the penalties, and all orders to ships to capture slavers had so far been futile, and the only remedy was to "shut up the market completely" by prohibiting slavery west of the Mississippi, they knew full well that shutting up the market completely would eventually call for including the area east of the river too.[59]

From the proslavery point of view, British as well as northern hypocrisy must be exposed. Great Britain got around to abolition, William Pinkney of Maryland charged, only when her own West

57. *Ibid.*, 2215–16, 2236.
58. *Ibid.*, 697; *U.S. Statutes at Large*, III, 600–601.
59. *Annals of Congress*, 16 Cong., 1 sess., I, 186.

Indian plantations were well stocked with slaves.[60] William Smith of South Carolina added that the English had imported slaves "as long as they could find a spot to set their feet on." He reminded his listeners that as long as the slave trade was legal, both England and the northern states were making profits on it, and only after it was shut off did they begin to talk about slavery as a sin and undertake projects for emancipation. The Prince Regent made fine speeches about freedom while with the help of pious missionaries he was fixing the yoke of slavery on all Asia. England, he concluded, ceased to enslave men only when she discovered that it was more profitable to enslave nations.[61]

It is not surprising that many Americans clung to the idea of unilateral action as the only "safe" way of proceeding against the slave trade, and no doubt some of them were genuinely optimistic that improving and enforcing America's own laws would suffice to kill the trade. Others, however, foresaw failure without some agreement for international cooperation on search. They retained hope, therefore, that Great Britain would renew her overtures.

60. *Ibid.*, 403–405.
61. *Ibid.*, 264, 385–386.

The Slave-Trade Convention of 1824

VI

Discouraged by the failure of the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle to act effectively on the slave trade, and encouraged by what seemed to be American good faith in her new legislation, the British returned to the idea of an Anglo-American treaty on mutual search.[1] It was in the late autumn of 1819 when Castlereagh summoned Rush to reveal to him his plan regarding the reopening of negotiations. Stratford Canning would be sent in the spring to replace Charles Bagot as British minister in Washington. He would be given full instructions and "have the whole subject in charge," and Castlereagh wanted Rush to lay the groundwork in advance by informing the president so that talks could begin as quickly as possible.[2] Nearly a year was to elapse before Canning and John Quincy Adams began their discussions, but as we have seen, it was a year in which the topic of slavery was a major concern in Congress.

1. Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe"; protocols and extracts from the Conference of Aix-la-Chapelle, Nov. 4, 7, 19, 23, F.O. 92/38, 39, PRO.

2. Castlereagh to Rush, Nov. 11, 16, 1819, F.O. 5 II/146, PRO; *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 77–80, nos. 342, 344. Wilberforce makes a mysterious and provocative reference to Rush in his diary, May 19, 1818: "Mr. Rush, American Minister, as *Amicus curiae.* I hope he found he was wrong, more than he would before own, yet I cannot believe him dishonest." See Wilberforce, *Life,* IV, 381.

It is not surprising that John Quincy Adams was somewhat cool to the overtures of Stratford Canning, but it was not only because of the agitated state of public opinion over the Missouri debates. Until there was time to assess the effectiveness of the new law making the slave trade piracy, it was best to proceed slowly on any international agreement. Moreover, the political rivalry between Adams and William Crawford, which would make them opposing candidates in 1824, was beginning to take shape. In March, 1820, Adams recorded in his diary that the debates over Missouri in the cabinet had "remarkably manifested Crawford's feelings and the continually increasing intenseness of his ambition." The governor of Indiana had told him that the Crawford group in his state would like to reintroduce slavery despite the Ordinance of 1787. "It is apparent," Adams concluded, "that Crawford is already aware how his canvass for the Presidency may be crossed in this slavery contest. The violence of its operation upon his temper is such that he could not suppress it." [3] Although professing not to believe it, Adams recorded in his diary the rumor that Crawford was implicated with Indian agent Mitchell in smuggling slaves into Georgia from Amelia Island.[4]

Consequently Canning found himself doing a great deal of talking to little effect—a decidedly disappointing position for so brilliant a star in the British diplomatic firmament, who was also sincerely and earnestly interested in the cause that his instructions had said "your Court regards as one of the very highest importance." If the United States could not be persuaded to join in establishing a maritime police system on the African coast, she should then take the responsibility for suggesting an alternate plan, wrote Castlereagh, "for we must hope that so enlightened a state is not prepared supinely to acquiesce in the continued existence of so flagrant an immorality." [5]

From the time Canning arrived in Washington in September, 1820, he continued to press John Quincy Adams for action, only to encounter repeated demurrers that mixed international courts and search in peacetime were not in tune with the "extra-Euro-

3. Adams, *Memoirs,* V, 9–10.
4. *Ibid.,* 211–212.
5. Castlereagh to Stratford Canning, Aug. 7, 1820, F.O. 5/150, PRO.

pean" policy of the United States, which preferred an "amicable march *on parallel lines.*" [6] Discussions might have terminated there, had not the U.S. House of Representatives been far ahead of the State Department in its determination to end the slave trade, by international cooperation if necessary. Each time the House made a move, Canning used the opening to make one of his own. It almost seemed as if the strategy were jointly planned or at least as if someone in the Slave Trade Committee was informing him of the plays in advance. Whenever the House requested the executive branch to furnish it with correspondence on the trade, Canning checked to make sure that everything was included. If a letter was omitted, or, as in one instance, the copies of the addresses of Parliament to the Prince Regent, he used the omission as a pretext for seeing Adams, and that opening for further discussion. The belated delivery of the omitted papers did nothing to improve Adams's "image." "It would, perhaps, be unfair to consider this circumstance in any other light but that of accident," Canning wrote to Castlereagh. "Yet Mr. Adams is not so fortunate as to obtain credit with all for being a decided friend to the employment of strong measures against the slave trade." [7] It seems possible that growing awareness of this unfavorable image in the House may eventually have helped to change Adams's mind on an Anglo-American treaty, especially as the election of 1824 drew closer and with the possibility that the decision might be thrown to the House of Representatives as a consequence of the splitting of votes among so many candidates.

In 1820, as in 1818, the cabinet was at first unanimous in disapproving of American participation in a mixed court, but by this time Smith Thompson of New York had succeeded Benjamin Crowinshield as Secretary of the Navy, a significant change because it marked the first break in the unanimity of the cabinet in

6. Adams, *Memoirs,* V, 181–184, 187–191, 195; Canning to Castlereagh, Oct. 3, 28, 1820, F.O. 5/150, PRO. The "Note on Conversation with Mr. Adams—Slave Trade," Stratford Canning Papers, F.O. 352/8, Public Record Office, should be dated Oct. 2, 1820, instead of 1822. Canning's report of his meeting with Adams makes the Secretary of State sound brusque and impatient—a different impression from what one gets from Adams's own diary.

7. Canning to Castlereagh, Jan. 21, 1821, F.O. 5 I/157, PRO; Adams, *Memoirs,* V, 232–233; *American State Papers, For. Rel.,* V, 77–80, no. 344.

opposing some system of mutual search. Thompson did not think search would necessarily countenance impressment, and abuses could be prevented if U.S. vessels and citizens were brought home for trial. He was aware (as was the House of Representatives) that American public opinion was increasingly in support of suppression of the trade, and he feared that if the British overtures were rebuffed, the United States would expose herself to a charge of insincerity that the British would use to discredit her.

Calhoun, Adams, and Monroe formed a triumvirate too powerful for Thompson. Calhoun discounted the belief that British motives were anything other than selfish and economically based: the British simply could not bear to see rivals making a profit in a trade in which they no longer shared. Moreover, if the United States acceded to the British proposal, Calhoun argued, " 'We appear to the world as the satellite and she the primary planet' "—a portent of the Monroe Doctrine. While Adams conceded some sincerity in British motives, he was inclined to think that her statesmen acted simply because they were hard pushed by the Saints, who had powerful support from British public opinion. Monroe's point was that refusing search in peacetime would strengthen the American position in wartime, and this alone was sufficient reason for declining. The final decision was not to present any formal counterproposal, as the British had suggested, but to reply that the United States had a vessel cruising the African coast and that mutual instructions could be given to its commander and to those of the British squadron so that they might furnish one another assistance in spotting their own slave ships.[8]

Although British diplomats were dubious about the real motives of the Americans, it is interesting to note that British abolitionist circles seemed to accept American constitutional objections at face value. A publication of the African Institution for 1821 criticized the noncooperation of the European countries but noted that "America alone has practically seconded our efforts with cordiality . . . ," although she, too, was kept from full cooperation by her constitutional restrictions.[9]

8. Adams, *Memoirs*, V, 216–219.

9. *Foreign Slave Trade* . . . (London: Ellerton and Henderson, 1821). This is vol. XXXVII of "Tracts on Slavery" in the Friends House Library.

While Adams was instructing Rush in London that he should leave no doubt about his government's determination against yielding on the right of search, the Slave Trade Committee in the House of Representatives almost simultaneously concluded that mutual search would be the only effective means and expressed faith in the intelligence of the American people to distinguish between its use in this instance and search in wartime. The committee's report suggested that it could be restricted to certain vessels and certain seas and limited to the seizure of vessels with slaves actually aboard, and the vessels could be delivered for trial to courts of their own nation.[10] Copies were sent to Canning of the instructions to American commanders off the coast of Africa to cooperate with the British, with the suggestion that, if mutually convenient, vessels of the two countries might cruise together and exchange information—an idea to which Great Britain attached little importance.[11]

In the summer an exchange in the British Parliament caused another flare of American temper. It began innocently enough when Wilberforce, speaking in the Commons, complained about Europe but praised the United States for her use of cruisers against the trade and for making it piracy, subject to capital punishment. In fact, he held up American action as an honorable example that his own country and the other European powers ought to emulate. Castlereagh, on the other hand, replied sharply that Wilberforce was mistaken if he thought the principal difficulties lay with the absolute rather than the "free and representative" governments, and he singled out the United States as being most opposed to a cooperative system. Dr. Stephen Lushington charged that America was not doing enough by acting unilaterally, and Lord Brougham joined the critics by saying that until she allowed search, all efforts would be unavailing.[12]

Newspapers in the United States, including the *National Intelligencer,* an unofficial government organ, were quick to react to

10. Adams to Rush, Feb. 6, 1821, in Ford, ed., *Writings of John Quincy Adams,* VIII, 92–94; *American State Papers, For. Rel.,* V, 90–93, no. 346.

11. Adams to Canning, Aug. 20, 1821, and Canning to Marquis of Londonderry, Sept. 4, 1821, F.O. 5/159, PRO.

12. *The Parliamentary Debates from the Year 1803 to the Present Time,* n.s., V, 1325–40.

the English criticism. Stratford Canning became so alarmed over the stir that he thought it advisable to write a letter to the editor under a pseudonym "in hopes of counteracting the poison." [13] Canning was by this time convinced that the cabinet was divided on the question of search (Thompson and Wirt presumably ready to consider it), and therefore he should not let the matter drop.[14] He was given another opening when the American schooner *Alligator,* cruising on the African coast, boarded four ships flying the French colors on the supposition that they were really American. *La Jeune Eugénie* was taken as a prize to Boston for adjudication, an act which raised not only diplomatic complications with France but embarrassment in the face of British indignation over the Americans doing exactly what they had so strenuously objected to in British action.

Since *La Jeune Eugénie* sailed under the French flag with French papers, Monroe's opinion was that she should be relinquished to the French consul in Boston, who could send her home for trial. The president was not unmindful that such action would win favor for the United States and "be useful in other respects." [15] In this case Crawford and Adams were on the same side, but Wirt and Thompson, on the other hand, argued that new situations called for the establishing of new precedents. Since slave-trade laws were new, new usages might follow. Boarding a slave ship, no matter what its nationality, might be a desirable precedent or a new application of the old principle of proceeding against pirates as having forfeited protection by any nation.[16]

13. *Ibid.;* Canning to Marquess [*sic*] of Londonderry, Sept. 4, 1821 (marked "confidential"), F.O. 5/159, PRO. A reading of the editorials in the *National Intelligencer,* Aug. 11 and 15, 1821, leads one to conclude that Canning was exaggerating the situation. They are really quite moderate in tone and are more in the nature of a report of the parliamentary debate than a criticism of it. Either Canning wanted to prevent, if possible, British statements in public that might handicap negotiations, or he wanted to chalk up a point in favor of his own diplomacy in "counteracting the poison."

14. Canning to Marquis of Londonderry, Sept. 4, 1821, F.O. 5/159, PRO.

15. Monroe to Daniel Brent, Sept. 15, 17, 1821, and to John C. Calhoun, Sept. 24, 1821, in Stanislaus M. Hamilton, ed., *The Writings of James Monroe Including a Collection of His Public and Private Papers and Correspondence,* 7 vols. (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1903), VI, 193–201; Adams, *Memoirs,* V, 381.

16. Crawford to Gallatin, May 13, 1822, and Gallatin to Adams, Nov. 16, 1821,

Interestingly enough, the decision of Judge Joseph Story of the circuit court in Boston that tried *La Jeune Eugénie* followed the same reasoning as Wirt and Thompson.[17] Story branded the slave trade as a violation of the law of nations, which must be deduced from principles of right and justice and is modified by practice so that additions can be made to it from time to time. All the nations, including France, had denounced the trade individually or as members of the congresses of Vienna, Aix-la-Chapelle, and London, where the "sense of Europe upon this point" was, according to Story, clearly reflected. From his viewpoint, therefore, it was time the courts began so to interpret the law of nations. He agreed with the decision of Sir William Grant in the case of the *Amedie* that the burden of proof should be on the captured vessel to show that the slave trade was legal by the laws of its own country.[18] Although Story's decision was later overruled, it reflected the trend of the times and was significant in its practical results because American ships subsequently stopped ships flying the Spanish and Portuguese as well as the French flags, despite the stand the president had taken against such action.

One positive outgrowth of the affair of *La Jeune Eugénie* was that it brought the French into a discussion of the slave trade. While the United States and France both strenuously objected to yielding to the British on the right of search, the American minister to France, Albert Gallatin, acknowledged that unless something of the kind was done, it appeared impossible to suppress the trade completely. He reported to Adams that he found little disposition on the part of the French to agree to search, and he privately doubted their earnestness in suppressing the trade. Any new convention would be unpopular, partly because the present

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in Henry Adams, ed., *The Writings of Albert Gallatin*, 3 vols. (Worcester, Mass.: Antiquarian Press, 1960), II, 241–244 and 212–215; Adams, *Memoirs*, V, 388–390.

17. Canning to Marquess [*sic*] of Londonderry, Feb. 8, 1822, F.O. 5/166, PRO.

18. William W. Story, ed., *Life and Letters of Joseph Story*, 2 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1851), I, 348–356. Another of the prize ships seized by the *Alligator* was retaken by its crew, sailed to Guadaloupe and then to Africa with an American crew, and brought back a cargo of slaves to Guadaloupe. This elicited a remonstrance from the British. See Gallatin to Adams, Feb. 2, 1822, in Adams, ed., *Writings of Gallatin*, II, 229–233.

treaty had been made under conditions of compulsion at the end of the war. Gallatin found that English public opinion, on the contrary, was more and more insistent in demanding of its government some positive achievement against the trade. To Gallatin this seemed to offer a good chance for the United States to do some bargaining. In return for allowing a restricted and modified system of search tailored to American interests, Great Britain could be asked to come to terms on such problems as the northern boundary, the fisheries, or the West Indian trade.[19]

Through the early months of 1822 Canning chose to employ a policy of watchful waiting while abolition societies presented their petitions and the House Slave Trade Committee again reported in favor of concerted measures with other powers.[20] Only a clear indication of public opinion, he wrote Castlereagh, could change the "strong repugnance" felt by the Secretary of State and the president toward a treaty, and he did not want to press too hard lest he excite more active opposition.[21] The British Foreign Office then decided to make a new approach through Rush, who paved the way for another Adams-Canning conversation. It was not very satisfactory. According to Canning, Adams returned to the subject "with evident marks of unwillingness." Adams denied that there was any difference of opinion in the cabinet and brushed off Canning's hints that he had private information to the contrary. When Canning asked if the Secretary could conceive of any greater evil than the slave trade, Adams's testy reply was yes—to admit the right of search, "for that would be making slaves of ourselves." [22]

The British had hoped for some positive sign to strengthen their hand with the European Concert Powers meeting in Verona

19. Gallatin to Adams, Feb. 2, 1822, and to Monroe, Feb. 4, 1822, in Adams, ed., *Writings of Gallatin,* II, 229–233.

20. For the petitions, see *Annals of Congress,* 17 Cong., 1 sess., 137, 709, 747, 1150; report of the Slave Trade Committee, *ibid.,* 1535–38.

21. Canning to Marquess [*sic*] of Londonderry, May 8, 1822, F.O. 5 I/168, PRO. In the manuscript version "Secretary of State" and "President" are crossed out, so that the phrase could read "The strong repugnance entertained *here* . . ." (italics mine).

22. Adams, *Memoirs,* VI, 13; Canning to Marquess [*sic*] of Londonderry, June 29, 1822, F.O. 5 III/168, PRO.

in the autumn of 1822. George Canning, who came to power after Castlereagh's suicide during the summer, had to face the fact that little progress could be made as long as France was "hostile" and the United States was "lukewarm, if not indifferent." [23] While the congress was in session, however, word seeped out that Gallatin had been given orders to urge the French to more effective collaboration and to himself cooperate with Sir Charles Stuart—news all the more welcome, George Canning wrote the duke of Wellington, since he had "nearly foregone all expectation of any active interference of the U.States on this subject." George Canning advised his brother Stratford to use his own judgment about whether or not to let John Quincy Adams know that they knew, and whether or not to use it in reopening discussions in Washington.[24]

Believing as he did in the force of public opinion, Stratford Canning personally supported antislavery organizations. He had contributed $50 to the American Colonization Society, and when he heard that a new Society for the Suppression of the Slave Trade had been organized in Boston by Lewis Tappan and George Blake, he sent them a contribution of $50. His strategy was to send the money through Daniel Webster, probably because it would insure a bit of publicity but probably also to set an example for Webster.[25] It may have been a pointed reminder to John Quincy Adams that Canning knew which way public opinion was moving in Adams's home state.

British abolitionists also continued to urge their friends in America, especially the Quakers, to keep pressure on Congress by petitions. The Society of Friends responded with *A View of the Present State of the African Slave Trade*, which was published in Philadelphia in 1824. It included reports from American naval officers and from British observers in Sierra Leone on the recent

23. George Canning to Duke of Wellington, Oct. 1, 1822, F.O. 92/48, PRO. In the manuscript these adjectives are crossed out to be deleted from the printed version. The adjective "hostile" for the French is softened to "opposed to."

24. George Canning to Duke of Wellington, Oct. 15, 1822, F.O. 92/48, and to Stratford Canning, Nov. 11, 1822, F.O. 5/165, PRO.

25. Stratford Canning to Daniel Webster, Oct. 5, 1822, Stratford Canning Papers, F.O. 352/8; Staudenraus, *African Colonization Movement*, 76.

increase in the trade.[26] Canning reported to his government that the friends of abolition in the House of Representatives had agreed to print an extra 2,000 copies of the 1822 report of the Slave Trade Committee that had called for international cooperation and had been favorable to a system of limited search.[27]

Canning's strategy was to time his moves to correspond with those of the House of Representatives, yet to let the major pressure come from that body. Behind the scenes he kept in touch with Charles Fenton Mercer and with Benjamin Gorham of Massachusetts, a member of the Slave Trade Committee. In January, 1823, he decided the time was right to repeat the diplomatic overtures, which he did with a letter to the Secretary of State.[28] Although he did not know it at the time, he had an ally in Albert Gallatin, who was urging from his Paris post that the United States should negotiate with the British and that some sort of mutual search was necessary.[29] When, in February, Mercer resubmitted his resolution for international cooperation and it passed by the overwhelming vote of 131 to 9, the executive branch could scarcely ignore it. In his speech Mercer definitely recommended that the slave trade be made piracy under the law of nations, i.e., not just by unilateral action of the United States.[30]

26. Richard Phillips to Zachary Macaulay, Sept. 24, 1822, Add. Mss 41267A, f. 120, British Museum; *A View of the Present State of the African Slave Trade. Published by Direction of a Meeting Representing the Religious Society of Friends in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, &c.* (Philadelphia: William Brown, 1824).

27. Stratford Canning to Marquess [*sic*] of Londonderry, May 8, 1822, F.O. 5 I/168, PRO.

28. "Memo of Conversation with Mr. Gorham about Slave Trade," Jan. 19, 1823, Stratford Canning Papers, F.O. 352/8; Stratford Canning to John Quincy Adams, Jan. 29, 1823, F.O. 5 I/175, PRO.

29. Gallatin to Adams, Jan. 18, 1823, in Adams, ed., *Writings of Gallatin,* II, 264–265.

30. *Annals of Congress,* 17 Cong., 3 sess., 928, 1147–55; Hugh G. Soulsby, *The Right of Search and the Slave Trade in Anglo-American Relations, 1814–1862,* vol. LI, no. 2, of Herbert B. Adams, ed., *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Historical and Political Science* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1933), 9. Soulsby credits Adams with the strategy of declaring the slave trade to be piracy in order to allow search. Actually, Mercer and others were far ahead of Adams in this. In the spring of 1823 Adams was still opposed. See "Memorandum Conversation with Mr. Adams, March 17, 1823," Stratford Canning Papers, F.O. 352/8; Stratford Canning to George Canning, Apr. 22, 1823, F.O. 5/176, PRO. Stratford Canning's conclusion was that Adams, not Monroe, was the big block

With this spur to action, Monroe finally instructed Adams to act, and the latter wrote to inform Canning that his government was ready to present an alternate proposal of mutual search and trial by mixed commissions. The alternative was that Great Britain should accept in principle the idea of declaring the slave trade piracy, and that the two nations should then make a "mutual stipulation" that could in turn be urged upon France and other maritime powers.[31] Actually, Adams was not explicit on whether he meant joining in a multilateral pact declaring the slave trade to be piracy under the law of nations or simply urging each nation to act unilaterally by statute. But since Mercer had recommended the first, Canning chose to put that interpretation on it and responded with alacrity without waiting for direction from London. Adams insisted that before a detailed agreement was worked out, the British government must signify its assent in principle.[32]

Pushed by the House into taking a specific stand, Monroe and Adams concluded that the convention they would propose to Great Britain must still make explicit that search was a belligerent right only; but as pirates were enemies of mankind, the pursuit of them would be consistent with belligerent rights. Politics was to give the final push to Adams. By summertime it began to be apparent that a move was afoot in Congress to turn the issue into a party question. Mercer furnished a list of names of those unfriendly to Monroe and Adams who would try to use it as a means of defeating the administration.[33] Principal among them were the Crawford supporters in the Senate. It was all that was

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to an agreement on search, and he ascribed it to political motives. He had gained popularity by championing American rights on the sea and was therefore reluctant to do what would seem like an about-face. Canning blamed Adams for deterring the last two chairmen of the Slave Trade Committee, who were "timid, though well-meaning men," and for holding down the two members of the cabinet who disagreed with him. See Stratford Canning to George Canning, June 6, 1823 (marked "confidential"), F.O. 5/176, PRO.

31. Adams to Stratford Canning, Mar. 31, 1823, in *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 328, no. 371; also in F.O. 5/176, PRO.

32. Stratford Canning to George Canning, Apr. 22, 1823, F.O. 5/176, PRO; Stratford Canning to Adams, Apr. 8, 1823, in *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 328, no. 371.

33. Adams, *Memoirs*, VI, 148–150.

needed to turn Adams into a champion of a slave-trade convention. The role was made easier for him when the House of Representatives specifically rejected an amendment to its resolution that would have called for concession on the right of search. Now at last he would proclaim that the House and the executive department saw eye to eye, so that he could proceed with negotiations along a clear-cut line. Accordingly, in June he sent to Rush in London a draft of a convention to be submitted to the British, on condition they first declare themselves in principle as favorable to the American approach.[34]

Although Canning, in conversation with Adams, seemed dubious about the possibilities of the British enacting a statute declaring the slave trade to be piracy, the Americans actually had strong allies in the British abolitionists, and Monroe was aware of the importance of gaining the support of the Wilberforce faction.[35] As a matter of fact, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle in 1818 this was exactly what Thomas Clarkson, speaking for the abolitionists, had urged Czar Alexander to back. The abolitionists were generally convinced that international agreement would be easier to reach via the route of declaring the trade piracy than by getting concessions on the right of search. By the time of the Congress of Verona in 1822 they had convinced the British statesmen to switch the official strategy.[36]

It was not until January, 1824, that Rush began formal talks with William Huskisson and Stratford Canning, who was back in London, and it was the middle of March before they arrived at an agreement.[37] Its first article contained the core of the convention, which provided that ships of the two countries were authorized to cruise the coasts of Africa, America, and the West Indies with power to detain, examine, and capture ships of either nation "concerned in the illicit traffic of slaves." Then followed

34. Adams to Rush, June 24, 1823, in *Annals of Congress,* 18 Cong., 1 sess., Appendix, 3017–22.

35. Adams, *Memoirs,* VII, 150.

36. Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe."

37. The protocols of the conferences from Jan. 23 to Mar. 13 are in F.O. 5/192, PRO, and in *American State Papers, For. Rel.,* V, 324–326, no. 371. This also includes Rush to Adams, Mar. 15, 1824, giving details of the proposals and counterproposals with points of discussion, and the convention itself, pp. 319–322.

a variety of restrictions designed to allay American fears. Procedures for boarding were carefully spelled out, and boarding officers were to be held strictly accountable for abuses. Of special significance was Article X, which asserted that the convention rested on the consideration that each nation would have made the slave trade piracy by its national laws. Moreover, they agreed to use their influence with other maritime and civilized powers to the end that the slave trade should be declared piracy under the law of nations.

Simultaneously with the drawing up of the convention, preparations to make the slave trade piracy under British law were being engineered by the abolitionists in Parliament. James Stephen drafted the bill, and Dr. Stephen Lushington was chosen to introduce it. There were two major points of contention: whether to include the intercolonial trade or just the trade from Africa and whether any concession should be made in the way of special licenses. The abolitionists strongly objected to the latter and were adamant in their stand to include the intercolonial trade. To make exceptions seemed incongruous in the light of British pressures on America and would surely prejudice the chance of the treaty's acceptance by the United States.[38]

Parliamentary consideration of the bill was more an occasion for oratory than real debate, and passage was quickly obtained. In the Lords, Earl Bathurst urged passage quickly so that news could arrive in America before Congress adjourned its current session, and Earl Grosvenor delivered the main supporting speech. It was not one, however, to give confidence to southern American senators who might be wavering in support of the treaty, for Grosvenor definitely saw it as a stepping-stone to final emancipation.[39]

Stratford Canning did not return to the Washington post, and it devolved upon his successor, Henry Unwin Addington, to follow his government's instruction to urge the Americans to early

38. George Canning to Huskisson, Mar. 13, 1824, Huskisson Papers, Correspondence, XII, 745, Add. Mss 38, British Museum. This evidence is in opposition to Eric Williams's charge that British abolitionists "did little or nothing to draw attention to, far less to condemn," the intercolonial slave traffic. See Williams, "The British West Indian Slave Trade after Its Abolition in 1807," *Journal of Negro History*, XXVII (Apr., 1942), 175–191.

39. *Parliamentary Debates*, X, 1424–25; XI, 1–8.

ratification.[40] The treaty, with Monroe's recommendation, was presented to the Senate on May 8, 1824, by Senator James Barbour of Virginia, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee. But even before debate began on May 12, it was obvious that strong opposition was shaping up and that politics would prevent its being considered on its merits alone. According to John Quincy Adams's informants, the public was alarmed by a statement George Canning had made in Parliament that mutual right of search had been conceded by the United States, and this was circulated in American newspapers before the government had a chance to make any announcement or explanation. In Baltimore there had been a protest meeting to memorialize the Senate against ratification.[41]

While some genuine fear about conceding the right of search may have existed, the weight of evidence seems to be that this was simply a public talking point to hide the real opposition—Crawford's followers—against the administration, represented by John Quincy Adams and Monroe. Their aim was to make Adams appear not only as an appeaser of the British but as a man who was a traitor to his own principles, since he had previously earned a reputation as the champion of freedom of the seas. Another possible factor in the opposition was southern fear about British intentions for the treaty as an aid to total emancipation. "Crawfordism had taken the alarm lest this concert between the United States and Great Britain for suppressing the slave-trade should turn into a concert for the abolition of slavery," Adams recorded in his diary.[42]

Undoubtedly the timing of this convention was bad insofar as arousing southern fears was concerned. In 1823 British abolitionists had begun their new crusade for emancipation in their West Indian colonies, and fears of British motives, awakened in the debates over Missouri, had not subsided. Rufus King reported that some southern congressional members were panicky over recent speeches in Parliament looking toward total emancipation.

40. George Canning to Addington, Mar. 20, 1824, F.O. 5/184, PRO.

41. *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 326, 360–362, nos. 371, 379; *Register of Debates*, 1824–1825, I, Appendix; Adams, *Memoirs*, VI, 321.

42. Adams, *Memoirs*, VI, 328.

Senator Nathaniel Macon's motion to postpone debate until the next session was, however, defeated, and those with fears turned to the remedy of amendment.[43] The main changes proposed were to (1) insert a time limit or a clause that would allow either party to renounce the treaty upon giving six months' notice; (2) exclude the coast of America from the cruising operations; and (3) eliminate the provision for taking citizens of either country off ships of third parties.[44]

Addington was "much disconcerted" at the unexpected opposition in the Senate. John Quincy Adams, in conference with several Senate leaders, tried to impress them with the impropriety of the United States making substantive changes at the ratification rather than the negotiation stage, especially since the projet agreed to by the British was the American proposal. Addington further pointed out that debate and delay by the Senate now would prevent American ratification from reaching England before Parliament rose. It was absurd, he thought, to limit such a treaty. How could a "great universal principle of morality" be reduced to five years? Nonetheless, as Rufus King stated, there was "no reasoning with fear." [45]

President Monroe was also alarmed. What could be done? Calhoun suggested that Mercer could present another resolution in the House calling for information, which would operate as a stimulus and admonition, but John Quincy Adams thought it wiser to leave the Senate to act for itself. Perhaps he feared that any "interference" from the House would only push the Senate to defend its prerogatives. Instead of bringing the House into it, Monroe decided to exert the full weight of executive authority directly by sending another message to the Senate. He reminded them that the executive branch had acted in direct response to the legislative, represented by the House resolution of February 28, 1823, and the Senate's ratification of the Treaty of Ghent with its Article X calling for Anglo-American cooperation to end the slave trade. Great Britain had already made concessions to the

43. *Ibid.*, 329; *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 361, no. 379.

44. *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 360–362, no. 379.

45. Adams, *Memoirs*, VI, 328–330; *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 341, 347, no. 374.

American point of view by passing her piracy law, by agreeing to adequate safeguards against abuses in the right of search, and by allowing trial of the offenders in their respective countries. Moreover, amicable settlement of this issue would pave the way for settling boundary disputes and other remaining differences.[46] Privately Monroe was threatening that if the Senate failed to ratify, he would take the strongest measures that could be adopted in placing the matter before the House.[47]

Despite the strenuous efforts of the president and the Secretary of State, the amendments embodied all three of the major objections. The fact that all of the amendments were moved by Senator Josiah Johnston of Louisiana, who eventually voted for the finished product while the Crawfordites voted against it, strengthens the argument that there was some genuine southern fear over the slavery issue. But the final vote of 23 against the treaty was definitely political rather than sectional.[48] Addington's report to his government appears to be an accurate analysis. There were, he said, three causes for the Senate action: (1) a disinclination to concede the right of search; (2) the fear of ulterior motives on the part of Britain for "effecting the total suppression of slavery in all countries"; and (3) party spirit. These were in ascending order of significance, with the "real" obstruction being the last.[49]

Unfortunately for the treaty, the one supporter of Crawford who was also a primary advocate of international cooperation, Charles Fenton Mercer, was in the House instead of the Senate.

46. Richardson, ed., *Messages and Papers,* II, 243–247; *American State Papers, For. Rel.,* V, 344, no. 374; Hamilton, ed., *Writings of Monroe,* VII, 22–27.

47. Adams, *Memoirs,* VI, 338.

48. *Ibid.,* 426–428; *American State Papers, For. Rel.,* V, 360–362, no. 379. Nay votes were cast by senators from Maine, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, and Illinois as well as from Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Maryland. The Virginia delegates led the support of the treaty, and in the yea votes they were joined by fellow southerners from North Carolina, Delaware, Tennessee, South Carolina, Mississippi, Kentucky, Louisiana, Alabama, and Missouri. The charge that it was the Jackson faction which opposed is equally without foundation. Jackson himself, John H. Eaton, and Thomas Hart Benton all voted for the treaty.

49. Addington to George Canning, May 21, 1824, F.O. 5/185, PRO. John Quincy Adams and Rufus King concurred in this conclusion. See Adams, *Memoirs,* VI, 348–351; Samuel Flagg Bemis, *John Quincy Adams and the Foundations of American Foreign Policy* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1949), 435.

He was chagrined to have to admit, which he did to Stratford Canning, "that the opposition to the treaty is the work of a single faction, prompted by the hope of prejudicing the public mind against one of the candidates for the Presidency, and, this with the expectation of aiding the pretensions of another." He impressed on Canning that he was revealing this in confidence because the candidate to be helped by rejecting the treaty (Crawford) had been his own preference, while Adams, against whom all this was directed, "you know to be no favorite of mine." [50]

Despite the unfavorable turn of events, Monroe, Adams, Mercer, and Addington were not yet ready to give up. There was still hope that they might succeed in persuading the British to accept the amended version, and to this they turned their efforts. The instructions to Rush were that he must first be sure to clarify the constitutional role of the U.S. Senate in the treaty-making procedure so that there would be no question of administrative sincerity in having signed the first version. Second, he was to emphasize that the essential features of the treaty had been retained and that the changes would alter its application very slightly. Omission of Article VII would not matter, for neither the United States nor Great Britain claimed the right to capture slave ships under other flags. (Both did it anyway, of course.) Since there were no longer any slave ships operating along the American coastline, its exclusion was of little practical importance, although of great psychological importance. The liberty to renounce the treaty on six months' notice might actually strengthen it because it would encourage other nations to join.[51]

Addington also cooperated by emphasizing that Monroe was not responsible for the failure. Indeed, in a letter to George Canning marked "secret and confidential" he credited Monroe's second message to Congress, "couched in very strong terms," with having "saved the Convention." [52] Again he stressed the influence of politics. Southern alarm over recent moves of the British in

50. Mercer to Stratford Canning, May 23, 1824, Stratford Canning Papers, F.O. 352/9.

51. Adams to Rush, May 29, 1824, in *American State Papers, For. Rel.*, V, 362–363, no. 379, no. 2.

52. Addington to George Canning, May 31, 1824 (marked "secret and confidential"), F.O. 5/186, pt. 1, PRO.

regard to West Indian slavery "operated as a powerful engine in the hands of the designing." Henee Addington added his plea that the British should be realistie and aeeept the modified version as far better than none at all and, as Rush would argue, essentially very little ehanged. Unlike his attitude in the days of Stratford Canning, John Quiney Adams was now very mueh in earnest.[53]

While Adams, Rush, and Addington were utilizing all offieial ehannels, Mereer took advantage of his personal friendship with Stratford Canning to bring pressure to bear. He, too, earefully explained how the exeitement of partisan polities was to blame, and they should be thankful the treaty was even alive, though "battered and mutilated." They were lueky that several senators were absent when the final vote was taken beeause if all had been present, they would have rejeeted it even with the amendments. Now it was important that the English not let false pride stand in the way beeause they were not getting just exaetly what they wanted. Exempting the Ameriean eoast was not so disastrous; in faet, it would serve to prevent ineidents near the United States that eould stir up great troubles. If Great Britain should rejeet the treaty with modifieations, what then? Mereer saw little hope. Either Crawford or Adams was about to sueeeed Monroe. If it should be Crawford, obviously there would be no treaty. Adams's present pro-treaty position was as a loyal member of the Monroe administration. If president, he might very well revert to his own true position, whieh was against the right of seareh. The fate of Afriea, Mereer eoneluded, rested with British aeeeptanee. Other repereussions were that Franee would be triumphant over Anglo-Ameriean disagreement, and Russia would view this as an end to their eombined resistanee to the Holy Allianee.[54]

Both Stratford and George Canning shared the general British

53. Addington to Canning, May 29, 31, 1824, F.O. 5/185, 186, PRO.

54. Mereer to Stratford Canning, May 23, 1824, Stratford Canning Papers, F.O. 352/9. The absent senators whom Mereer listed as opposing the treaty were Edwards of Illinois, Lloyd of Maryland, Lanman of Connecticut, Palmer of Vermont, and Talbot of Kentucky. Mereer's request that Canning "burn this letter" obviously was not heeded. Instead, Canning passed it on to Huskisson, who found it "a very eurious pieture . . . of this rickety and eapricious Executive, with which it seems almost impossible to negotiate." As for Adams, Huskisson said he should "laugh to see him tarred and feathered for having proposed to eoncede it [right of seareh]. . . ." Huskisson was of the opinion that the only

impatience with the American action, and George Canning refused to recommend the modified version. While aware that the Senate had acted within its constitutional rights, he did not think that sufficed "to reconcile the exercise of it altogether with the feelings of the other Contracting Party, whose solemn ratification is thus rendered of no avail. . . ." Only if the Senate changed its mind and allowed the inclusion of the American coast would Britain concur in a new convention.[55]

Technically, of course, the United States was to blame for the failure of the convention. One cannot help but question, however, the rigidity of British adherence to pride and protocol. The treaty as modified was distinctly better than none at all. Action through search could have been taken on the coast of Africa, to prevent shipment of slaves, and in the West Indies, where most of them were landed before being smuggled into the United States. Once Americans were persuaded there was no danger in this limited concession of search, they might possibly have agreed to its extension. This same lack of flexibility was apparent in the British refusal to consider the Russian counterproposal at Aix-la-Chapelle. Czar Alexander had there proposed a universal declaration that the slave trade was piracy. To enforce it, an international administrative institution off the coast of Africa should be established with its own maritime force, judicial power, and supreme council. At that point the British were pushing for treaties on mutual search, and Alexander's idea was dismissed as visionary and ephemeral.[56]

If one must assign individual responsibility, however, John Quincy Adams cannot escape. He, more than anyone, was responsible for stalling off the British and delaying until an election was upon his country and politics were bound to figure in the outcome. Moreover, after he was elected president, just as Mercer had predicted, he reverted to his earlier position of coolness to-

repercussions in England would be to "set the Saints and Philosophers against the Americans." In saying this, he was admitting that his government had acted in the first place because of the pressure of the abolitionist Saints. See Huskisson to [Stratford Canning], June 23, 1824 (marked "Private"), Stratford Canning Papers, F.O. 352/9.

55. George Canning to Rush, Aug. 27, 1824, F.O. 5/194, PRO.

56. Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe."

ward any treaty embodying the right of search, and successive attempts by the British to reopen the issue during his administration all failed.[57]

By 1825 the abolitionists could not avoid the conclusion that it was futile to think they could kill slavery via the indirect route of strangling the slave trade. It was one more blow to gradualism and pushed them one more step toward embracing immediatism.

57. In 1825, when Charles Vaughan, Addington's successor as British minister to the United States, approached the new Secretary of State, Henry Clay, on the possibilities of reopening the discussions, Clay told him that the previous administration's support of the slave-trade convention had come from Monroe, not Adams. See Vaughan to George Canning, Sept. 30, 1825, F.O. 5/199, PRO.

The Failure of Piecemeal Reforms

VII

While plans to alleviate slavery through colonization and hopes to terminate it by outlawing the slave trade were in progress in the period after 1808, other peaceable, "moderate" programs were also being experimented with on something of a trial-and-error basis. These included the registry system, amelioration of the conditions of slaves and of free blacks, regulation of the internal slave trade, the free-produce movement based on the principle of economic boycott, and, in America, the "containment" of slavery in those states where it already existed. In general the abolitionists in both Great Britain and the United States were still optimistic, although one senses a growing disillusionment with such piecemeal efforts. But not until 1823 in England, and the mid-1820s to early 1830s in the United States, did the despair crystallize to the point where the general body of antislavery people was ready to concede defeat and consequently to consider reorganization along more militant lines, with new, energetic societies that would advocate a head-on, albeit nonviolent, assault.

None of the above-mentioned plans to alleviate slavery was new in the period after 1808. The revival of some of them was based on the assumption that British and American laws against the slave trade would be effective, and therefore ameliorative systems would be more feasible. It stood to reason, abolitionists

believed, that if the foreign supply was cut off, slaveholders would be eager to take better care of those slaves they had. Lack of large supplies of new slaves should also militate against the extension of the plantation system into new territories and states. On the other hand, to some people the abolition acts of 1807 seemed to obviate any necessity for registry because it was assumed that the end of importation would automatically result in an improvement of conditions for those slaves already held. It was only when the expected improvement did not materialize that old registry plans were presented for reconsideration.[1]

The registry movement was revived first in England. As early as 1792 Edmund Burke had formulated one such plan when discussions began in Parliament on how to end the slave trade. The main feature of his proposal had called for the licensing of all ships and traders. It also included a prohibition against selling slaves away from the estates and a system of "protectors," appointed by the state, to watch over the welfare of the slaves to see that they were accorded certain rights such as religious instruction and marriage and to prevent abuses in punishment.[2] It was not until the end of 1810 that Wilberforce, grieved that the West Indian planters seemed to take no initiative in proceeding with improvements in the system, turned his attention to the problem. In a reflective mood as the old year was passing, he drew up a list of "Subjects for Action and Deliberation for Abolitionists." He thought they should (1) take measures to prevent the sale of contraband slaves; (2) concert plans to place crown estates and all West Indian slaves under humane management; (3) look into the matter of Negro apprentices; and (4) make sure that the customs agent now going to the West Indies was instructed to assist rather than "unfairly prejudice" the cause of abolition. Wilberforce proposed to Macaulay that to launch the campaign, they should "fire a pamphlet" at the West Indians. Collins's work on the management of the Negro, *The Professional Planter,* published in 1804, could be circulated. James Stephen

1. James Stephen, *A Defense of the Bill for the Registration of Slaves . . . in Letters to William Wilberforce Esq. M.P., Letter the First* (London: J. Butterworth & Son, 1816); *Parliamentary Debates,* n.s., VIII, 624–630.

2. Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition,* 16.

got busy drawing up measures for improvements in the crown colony of Trinidad that might serve as a model for the rest.[3]

Two cases in 1810 and 1811 involving brutal treatment of slaves underscored the need for immediate action. In January, 1810, Edward Huggins, a slave owner in Nevis, ordered twenty slaves to be publicly whipped because they refused to work at night carrying fertilizer into the fields. Ten men were given from 47 to 365 lashes and ten women between 49 and 291 lashes. The punishment was so brutally administered that several were disabled and one woman died. Although Huggins was brought to trial for excessive flogging, he was acquitted by a grand jury. The following year, after repeated reports of inhumane punishments and murder of slaves, Arthur Hodges of Tortola was tried, found guilty, and executed. But the public sentiment of his white fellow islanders against the verdict was so pronounced that martial law had to be proclaimed to keep the peace. The publicity given to these cases in England aroused feelings far more than any parliamentary proposals could possibly do, and it strengthened the hands of those M.P.s initiating reform bills.[4]

With such support behind them, early in 1812 James Stephen, Samuel Romilly, Henry Brougham, and Wilberforce prevailed upon Prime Minister Spencer Perceval to make the registry system experiment in Trinidad, and in March of that year the necessary order in council was issued.[5] Action in regard to the colonies with their own legislatures was more difficult, of course, because they could and did stand on the constitutional issue, and such abolitionists as Lord Grenville admonished that caution must prevail rather than the use of force until enough time had elapsed to evaluate the Trinidad experiment. By the spring of 1814 even Wilberforce advocated postponement on the grounds that pushing registration would be bad strategy at a time when the abolitionists wanted to maintain all the government support they could mus-

3. Wilberforce, *Life*, III, 481–485.

4. Charles H. Wesley, "The Neglected Period of Emancipation in Great Britain, 1807–1823," *Journal of Negro History*, XVII (Apr., 1932), 156–179. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 399–402, gives greater detail about the brutal murders committed by Hodges.

5. Wilberforce, *Life*, IV, 3–4; Romilly, *Memoirs*, III, 1; *British and Foreign State Papers*, III, 975–1007.

ter for an international agreement on the slave trade. But by the summer of 1815, after the great powers, meeting in Vienna, had issued their declaration condemning the slave trade, he was ready to turn back to the registry system.[6]

At the insistence of the African Institution, Wilberforce introduced his bill in June and was defeated. Planters in Parliament were strongly opposed, and there were protests from the legislatures of Barbardos, Jamaica, Tobago, St. Vincent, Dominica, Antigua, and Nevis. Liverpool, Bathurst, and Vansittart, three key government officials, insisted they could not support the bill for want of actual proof of smuggling slaves into the colonies. As a personal protest against Parliament, James Stephen then resigned his seat to devote his time to producing pamphlets that would convince the government there was sufficient evidence of slave smuggling to make the registry system inoperative. The planters, led by Joseph Marryat, Gilbert Mathison, and George Hibbert, opened the new session in 1816 with a barrage of counter evidence, and the year 1816 became one of all-out pamphlet warfare.[7]

Emotions ran high, especially after the outbreak of an insurrection in Barbados at Easter time that the planters and colonial legislatures blamed on the agitation over registration. False hopes had been raised among the slaves, they charged, by the rumor that registration meant emancipation. Wholesale burning and sacking of plantations resulted in martial law for three months while the rebellion was ruthlessly crushed.[8] The natural result of this situa-

6. Wilberforce, *Life,* IV, 19–20, 75–76, 176–177.

7. See, for example, *Arguments in Support of the Proposed Bill for the Registration of Slaves in the West Indian Colonies* . . . (London, 1817); *Antidote to "West Indian Sketches" Drawn from Authentic Sources* . . . (London: Whitmore and Fenn, 1817); Joseph Marryat, *An Examination of the Report of the Berbice Commissioners, and an Answer to the Letters of James Stephen, Esq. Respecting the Crown Estates in the West Indies* . . . (London: J. M. Richardson, 1817); also an earlier publication, *Reasons for Establishing a Registry of Slaves in the British Colonies: Being a Report of a Committee of the African Institution* (London: Ellerton and Henderson, 1815). It is Romilly in his *Memoirs,* III, 178, who says that the African Institution met at the home of the duke of Gloucester on June 3, 1815, and decided that registry could no longer be delayed. Wilberforce then agreed to introduce the bill.

8. Wilberforce, *Life,* IV, 243–244, 249, 260, 282; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 389–398. Ragatz says Stephen resigned his seat in Parliament after the

tion was that the government retreated. Instead of imposing registration, they recommended that the individual colonial legislatures should set up their own systems. Eventually all but Jamaica agreed, but since she was a major colony, the exception was important. Not until 1819 was the system centralized by an act of Parliament that provided for a registrar in London beginning in 1820. The same act invalidated any sale or mortgage of a slave not registered.[9]

American abolitionists were aware of and influenced by the British experiments but saw their best chance to accomplish a similar end by working to amend the existing Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 so that it would also provide some regulation of the internal slave trade. A petition of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society in 1818 was sent to Congress with that request.[10] What the petitioners wanted, of course, was more protection for slaves and free blacks, but the bill that emerged was far from satisfactory. It proposed to provide a registry system for all the slaves taken from one state or territory to another to be sold. Each must be registered with the county court of last residence. Anyone evading the law (and this presumably would apply in the case of an attempt to take a free Negro or an illegally imported Negro across a state line) would forfeit the slave and pay a fine of $1,000. Half of the sum was to go to the person bringing the prosecution and half to the U.S. government.[11] On the surface it appeared to afford some protection against the kidnapping of free blacks, and it was evidently an attempt to satisfy the numerous petitions submitted in 1817 asking for some regulation of the internal slave trade. But the main objection of those holding the antislavery point of view (John Sergeant of Pennsylvania, Charles Rich of Vermont, Benjamin Adams of Massachusetts, and Arthur Livermore of New Hampshire in the House and Jonathan Roberts of Pennsylvania,

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Barbados insurrection, but Wilberforce reports the action in his diary entry for Mar. 15, 1815, a year earlier.

9. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 398–399; Wilberforce, *Life,* IV, 378; Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition,* 26–27.

10. *Annals of Congress,* 15 Cong., 1 sess., 829.

11. *Ibid.,* 225. For progress and debates in both House and Senate, see pp. 161–162, 225, 231–239, 242–255, 837–840.

James Burrill of Rhode Island, and David Morrill of New Hampshire in the Senate) was that it did not guarantee to the Negro the writ of habeas corpus. Here, where a man's liberty was at stake, there was not even so much protection as was required in most ordinary civil suits. In addition, the only "description" that had to be furnished in reclaiming a fugitive was name, age, and sex, really no identification at all.

Senator David Morrill's argument on constitutionality is significant because it was the same as that later raised in the *Prigg* v. *Pennsylvania* decision of 1842, which became the basis for the "personal liberty laws" of the northern states. He acknowledged that the Constitution recognized the legal existence of slavery and therefore the constitutionality of a federal fugitive-slave law. But, he insisted, the act under consideration called upon state officers to perform a judicial act authorized by federal law, and this was clearly unconstitutional. Federal laws could not claim the services of state officers.

The main speaker for the proslavery side was William Smith of Georgia in the Senate, whose arguments for the bill went far beyond the issue of regulating the internal slave trade or of reclaiming fugitives, because he was well aware that in reality, with every such bill that came up, slavery itself was at stake. Once the door was opened for regulation by the federal government, there was no telling how far that power would be extended. His speech amply demonstrates, as did those against the Quaker petitions of the 1790s, that the southern "positive good" defense was well formulated before the 1830s and that even then it was deemed necessary to discredit the opponents of slavery by making them appear to be fanatics, exaggerators, and enemies of the social order. Just as in Parliament the planting interests denied the charge of slave smuggling, Smith denied Burrill's and Roberts's accusations that the kidnapping of free colored persons went on and took great umbrage at their labeling southerners "kidnappers, man stealers and soul drivers." "And has it come to this," he asked, "that we must wait for the permission of the abolition societies before a law can be offered to secure the recovery of just rights [i.e., property rights]?" This speech seems to reflect that the abolition societies of the period, at least in the minds of southerners, were not

considered so weak and ineffectual as they have been pictured. If they had even a few southern politicians "running scared," their impact must have been felt.

Smith mocked the benevolence of New Englanders who had made good profits from the slave trade and then made their states free only when commercial capital paid a larger return on investment than slave capital. Northern bank stocks were currently paying 30 percent while planters got a 10 percent return on their money. But didn't the benevolent New Englanders know that those same banks were squeezing their profits out of the poor? The U.S. commissioners at Ghent, he continued, had no instructions to enter into a stipulation on the slave trade, but since they were "friendly to banks and opposed to slavery," they seized the chance presented by England. English motives were as disgraceful as those of the northern states: purely commercial. And England, too, thought only of profit while her "free" poor died in the streets and were not to be compared to the "comfortable" slaves of the South. He was utterly disdainful of such British statesmen as Pitt, who, according to him, had turned humane only after Britain's own colonies were well stocked with slaves.

No scheme faintly smacking of antislavery motives escaped Smith's attack. The colonization society was to him an agency of cruelty to slaves. It would tear them away from their native land, only to reduce them to the "miserable barbarity of their ancestors" (exactly what the abolitionists later said in their attacks). As for the abolition societies, he knew they were definitely planning for general emancipation. Although their petitions were clothed in other words, they fooled no one. "If they had applied directly for emancipation they could not speak plainer." He lashed out at antislavery pamphlets, which, he insisted, were collections of extraordinary cases on the high seas or in the West Indies, with the addition of excerpts from the writings of British travelers, who had to insert atrocity stories so their books would sell, or from speeches in the British Parliament "calculated to inflame without being able to instruct, and suited more to promote a particular policy than to promote the rights of humanity." It is interesting to note that while American charges against the British in the colonial period had always been that they were proslavery and re-

sponsible for perpetuating the institution in the colonies, by this time "British interference" was always equated with the antislavery position. Even before 1820 the proslavery forces were well aware of the strength of that influence.

An effort by the antislavery men in the Senate to postpone action on this inadequate fugitive-slave bill failed, but the bill's opponents in the House succeeded in tabling it.[12] In view of the vehement opposition of Georgia's Senator William Smith to any "interference" by the federal government in the area of slavery, it is most surprising to recall that shortly thereafter, in 1820, Georgia Representative John A. Cuthbert advocated a register of all slaves as a means of detecting illegal importations. John Randolph of Virginia then led the opposition on the grounds of giving dangerous power to the federal government.[13] While these attempts at registry did not succeed, one should note that registry was a part of the gradual emancipation procedures operating in several of the northern states, including New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.

With the end of the War of 1812 and the Napoleonic upheaval, British travelers and emigrants to America once again began to publish their accounts and observations, many of which included information on slavery ranging all the way from factual observations and sympathy with the white masters to impassioned indictments of the brutality of the institution. As in the earlier fight against the slave trade, such publications were of immense significance in stirring public opinion to the point where it could more easily be mobilized for concerted support of the emancipation cause and, on the reverse side of the coin, to a more vocal defense of the system. Some abolitionists were optimistic enough to believe that if foreigners pointed the finger of shame at the institution of slavery, the southern states would try to eliminate the worst of its brutalities, if not abolish it entirely. More of them placed their hope in the fact that immigrants in the new western territories would reject the institution out of conviction that it was unprofitable economically as well as dangerous socially. Thus many of the pamphlets and books were printed and circulated

12. *Ibid.*, 258–259, 1339, 1393.
13. *Ibid.*, 16 Cong., 1 sess., 925–926.

with the aim of educating public opinion, especially as it would influence potential settlers.

In 1819 William Amplett, a British settler in Ohio, published the *Emigrants' Directory,* which emphasized that slavery handicapped rapid development of land and resources, using Kentucky as his example.[14] A book by John Bristed, *America and Her Resources,* was generally a defense of the United States against attacks made through misunderstanding. His theme was the tremendous promise of the new nation and the inevitability of her greatness—but, he added, she was held back by the absolute evil of slavery, as detrimental to the white race as it was to the black. He favored colonization as a solution that alone could free the country of the pestilence and curse of its racial problem.[15]

Adam Hodgson, who went from Britain to the United States on a trade voyage at the end of 1819 and stayed for six months, found his first exposure to slavery a sickening experience, and his reaction was one of guilt for his own country as well as for the United States because the British had introduced the system. Though he found some of the domestic slaves to be surprisingly cheerful, he was appalled by evidence of breeding slaves for the market and by the custom of shooting down those who attempted to escape. Hodgson, like Bristed, was interested in colonization as a possible solution, and he visited Bushrod Washington at Mount Vernon to consult him on the subject.[16] Hodgson's *Letters from North America* received the endorsement of the American Convention of 1823.[17]

That same year Hodgson also published his letter to Jean Baptiste Say, the French economist, on the subject of free versus slave labor. Say had denounced slavery as unjust while conceding that it might be profitable. In rebuttal Hodgson quoted Adam Smith, Hume, and a Russian political economist named Storch who had

14. Adams, *The Neglected Period,* 32–33.

15. John Bristed, *America and Her Resources; or A View of the Agricultural, Commercial, Manufacturing, Financial, Political, Literary, Moral and Religious Capacity and Character of the American People* (London: Henry Colburn, 1818).

16. Adam Hodgson, *Letters from North America, Written during a Tour in the United States and Canada,* 2 vols. (London: Hurst, Robinson & Co., 1824).

17. *Minutes of the Eighteenth Session of the American Convention* (Philadelphia, 1824).

studied the situation of forced labor in Poland. Benjamin Franklin had once said that American slave labor would always be more expensive than British free labor, and Hodgson stood ready to add corroborating statistics to supplement his own observations in the United States and the testimony of "various gentlemen" in the southern states and the West Indies.[18] Hodgson's presentation clinched the argument for most abolitionists. In England it became an important campaign document in the parliamentary fight against the West Indian planting interests, and in America it was republished by the New York Manumission Society to help in the attempt to keep slavery out of the western territories.

An English immigrant who made a very definite contribution to the antislavery cause in the West was Morris Birkbeck, who arrived in the United States in the spring of 1817. One of the first sights to greet him in Virginia was a street auction at which two female slaves with their children were sold. He was revolted at the freedom with which they were handled and examined, as if they were cattle. "And it is this," he lamented in his diary, "to be a member of such a society that I have quitted England!" His horror over slavery determined his decision to settle in Illinois, where the institution was banned under the Northwest Ordinance, "for, if political liberty be so precious, that to obtain it, I can forgo the well-earned comforts of an English home, it must not be to degrade myself and corrupt my children by the practice of slave keeping."[19] Birkbeck pondered deeply the position of the slaves and the charge that English laboring classes were no better off. There were very basic distinctions, he concluded: (1) in England personal fear was not the stimulus for work; (2) peasants were punished under the law for crimes, but slaves were punished at the discretion, or whim, of the overseer; (3) a peasant laborer

18. Hodgson, *A Letter to M. Jean-Baptiste Say, on the Comparative Expense of Free and Slave Labour.*

19. Morris Birkbeck, *Notes on a Journey in America, from the Coast of Virginia to the Territory of Illinois,* 2nd ed. (London: Severn & Co., 1818), 11, 25. In England Birkbeck had been introduced by John Quincy Adams to Edward Coles, later to become governor of Illinois and significant in the fight to keep Illinois free. See Merton L. Dillon, "The Antislavery Movement in Illinois, 1809–1844" (Unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, University of Michigan, 1952), 67.

could testify in court, while no such possibility for self-defense was provided the slave.[20]

Birkbeck's *Notes on a Journey in America* came out in several editions, and it was not long before he found himself in a position that required him to translate his beliefs into definite political action, for in 1822 a movement began in Illinois to adopt a constitutional change that would legalize slavery. His leadership and that of his fellow emigrants from England, Richard and George Flower, held the votes of the English settlers at Albion and at Wanborough in Edwards County for the antislavery side in the election of 1824. There is no knowing how many votes outside these settlements he may have influenced by his speeches and writings.

An oration Birkbeck delivered at Wanborough on the Fourth of July, 1822, was typical of his moderate, but uncompromising, approach. It began with the usual patriotic verbiage and was couched in terms designed to placate the local citizenry; but at the very end Birkbeck declared that the Declaration of Independence applied to the "unfortunate Africans" as well as to white Americans. The Founding Fathers were to be praised for doing so much to break the fetters of slavery, but it was up to their successors to further the work they had so nobly begun.[21] A series of his letters were published in the *Illinois Gazette* at Shawneetown under the pseudonym "Jonathan Freeman," but it was not difficult to guess their authorship. The proslavery forces in the state denounced him as a "foreign emissary," an "exile," a Quaker, and an infidel, hoping to discredit him, but in the vote of 1824 the antislavery forces prevailed by a narrow margin. Political retaliation on the part of his enemies later prevented his confirmation as secretary of state under Governor Edward Coles, and for years Illinois led a precarious existence, with considerable doubt about whether or not she would remain a free state.[22] Although

20. Birkbeck, *Notes*, 25.

21. *Niles Weekly Register*, XXIII, 73–75.

22. Elihu B. Washburne, *Sketch of Edward Coles, Second Governor of Illinois, and of the Slavery Struggle of 1823–4* (Chicago: Jansen, McClurg & Co., 1882), 188–189, 195–196; Dillon, "Antislavery Movement in Illinois," 90–92.

agitation to legalize slavery did not succeed outright, a loophole was found in the indenture system. Under it, for all practical purposes, slavery did exist in Illinois.

Birkbeck's efforts and the fight to keep Illinois a free state were followed with much interest in England. A pamphlet written by Roberts Vaux, *An Impartial Appeal to the Reason, Justice, and Patriotism of the People of Illinois on the Injurious Effects of Slave Labour,* which had been first published in Philadelphia, was immediately reprinted in London in 1824, and Birkbeck's *Notes* were published in both England and Ireland.[23] Commenting on Birkbeck's writing in a review for the *Christian Observer,* Zachary Macaulay drew from it a lesson: while it was obvious that every American must bend his energies to "erase the foul stain of slavery," it was no less the duty of every Englishman.[24] In the same article Macaulay reviewed the accounts of two British travelers, Lieutenant Francis Hall and Henry B. Fearon, which expressed similar shock at the conditions of American slaves, their "cowering humility," and lack of adequate legal protection. While it was true, Macaulay admitted, that Americans were in a better position to know and therefore to understand the problems of their black population, there was a danger that Americans' feelings tended to become blunted by overfamiliarity with the evils they saw. Therefore, the British had an advantage in being less directly involved and must not shirk the responsibility to speak out. In 1823 the London committee appointed a Home Correspondence Committee to report on publications considered necessary for the United States.[25]

23. It was published in 1824 by Ellerton and Henderson, but it appears in vol. II of "Tracts on the Slave Trade" in the University of London collection with the date 1823. The Home Correspondence Committee of the London society authorized the reprinting of 5,000 copies in 1824, but this may have been the edition put out by Ellerton and Henderson rather than an additional one. See *Account of the Receipts and Disbursements of the Anti-Slavery Society, for the Years 1823, 1824, 1825 and 1826: with a List of Subscribers* (n.p., n.d.).

24. [Zachary Macaulay], *Review of Such Parts of Lieutenant Fr. Hall's 'Travels in Canada and the United States' and of Mr. Fearon's 'Sketches of America' as Have Respect to the Condition of the Negro Population,* extracted from the *Christian Observer,* Feb., 1819. This is vol. XXVI of "Tracts on Slavery" in Friends House Library.

25. Committee on Slavery, Minute Books, entries for Dec. 16, 1823, Feb. 17, 1824, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

Exposures of American slavery inevitably forced British readers to examine West Indian slavery with more attention. Books attacking the evils of the West Indian system, especially those stressing its economic unprofitability, stimulated comparisons with the plantation system of the southern United States and the danger of its spread into the West. Among them was one edited by Zachary Macaulay but probably written by Thomas Cooper: *Negro Slavery; or, A View of Some of the More Prominent Features of That State of Society, as It Exists in the United States of America and in the Colonies of the West Indies, Especially in Jamaica.*[26] Such books as this, of course, tended to reinforce the belief in a "conspiracy" of New and Old Englanders to get rid of the institution in both America and the British West Indian colonies. Britishers justified their concern and "interference" on the grounds that the mother country shared in the guilt of establishing and perpetuating slavery everywhere in her colonies, just as northerners claimed the right to object to slavery in the South because it was a national rather than a sectional sin.

One British visitor, a Mrs. Robson from Liverpool, obtained permission to talk with President John Quincy Adams at his home in Quincy, Massachusetts, in 1826. She exhorted him on the "weight of guilt" hanging over both countries and pleaded with him to use his power in behalf of the oppressed. According to her report, he clasped her hand in parting as the tears coursed down his cheeks, and he promised to act "as the subject required and his conscience dictated"—a response she obviously did not interpret as vague and evasive.[27] Isaac Candler, who wrote *A Summary View of America* after traveling in the country, noted that while most southerners would not defend slavery in the abstract, they defended it under existing circumstances by placing the blame for its establishment on England.[28]

26. [Thomas Cooper], *Negro Slavery; or, A View of Some of the More Prominent Features of That State of Society, as It Exists in the United States of America and in the Colonies of the West Indies, Especially in Jamaica* (London, 1824). The same pamphlet was published in London in 1823 without Cooper's name, as put out by the Association of Liverpool.

27. J. Robson to J. S. Robson, Oct. 30, 1826, Mss Portfolio 38.65, Friends House Library.

28. [Isaac Candler], *A Summary View of America* (London: T. Cadell, 1824).

British Quakers became directly involved in American antislavery projects when they donated between £2,000 and £3,000 to aid free Negroes in North Carolina and Ohio. Some emigrated to Liberia, and many from Ohio moved to Canada after Ohio, in 1829, began to enforce an old law requiring free blacks to give "security" for their maintenance and behavior while residing in the state. The London Meeting for Sufferings sent a memorial on the subject to the Ohio legislature and another to Sir George Murray, Secretary of State for the Colonies, asking him to aid refugees settling in Canada.[29] Thomas Fowell Buxton, soon to succeed Wilberforce as the abolitionist leader in Parliament, went personally to consult with Murray on the question. The Society of Friends in England continued to interest itself in and encourage programs of education and protection for the free blacks, petitions against the slave trade and slavery, and efforts to enforce existing laws against illegal importations.[30]

The American Convention, which was dominated by Quakers and which quietly but persistently persevered in its antislavery endeavors, kept itself, and abolitionists generally, in touch with concurrent developments in Great Britain, especially the efforts being made to obtain the "united determination" of the Concert of Europe against the slave trade. Up to 1823 their correspondence was carried on with the African Institution as well as with the London yearly meetings. After that date they corresponded with the new London antislavery society with the formal name of the Society for Mitigating and Gradually Abolishing the State of Slavery throughout the British Dominions—a title so unwieldy that "London Abolition Society" or "London Anti-Slavery Committee" was usually substituted. At the American Convention of

29. "Subscription raised, under the recommendation of the Yearly Meeting of 1825, to aid in promoting the abolition of the Slave Trade and Slavery," Ms vol. CXVII, Friends House Library; "Minutes of a Standing Committee of the Meeting for Sufferings Appointed to aid in promoting the total abolition of the Slave-Trade," Minute Book 1, Ms vol. CXV, Friends House Library; Indiana Yearly Meeting to London Yearly Meeting, Oct. 5–12, 1829, Epistles Received, VII, Friends House Library.

30. Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library; epistle of London Yearly Meeting, 1858, Mss & Printed Documents, no. 57, Friends House Library.

1823 careful attention was paid to the formation of this new society, its officers, committees, and patrons. A review of slavery in the British colonies that had been prepared by the new society was presented by Roberts Vaux, and it was then appended as a document to the annual report of the American Convention so that it could be more widely circulated and read. The review contained a biting indictment of West Indian slavery, equally applicable to American slavery. Subjoined was a list of other British publications recommended to antislavery readers.[31]

Except for the fact that the word "conspiracy" implies secret plotting, southerners were very correct in their assessment of the common goal of emancipation held by English and American abolitionists. More and more the antislavery people in both countries looked on the fight against slavery as one war with battles being fought in two major arenas, and their pronouncements to that effect were open and frequent. We have already noted the fears expressed by southern congressmen in the debates over cooperating with Great Britain to enforce the slave-trade laws, and how these charges of "conspiracy" carried over into the debates on the admission of Missouri. In 1818, the year the Missouri contest began, southern fears were heightened when Representative Arthur Livermore of New Hampshire introduced a resolution calling for an amendment to the Constitution that would prohibit slavery in any state hereafter added to the Union. Although voted down, it set the stage for the fight over Missouri.[32] Then, in the second session, an American Convention petition asked for gradual emancipation in the District of Columbia, and the Senate passed a resolution that invited inquiry into preventing the transportation of slaves into states that prohibited slavery.[33] To the abolitionists all of these measures represented a moderate policy of containment, but southerners knew full well that containment would be but one plateau in the climb toward total emancipation.

When antislavery men like James Tallmadge of New York em-

31. *Minutes of the Proceedings of the Fourteenth American Convention* (Philadelphia: W. Brown, 1816); *Minutes of the Proceedings of a Special Meeting of the Fifteenth American Convention* (Philadelphia: Hall and Atkinson, 1818); *Minutes of the Eighteenth Session of the American Convention.*

32. See Chapter V.

33. See Chapter V.

phasized how slavery disgraced America in British eyes, they inevitably stirred up hornets' nests. In a speech on February 16, 1819, during the Missouri debates, Tallmadge cited a letter he had received, postmarked in South Carolina but signed "a native of England," which demanded that when Great Britain was blamed for introducing slavery in the colonies, it must now be added that she had atoned for her original sin by establishing an ameliorative system in her present colonies (the registry system) that improved the slaves' conditions and provided for their safety. America, instead of atoning, had compounded her sin by disregarding the conditions of slaves and even allowing them to be killed without exacting punishment for murder.[34] John Quincy Adams reported that when Rufus King gave his great speech against slavery in Missouri, southern senators bit their lips and clenched their fists as they listened.[35]

Charles Cotesworth Pinckney of South Carolina answered that he had observed in his travels that the lot of the lower classes in England was "far inferior" to that of American slaves, and the same was true of free Negroes in New York and Pennsylvania.[36] Representative James Johnson of Virginia found it "singular" that the "passion of humanity" should seize upon Old England and New England simultaneously and be enlisted only in favor of black slaves, while they seemed not to be alarmed by the conditions of white slaves in Europe or slaves of other colors in the Indies. He noted the marked hostility of English travelers to the western and southern states and the "exclamations and denunciations" against American slavery that filled the pages of "every public journal in Great Britain," despite her own half-fed and badly clothed subjects in Scotland and her "enslaved subjects" in Ireland. No, he concluded, it would never do to look to Old England as an example.[37]

While southerners were afraid of what abolitionist coalitions might do in the future if allowed to develop, antislavery people were equally perturbed about the possibilities if the institution

34. *Annals of Congress,* 15 Cong., 2 sess., 1211.
35. Arbena, "Politics or Principle? Rufus King and the Opposition to Slavery."
36. *Annals of Congress,* 16 Cong., 1 sess., II, 1324.
37. *Ibid.,* 1370–71.

of slavery should get a toehold west of the Mississippi. It seems apparent that fears over the spread of slavery were largely responsible for the establishment of several newspapers devoted almost exclusively to the cause of emancipation. Charles Osborn's *Philanthropist* began in Mt. Pleasant, Ohio, in the summer of 1817, Elihu Embree's *Manumission Intelligencer* started at Jonesboro, Tennessee, in 1819 (he expanded it into the *Emancipator* in 1820), Benjamin Lundy's *Genius of Universal Emancipation* began in Ohio in 1821, and John Finley Crowe's *Abolition Intelligencer* began in 1822 at Shelbyville, Kentucky. All were frontier papers, close to the area with which the debates were directly concerned. Lundy even went to Missouri in 1818 under the conviction that he must personally try to do something to save the state.[38] Failure to keep slavery out of Missouri in 1820, and near failure in Illinois four years later, brought home to antislavery men the realization that slavery was not a moribund institution about to fall of its own weight.

These editors were aware of the importance of joining forces with their English antislavery brethren, and since three of them were Quakers, there was a long tradition of cooperation with which they were familiar. Osborn made a trip to England in 1819 (and another in 1832) during which he participated in yearly meetings.[39] Embree began his first issue of the *Emancipator* with an installment of Thomas Clarkson's *History of the . . . Slave Trade* and continued to give space to British efforts against the slave trade, especially to colonization.[40] Lundy had a distributing agent in London for his *Genius*, James Cropper, who steadily supplied him with material by British abolitionists and who arranged with the secretary of the London society, Thomas Pringle, to send Lundy their complete publications. In addition, Lundy printed pertinent portions of the parliamentary proceedings dealing with emancipation.[41] When John Randolph of Virginia visited

38. Dillon, *Lundy*, 34–40.

39. George W. Julian, *The Rank of Charles Osborn as an Anti-Slavery Pioneer, Indiana Historical Society Publications*, II, no. 6 (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1891), 235.

40. *The Emancipator (Complete), Published by Elihu Embree, Jonesborough Tennessee, 1820* (Nashville: B. H. Murphy, 1932).

41. Committee on Slavery, Minute Books, entry for Aug. 21, 1827, Rhodes

England in 1822 and addressed a meeting of the African Institution, Lundy wrote a sarcastic account of his eloquence against the slave trade that made the hall ring with applause, though Randolph was actually "a violent advocate of slavery." [42]

While the spread of the cotton kingdom after 1800 gave new life to the slave-labor system in the United States, it facilitated the downfall of slavery in the British empire because West Indian growers could not compete.[43] Their problem of soil exhaustion was greater, they were more handicapped in obtaining enough labor since England was enforcing the slave-trade prohibition, and under the registry system there was some, if not complete, restriction in the internal (i.e., intercolonial) slave trade. The combined competition of American cotton and East Indian sugar proved to be disastrous. Cuba and Brazil offered competition in coffee as well as in sugar. The weakening of the West Indian planters' economic power, and the ensuing diminution of their political power, certainly help to account for the success of the renewed abolitionist attack on slavery in the 1823–1833 period. By that time the economic decline was more apparent than it had been in 1807.

One of the British abolitionists who was the most aware of the economies of slavery was James Cropper, a trader in East Indian sugar. Charges that his own investments provided the motivation for his opposition to West Indian sugar have been dismissed by most historians as unwarranted, but they were naturally dismaying to Cropper himself.[44] However, when he came out with a pro-

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House Antislavery Papers, E 2/1; David B. Davis, "James Cropper and the British Anti-Slavery Movement, 1821–1823," *Journal of Negro History,* XLV (Jan., 1960), 241–258; Dillon, *Lundy,* 84; *Genius of Universal Emancipation,* Nov., 1821, June, Oct., Dec., 1822, for reprints of British abolition news.

42. *Genius of Universal Emancipation,* July, Aug., 1822.

43. See Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 370, on this point.

44. *Ibid.,* 435; David B. Davis, "James Cropper and the British Anti-Slavery Movement, 1821–1823" and "James Cropper and the British Anti-Slavery Movement, 1823–1833," *Journal of Negro History,* XLVI (Jan., 1961), 154–173. In a letter to Wilberforce of May 3, 1821, Cropper says that he entered the East Indian trade because he believed cultivation by free labor would prove cheaper than by slave labor, and therefore East India would prevail in the long-run competition. See James Cropper, *Letters Addressed to William Wilberforce, M.P. Recommending the Encouragement of the Cultivation of Sugar in Our Dominions*

posal to admit at a uniform rate the sugar of all countries that abolished slavery, he took much of the wind out of the sails of those who had accused him of being interested only in his own profits.[45] To begin with, he was convinced of the comparative mildness of American slavery as compared with West Indian, believing that the use of slave labor in the United States would be a temporary thing and would disappear as free population increased on the frontier. Consequently he, along with American abolitionists, was completely dismayed to see its extension provided for in the Missouri Compromise.

In 1822 Cropper sent queries to six Americans, among them a Baltimore Quaker, Evan Thomas, asking for detailed information on the slaves: their conditions of work, whether or not they received religious instruction, separation of families, and their rate of increase. There were also questions on plantation ownership and mortgages, the rate at which they changed hands, and productivity.[46] Similar queries were made with regard to Cuba. Since Cropper was a friend of Adam Hodgson, he likely gleaned a good deal of information from him as well. The information amassed was then incorporated into a pamphlet, *The Support of Slavery Investigated*, published in London in 1824. Cropper was so convinced of the unprofitability of slave labor (accepting Hodgson's letter to Say as irrefutable) that it was hard for him to understand why Illinois farmers wanted to introduce it. The only answer seemed to be that the cheapness and fertility of new land temporarily overcame the disadvantages of slave labor and made it seem profitable. He also recognized that free labor was at a premium on any frontier.[47] Cropper's debate with John Gladstone

in the East Indies, as the Natural and Certain Means of Effecting the Total and General Abolition of the Slave-Trade (Liverpool: James Smith, 1822).

45. William L. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship in the British West Indies* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1937), 87.

46. James Cropper to Zachary Macaulay, Aug. 12, 1822, Add. Mss 41267A, f. 108, British Museum; Cropper to Evan Thomas, Aug. 22, 1822, and Thomas to Cropper, [1822], Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library. The "Queries"—thirty-five of them—are contained in a leaflet put out by the London society that has no specific title and no date. It was printed by James Smith in Liverpool, Cropper's home.

47. James Cropper, *The Support of Slavery Investigated* (Liverpool: George Smith, 1824).

(the father of the subsequent prime minister) over free and slave labor was also published in 1824. It contained Cropper's answer to Gladstone's accusations about his vested interests, along with information on American and West Indian slavery.[48]

In 1824 Cropper led a deputation to present the case for East Indian sugar to Parliament. This issue was one in which humanitarians and East Indian vested interests could comfortably join forces, and both agreed on the immediate goal as the equalization of import duties on East and West Indian sugar to remove the preference given to the West Indies. Since Cropper and his followers were convinced that free labor was cheaper, fair competition would force the West Indies toward emancipation. Many of the pamphlets already noted publicized this approach. Cropper's *Support of Slavery Investigated* criticized the misuse of power that gave artificial stimulation to an economic system that should be allowed to die, and his *Letters . . . to Wilberforce* also emphasized the sugar issue. Macaulay contributed two essays refuting arguments advanced by the West Indian planters, and James Stephen added *England Enslaved by Her Own Slave Colonies,* in which he pointed out to British taxpayers how costly the West Indian colonies were because of import subsidies and the cost of military protection—the latter being more expensive than necessary because of the foolish prejudice against the use of black troops. He assured his readers that British money could be better invested.[49]

An anonymous pamphlet, *An Appeal, Not to the Government, but to the People of England, on the Subject of West Indian Slavery,* warned that if the government failed to act, the people

48. [James Cropper], *The Correspondence between John Gladstone, Esq., M.P., and James Cropper, Esq., on the Present State of Slavery in the British West Indies and in the United States of Americe . . .* (Liverpool, 1824).

49. [Zachary Macaulay], *East and West India Sugar, or, A Refutation of the Claims of the West India Colonists to a Protecting Duty on East India Sugar* (London: Lupton Relfe, 1823); [Macaulay], *A Letter to William W. Whitemore, Esq., M.P. Pointing Out Some of the Erroneous Statements Contained in a Pamphlet by Joseph Marryat, Esq. M.P. Entitled "A Reply to the Arguments Contained in Various Publications, Recommending an Equalization of the Duties on East and West India Sugars"* (London: Lupton Relfe, 1823); James Stephen, *England Enslaved by Her Own Slave Colonies: An Address to the Electors and People of the United Kingdom* (London: Hatchard & Son, 1826).

must, and in this case they held "commanding ground." The abstinence of one-tenth of the population from the use of West Indian sugar could annihilate slavery there.[50] The power they held was no longer an option; it was an obligation. Mrs. Elizabeth Heyrick used the same point in her pamphlet *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition,* and the anonymous *Enquiry Which of the Two Parties Is Best Entitled to Freedom?* called for this self-denial, which would bring a "bloodless triumph." The Female Anti-Slavery Society in Birmingham made a house-to-house canvass of the city to urge a boycott of slave-produced sugar.[51] Early in 1825 James Cropper held a big meeting in Liverpool to see what could be done about organizing a company for producing free-labor sugar. He was so persuasive that at the initial meeting shares up to £175,000 were sold.[52]

James Heywood established an East Indian sugar warehouse in London, and the Tropical Free-Labour Sugar Company was formed to experiment with plantations and the importation of sugar from Sierra Leone. Jesse Woodward of New Brunswick proposed to establish a sugar estate in Trinidad manned by free labor to prove the point of relative costs, and American Quakers rededicated themselves to the use of nonslave-produced sugar.[53] Resolutions against its use were introduced in the American conventions of 1825 and 1826, and after adoption they were incorporated into an *Address to the Abolition, Manumission, and Anti-Slavery Societies throughout the United States.* Free-produce societies were formed in both Delaware and Pennsylvania in 1826,

50. *An Appeal, Not to the Government, but to the People of England, on the Subject of West Indian Slavery* (London: Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, 1824).

51. [Elizabeth Heyrick], *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition; Or, An Inquiry into the Shortest, Safest, and Most Effectual Means of Getting Rid of West Indian Slavery* (London: J. Hatchard & Son, 1824); *An Enquiry Which of the Two Parties Is Best Entitled to Freedom?* (London: Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, 1824); *The Second Report of the Female Society for Birmingham, West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Their Respective Neighborhoods, for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, Established, 1825* (Birmingham: B. Hudson, n.d.). It seems possible that Mrs. Heyrick wrote the *Appeal* referred to in note 50 above.

52. Viscountess Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay by His Granddaughter* (London: Edward Arnold, 1900), 428.

53. Committee on Slavery, Minute Books, entry for Apr. 12, 1826, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 434–435.

Benjamin Lundy agitated for similar action in Maryland, and quite a bit of support came from the Ohio antislavery societies, especially the one in Salem. Several free-labor stores were opened in these areas, among them that of Benjamin Lundy in Baltimore. In 1829 the Female Association for Promoting the Manufacture and Use of Free Cotton was organized, and two years later the Colored Free Produce Society and the Colored Female Free Produce Society, all in Pennsylvania.[54]

Despite all of the bustle and protest against West Indian sugar, the select committee appointed by the British Parliament decided in favor of retaining the current system, and once again antislavery forces had to concede temporary defeat.[55] By the 1830s, to make the suggestion more palatable to the West Indians, Cropper was proposing that in return for giving up the sugar protection, they should be compensated to the extent of £2,500,000. Even partial victory did not come until 1836, when East Indian sugar duties were reduced by 25 percent.[56] Although the boycotting of cotton was to prove even more difficult from a practical standpoint, nonetheless the possibility of using such a weapon remained alive in some minds and was revived in the 1840s and 1850s.

Any fair analysis of the attempts at piecemeal reform in the first quarter of the nineteenth century is bound to produce a discouraging conclusion. The great optimistic faith born of the Enlightenment—that men were reasonable creatures and would move gradually along the route of reform—had been fanned into flame by the expression of revolutionary ideals of liberty and equality. Simultaneously the upsurge of evangelical religion emphasized that men were their brothers' keepers. Together these impulses had stimulated the antislavery movement. But when antislavery people experienced failure after failure in their attempts to achieve gradual abolition, their frustration was bound to surge out in more vehement demands for immediate action. By the end

54. Nuermberger, *Free Produce Movement*, 16–19.

55. *Second Report of the Committee of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions* (London: Ellerton and Henderson, 1825).

56. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 369.

of the 1820s a new generation was beginning to demand new approaches.

Indeed, when one reviews the failure of the numerous halfway measures, it seems almost inevitable that abolitionists should have determined to draw their ranks into tighter formation and to revamp their strategy. In Great Britain, as West Indian opposition to registration prevented any positive results in ameliorating conditions of slavery, it had been necessary for antislavery men to give closer attention to the details of the institution in the colonies. What they discovered was so appalling that they could envision no cure within the system; complete extinction was the only answer.[57] In the United States, under the federal system, there seemed little hope of making effective headway through political action against slavery in the states where it existed, and the attempt to contain it in the area east of the Mississippi River had failed. Polarization and the move to immediatism was to come first in Great Britain, and this influenced the same trend in the United States, which becomes apparent between 1824 and 1833.

57. My conclusion (and that of British abolitionists of the time), that piecemeal reform was ineffective in the West Indies, is contrary to that of Stanley Elkins in *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 197.

Polarization: 1823-1830

VIII

It was in 1823 that British abolitionists decided the time had come to throw down the gauntlet openly to the West Indian planting interests by announcing their intention to strike out for total emancipation. Zachary Macaulay, Wilberforce, James Stephen, T. F. Buxton, and Dr. Stephen Lushington agreed that to give the movement a fresh impetus, it would be well to supplant the old African Institution with a new organization.[1] At the same time, they did not want to alarm well-disposed people in and out of Parliament by sounding too radical, and they chose, therefore, a conservative name, the Society for Mitigating and Gradually Abolishing the State of Slavery throughout the British Dominions.

This decision to declare for total emancipation was not a sudden one, of course. As early as 1818 Wilberforce had begun to make such entries in his diary as the one for March 28 of that year: "The denunciations not only against those who are guilty of the positive acts of oppression, but against those who connive at its continuance, are so strong that I am truly uneasy at my having suffered so much time to pass away without having done anything for relaxing the yoke of the most degrading and bitter

1. Committee on Slavery, Minute Books, entry for Jan. 31, 1823, Rhodes House Anti-slavery Papers, E 2/1.

bondage that ever ground down the human species." [2] It was after the passage of the Registration Act, in about 1820, that Zachary Macaulay began to advance to the view that antislavery people must work for complete, but gradual, emancipation. George Stephen, the son of James, relates that the first discussions he remembered on the point dated from about 1822.[3] The religious orientation of the Saints made it natural that they should be concerned over religious instruction for the slaves and such ameliorative measures as legal recognition of slave marriages. Writing in 1822, Wilberforce said that as early as 1780 he had thought of "bringing forward" (in Parliament) the state of the slaves in the West Indies, and now, as he felt his career drawing to a close, he knew this must be his last crusade: ". . . whenever I have thought of going out of parliament, the idea of leaving this great subject untouched has given me *pangs* that have been very painful." [4]

Slave insurrections in both the United States and the West Indies helped to stimulate public opinion in the direction of action. While some people were still exploring the possibilities of amelioration and colonization, more and more opponents of slavery were coming to believe that only total emancipation would suffice.[5] The uprising in Barbados in 1816, the uncovering of the Denmark Vesey plot in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1822, the revolt in Demerara in 1823, the exposure of the Jamaican plot at the end of 1823, and reports of conspiracies in St. Lucia, Dominica, and Trinidad that did not materialize—all played their part in emphasizing the extent of the danger inherent in allowing slavery to continue.

We have noted the pamphlet warfare that erupted in England in 1816 over West Indian slavery. Travel accounts exposing the horrors of the slave system in the United States certainly contributed to the arousing of public sentiment in both Great Britain

2. Wilberforce, *Life*, IV, 376.

3. Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay*, 312; George Stephen, *Antislavery Recollections; in a Series of Letters, Addressed to Mrs. Beecher Stowe . . .* (London: Thomas Hatchard, 1854), 59.

4. Wilberforce, *Life*, V, 117–118.

5. The American Convention at its 1818 meeting declared that the objective was more than just amelioration; it was total abolition.

and America and, in turn, called forth defenses from slaveholders. One of the greatest storms of protest was raised by W. Faux, who visited the southern part of the United States in 1819 and 1820. Shortly after his arrival in South Carolina he witnessed the whipping of a slave, for stealing, which resulted in death. Within a short time in the same area he witnessed a second case of whipping to death, and in this instance the body was not buried but was left for the dogs to eat. Finding this more than his righteous indignation could stomach, Faux resolved to give publicity to the case and did so by writing to the *Charleston Courier.*

Despite the fact that his letter was published, a surprising thing in itself so soon after the exposure of the Denmark Vesey plot, Faux denounced the press as more enslaved there than under the most despotic government. He gladly said goodbye to the state after leaving behind antislavery pamphlets for the governor, the attorney general, a Charleston judge, and the editor of the *Courier.* In his travel account he stated that had he been blind, he should have been able to tell when he entered the slave states because one could smell the difference: "The moral air is putrid." He portrayed such barbarities as using dogs to chase fugitives as well as the miscegenation that resulted in most owners being related to their "black cattle." He also recounted how elegant southern ladies sometimes personally wielded the cowhide in punishing their servants.[6]

Mrs. Trollope's two-volume work, *Domestic Manners of the Americans,* received more publicity than most other travel books because of her associations in the literary world. While she acknowledged that the condition of domestic slaves was generally not too bad, the deplorable thing was that there was no recourse when conditions *were* bad. She noted the laws designed to keep slaves in ignorance, how they were discussed in their own presence as if they were not human beings with sensitivity, the

6. W. Faux, *Memorable Days in America: Being a Journal of a Tour to the United States, Principally Undertaken to Ascertain by Positive Evidence the Condition and Probable Prospects of British Emigrants . . .* (London: W. Simpkin & R. Marshall, 1823). Adams, *The Neglected Period,* 111, points out how remarkable it was that Faux's letter was published in Charleston so soon after the Vesey plot.

disgraeeful breeding of slaves in the upper South for sale in the markets of the deep South, and the ill effects on the manners and morals of the whites. While Mrs. Trollope was not one of those who believed that total emancipation was immediately possible, she was sure much eould be done toward amelioration of the harshness of the system. Sometimes her criticisms of the Amerieans was biting: "You will see them with one hand hoisting the eup of liberty, and with the other flogging their slaves." [7]

Numerous other travelers' accounts helped to swell the tide of criticism. Among them were John Lambert's *Travels* (London, 1816), J. Fineh's *Travels in the United States and Canada* (Edinburgh, 1822), Isaae Holmes's *An Account* (London, [1823]), William N. Blane's *An Excursion . . . 1822–1823* (London, 1824), John M. Dunean's *Travels through . . . the United States and Canada* (Glasgow, 1823), and Fanny Wright D'Arusemont's *View of Society and Manners* (New York, 1821).[8] The exposure of Amerieaη slavery naturally foeused more attention on West Indian slavery as well. Such old pamphlets as James Ramsay's from the revolutionary period and Wilberforce's on the slave trade renewed their circulation, along with sueh newer ones as George Pinkard's notes on the West Indies (1815), Watson's *Defense of the Missions in the West Indies* (1816), Adam Hodgson's *Letters from North America* (1823), and works by James Cropper and James Stephen. The series ealled *Negro Slavery,* which Zachary Maeaulay edited, eombined the attaeks on West Indian and Amerieaη slavery.

By 1823 Wilberforee was so failing in health and energy that he deeided the burden of parliamentary leadership for emancipation legislation must be earried by someone younger. The choice fell on T. F. Buxton, who had entered Parliament in 1818. Buxton was an Evangelical and a Saint who had married into the Gurney family. Before 1823 he had taken an aetive role working for the poor in East London, partieularly in the sphere of prison reform,

7. Mrs. [Franees] Trollope, *Domestic Manners of the Americans,* 2 vols., 4th ed. (London: Whittaker, Theateher & Co., 1832), 12. See also espeeially pp. 49–56.

8. For complete lists, see Jane L. Mesiek, *The English Traveller in America, 1785–1835* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1922).

a cause he shared with his sister-in-law, Elizabeth Fry. Both in appearance and personality Buxton seemed to epitomize strength. He was a big man, sturdy in build and health, endowed with abundant vitality and largeness of heart. No doubt his popularity was also enhanced by a modesty and tolerance that balanced his resolution. Among the younger men who were ready to play supporting roles were two second-generation abolitionists, George Stephen and Thomas Babington Macaulay. George Stephen's job in the Colonial Office gave him an advantageous position within the government.

As the name of the new antislavery society indicated, its aim was to combine the mitigation of slavery with plans for gradual emancipation. This would encompass the preparation of slaves for freedom. They should be allowed more and more of the rights of free men and be taught to work to advance their own interests rather than because of fear of the overseer's whip. What the new society had in mind as far as mitigation went, according to Zachary Macaulay, was not rashly to interfere with plantation discipline but to urge the adoption of measures affecting the character and conditions of the slaves: (1) remove fiscal obstructions to manumission; (2) oblige masters to manumit at an appraised price; (3) abolish compulsory Sunday labor and markets; (4) promote religious instruction; (5) legalize slave marriages; (6) accept evidence of slaves in court; (7) cause them to be treated as men, not chattel; and (8) secure them in possession of property.[9]

Although the Saints were opposed to giving West Indian planters what they considered unfair advantages in import duties in order to enable them to sustain production and profits from slave labor, they were, on the other hand, aware of the complexities of the economic situation and sympathetic with the plight of those caught in the vicious system of absentee ownership. But since absentee landlordism increased the cruelties in the operation of the slave system, one of the Saints' arguing points was the economic unprofitability of the present setup, and for this reason they fought for the equalization of duties on East and West

9. Zachary Macaulay to T. F. Buxton, Nov. 11, 1823, in Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay*, 393–395.

Indian sugar. This attitude also helps to explain the abolitionists' later acceptance of compensated emancipation.[10]

One of the first projects of the new British antislavery society was another campaign to organize public opinion to back up the parliamentary action to be initiated by Buxton. Despite ill health and failing eyesight, Wilberforce prepared what he called a "Manifesto" on the present state of the slaves, "calling on all good men . . . to concur with me in endeavoring to improve their condition, in order to fit them for the enjoyment of liberty." In a letter to an old friend, Lady Olivia Sparrow, he confessed that he felt himself "to be a criminal for having remained silent so long."[11] On March 18, 1823, he summoned his strength to launch the campaign in Parliament by introducing a petition from the Society of Friends. Just as his political colleagues felt that he deserved the honor of making the first move in Parliament, they wanted that move to honor the Quakers, who had made the first protest against the slave trade. The Society of Friends, therefore, had drawn up the petition at Zachary Macaulay's invitation.[12] Having accorded Wilberforce the honor of the first speech, T. F. Buxton gave notice that he would later present a motion on slavery.

On May 15 he did so. Meanwhile Wilberforce's manifesto had gone out to the country in April, and antislavery petitions from around the nation were being drawn up for presentation.[13] Buxton's resolution was couched in moderate language: "That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British constitution, and of the Christian religion; and that it ought to be abolished gradually throughout the British colonies, with as much expedition as may be found consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned." ". . . we mean nothing

10. Wilberforce, *Life*, V, 128–129, 353–354.

11. *Ibid.*, 163–165.

12. *Ibid.*, 170; Zachary Macaulay to Mrs. Macaulay, May 31, 1822, in Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay*, 379. Wilberforce's speech is in *Parliamentary Debates*, 2nd ser., VIII, 624–630.

13. *Report of the Committee of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions, Read at the General Meeting of the Society, Held on the 25th Day of June, 1824* . . . (London: Richard Taylor, 1824). Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 408, says that no less than 750 petitions were drawn up in 1823–1824.

rash, nothing rapid, nothing abrupt, nothing bearing any feature of violence," he assured the Commons.[14]

His speech contained two major proposals. The first was that the freeing of all children born to slaves would provide for a gradual extinction of the system. As successful precedent for this procedure, Buxton cited it as the method used in New York, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey and currently in operation in Ceylon. The second part of his speech included a series of ameliorative measures for those who remained slaves, which followed closely the ones Zachary Macaulay had outlined, designed to elevate the slave from the status of mere chattel to that of a human being. His speech and the following debates were published in pamphlet form to be circulated in the campaign for public support.[15]

George Canning responded for the government, declaring that the ministry would favor all reasonable and practical measures. Among those he would agree to would be the abolition of the flogging of female slaves, prohibitions against selling slaves separately from the land, and provision for religious instruction. He was also inclined to approve the acceptance of slave testimony in court. He did not, however, think that freeing all slave children at birth was feasible. The government's problem, he summed up, was to prepare the slaves to participate in civil rights by procedures that would insure the safety of the white population and security for their interests as well. Nothing was said at this time about compensated emancipation. Canning then introduced a set of general resolutions for amelioration to substitute for Buxton's. They comprised a statement of the government's good intentions rather than a commitment to specific enactments.[16]

Even the opposition by the spokesmen for the West Indian planting interests, led by Charles Ellis, reflected an image of

14. *Parliamentary Debates,* n.s., IX, 274–275 (the complete speech is on pp. 257–275); Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England,* 195.

15. *Substance of the Debate in the House of Commons, on the 15th May, 1823 on a Motion for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions with a Preface and Appendixes Containing Facts and Reasonings Illustrative of Colonial Bondage* (London: Ellerton and Henderson, 1823).

16. *Parliamentary Debates,* n.s., IX, 275–287.

moderation. For example, since the whip was not an "instrument of coercion" so much as a "badge of authority," they would not oppose legal restrictions on its use and particularly its abolition in cases of "indecent punishment of females." They professed satisfaction with the government's proposals and, like Canning, were of the opinion that Buxton's method of gradual emancipation would not work. New York, unlike the West Indies, had a relatively large white population. Its few slaves furnished no real danger to the peace. But in the West Indies, where the proportion of blacks to whites was much greater, a growing population of free blacks was bound to result in the discontent of those still subjected to slavery for life. Insurrection was bound to ensue. One of their major arguments was the grave danger in Parliament's issuing orders that would destroy the authority of local legislatures in maintaining a proper respect between planter and slave. They saw violence as the inevitable outcome of the disintegration of local authority.[17]

Perhaps one explanation for the "reasonable" reaction of the planters was that their strategy had been well laid in advance to just that end. They were convinced that their only hope in forestalling drastic action by the abolitionists lay in their promise to effect self-reform through local legislation. In this their attitude contrasted dramatically with that of the southern planters in the United States, who were convinced that their power was so much stronger than that of the abolitionists that they could afford to follow a "hard line" and so preserve the "peculiar institution." Before the debates in Parliament the Society of West India Planters and Merchants had set up a special committee to prepare a list of ameliorative measures. Charles Ellis was named chairman of the group, and one of the things it did was to meet with Earl Bathurst, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies. Out of this meeting came the decision that in the crown colonies of Trinidad and St. Lucia the governors should be instructed to inform the planters that orders in council would immediately initiate reforms.[18]

17. *Ibid.*, 295–307, for Ellis's speech; full debate to p. 360.
18. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 411–413.

In light of such reasonableness from all sides, Buxton withdrew his motion in favor of Canning's resolutions. As events turned out, this general spirit of conciliation was to be short-lived. Bathurst's orders in council of July, which recommended a lengthy list of ameliorative measures to the local legislatures, provoked violent alarm and opposition, even threats that independence might be declared if the program were pushed. Not only were the antislavery forces denounced but also the Society of West India Planters and Merchants, which had formulated the strategy of local action to avoid imperial fiat.[19]

The revolt in Demerara in August seemed to justify the worst fears of everyone. Noting the constant meetings and discussions of the planters, and their excited state, the slaves there surmised that the king had granted them freedom, which their masters were withholding. The uprising was swiftly crushed, but at the cost of the slaughter of many blacks. Some were murdered on the spot, forty-seven were hanged within a month, and as late as the next January three slaves were sentenced to 1,000 lashes apiece and to be worked in chains, two for life and one for seven years (if they survived!).[20]

Of major significance in this series of events was the role of a Methodist missionary, John Smith, who lived on the plantation where the uprising began and who was accused of complicity in the plot. He was imprisoned and sentenced to be executed without anything resembling a fair trial. There was no concrete evidence against him; his only crime was that he disapproved of slavery and had been a friend to the slaves. It was the culmination of a long accumulation of hatred against the dissenting clergy in the islands, most particularly the Wesleyan Methodists, who were antislavery in principle and therefore automatically enemies of the planters. Smith died of illness while closely confined in prison before he could be executed, thereby becoming a martyr whose death gave a greater impetus to the antislavery cause in Great Britain than years of parliamentary debates could have accomplished. Professor Klingberg sees the effect on public opinion as similar to that in the United States following the

19. *Ibid.*, 416–419.
20. Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition*, 130–131.

execution of John Brown.[21] With public sentiment completely aroused, the government was able to stiffen its back with respect to the colonial legislatures. Their adamant refusal to comply led, in turn, to the abandonment of attempts at amelioration and to the success of the cause of total emancipation.

The new antislavery zeal was largely expressed through the organization of societies and the publication of antislavery arguments. The first *Annual Report* of the London society in 1824 announced that there were already 220 antislavery societies, which had presented 225 petitions to the last session of Parliament and 600 to the present session.[22] The July 31, 1826, issue of the *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter* counted 674 petitions to Commons in the session of that year. The one from London alone had 72,000 signatures, the one from Manchester, 41,000, from Glasgow, 38,000, and from Edinburgh, 17,000. Besides the London society, among the more active ones were those of Liverpool and Edinburgh. James Cropper's enthusiasm and energy dominated the Liverpool group, and many of the pamphlets put out by them were his, along with the *Declaration of the Objects of the Liverpool Society for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery* in 1823. The Edinburgh Society for Promoting the Mitigation and Ultimate Abolition of Negro Slavery issued its resolutions in its *First Annual Report,* along with *Considerations on Negro Slavery; with a Brief View of the Proceedings Relative to It, in the British Parliament,* and announced its decision to present a petition to Parliament.[23]

Since the new zeal affected female as well as male abolitionists, the question of the role of women in the movement became a point of dispute. In this early period, when American women had not yet been heard from in the antislavery movement, three

21. Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England,* 218–220; *Parliamentary Debates,* XI, 961–1076.

22. *Report of the Committee of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery . . . 1824.*

23. *First Annual Report of the Edinburgh Society for Promoting the Mitigation and Ultimate Abolition of Negro Slavery* (Edinburgh: Abernethy and Walker, 1824); *Considerations on Negro Slavery; with a Brief View of the Proceedings Relative to It, in the British Parliament* (Edinburgh: Anderson and Bryce, 1824).

English ladies were exerting considerable influence with their writings. Hannah More, the poet, continued her correspondence with New York friends, sending occasional poems on behalf of the slave, and continued to speak out in London social circles.[24] Amelia Opie, wife of the London portrait painter John Opie and a writer of the romantic novels so popular in that era, was also a staunch friend of emancipation. In 1824 one of her poems, "The Negro Boy's Tale, a Poem Addressed to Children"—and calculated to vibrate the heartstrings of adults as well—made its appearance in London. When the American abolitionist Arnold Buffum visited England in 1825, Mrs. Opie was one of the people with whom he made a point of becoming acquainted. Later at the world antislavery convention of 1843 she quite won the heart of the puritanical Lewis Tappan.[25]

A pamphlet written by Mrs. Elizabeth Heyrick in 1824 made the biggest stir of all among antislavery people in both Great Britain and the United States. She was a Quaker lady residing in Leicester, a friend of the Gurneys, Buxtons, Frys, and Hoares, all prominent antislavery and reform-minded Friends. Joseph J. Gurney described her as "an interesting woman fraught with the *genius of philanthropy*."[26] Her pamphlet was exciting both for its powerful and compelling language and for its call for immediate, not gradual, emancipation as the "shortest, safest, and most effectual" method.[27]

Now the question arose among British abolitionists of whether or not ladies ought to go beyond the genteel sphere of making literary contributions, which could be written within the privacy of their own homes. Zachary Macaulay and Henry Brougham wanted their help with petitions, but Wilberforce, despite his long friendship with Hannah More, clung to the old-fashioned

24. Hannah More to Salina [Mills] Macaulay, Dec. 12, [1822], Macaulay Papers.

25. Clipping, "The Late Arnold Buffum," Lewis Tappan Papers, Library of Congress; Bertram Wyatt-Brown, *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War against Slavery* (Cleveland: Case Western Reserve University Press, 1969), 260, 262.

26. Joseph J. Gurney to Mrs. Samuel Hoare and Mrs. Buxton, Apr. 3, 1828, Gurney Mss, sec. III, 476, Friends House Library.

27. [Heyrick], *Immediate, Not Gradual Abolition.*

belief that such activity was not proper for ladies.[28] They did, however, organize auxiliary antislavery societies, and the Leicester auxiliary published *An Address on the State of Slavery in the West India Islands.* Since Leicester was the home of Elizabeth Heyrick, she probably had a hand in writing it and, in general, promoting a more active role for antislavery women. She was one of the officers of the Female Society for Birmingham, West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Their Respective Neighborhoods, which was established in 1825. The other officers included members of the Forster, Sturge, and Lloyd families, all antislavery Friends in the Birmingham area whose names figured prominently in antislavery annals for several generations.[29]

Among the influential pamphlets of 1823–1824, when the campaign was at its height, were several written by Thomas Clarkson, Zachary Macaulay, and James Stephen. Clarkson, contrary to his usual optimistic outlook, had little faith in action by the colonial legislatures and advised his fellow abolitionists to proceed as if Canning's resolutions had never been passed. Primarily, they should keep up their committees and continue distribution of books and pamphlets.[30] As in the olden days, he undertook a tour of England, Wales, and Scotland to expound the views and purposes of the London committee, distribute its literature, and call for petitions, making special efforts to involve churchmen in the cause. The "voice of the nation" must show the planters the futility of resistance.[31] Clarkson produced his *Thoughts on the Necessity of Improving the Condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies, with a View to Their Ultimate Emancipation* and wrote a piece answering an article in the *Royal Jamaica Gazette* of June, 1823, which had argued that Jamaican slaves were better

28. Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay,* 433.

29. Leicester Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society, *An Address on the State of Slavery in the West India Islands* (London, 1824); *The Second Report of the Female Society for Birmingham, West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Their Respective Neighborhoods, for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, Established, 1825* (Birmingham: B. Hudson, n.d.).

30. Clarkson to Macaulay, May 19, 1823, Macaulay Papers.

31. Clarkson to George Newman, Feb. 16, 1824, Pritchard Letters, 12/13, Friends House Library; Clarkson to Crowdson Tunstall, Apr. 20, 1824, Mss Portfolio 14.86, Friends House Library.

off than the British peasantry.[32] Zachary Macaulay published the latter as one number of the short series called *Negro Slavery,* to which Thomas Cooper contributed *A View of Some of the More Prominent Features,* previously mentioned. Cooper also wrote *Facts Illustrative of the Condition of the Negro Slaves in Jamaica,* published in London in 1824.

Of all of the antislavery pamphleteers, James Stephen was one of the most prolific and by far the most literary. He had been a main contributor to the pamphlet campaign of 1816–1817, had published *Extracts from a West India Plantation Journal,* and now added what was to be one of his longest and most scholarly works: *The Slavery of the British West India Colonies Delineated.* It became a major reference for the Members of Parliament who were engaged in debates on the question, and portions of it were extracted to be circulated by the London society as separate, short pamphlets.[33]

Works by less well-known writers included Joseph Barham's *Considerations on the Abolition of Negro Slavery, and the Means of Practically Effecting It* (London, 1823), John Taylor's *Negro Emancipation and West Indian Independence the True Interests of Great Britain* (Liverpool, 1824), William Cuttriss's *Slavery Inconsistent with Christianity* (London, 1825), R. Bickell's *The West Indies as They Are: Or A Real Picture of Slavery* (London, 1825), and A. H. Beaumont's *Compensation to Slave Owners Fairly Considered in an Appeal to the Common Sense of the People of England* (London, 1826). An anonymous pamphlet, *An*

32. Thomas Clarkson, *Thoughts on the Neeessity of Improving the Condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies, with a View to Their Ultimate Emancipation; and on the Practicality, the Safety, and the Advantages of the Latter Measure* (London, 1823); Thomas Clarkson, *Negro Slavery,* no. XI: *The Argument, "That the Colonial Slaves Are Better Off Than the British Peasantry," Answered, from the Royal Jamaica Gazette of June 21, 1823* (London: Ellerton and Henderson, n.d.). There is an undated paper on slavery in the West Indies in the Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

33. James Stephen, *Extraets from a West India Plantation Journal, Kept by the Manager: Showing the Treatment of the Slaves and Its Fatal Consequences* (London: S. Bagster, n.d.); James Stephen, *The Slavery of the British West India Colonies Delineated, as It Exists Both in Law and Practiee, and Compared with the Slavery of Other Countries, Antient and Modern,* 2 vols. (London: J. Butterworth, 1824–1830). One of the short pamphlets is called *West Indian Pretensions Refuted . . .* (London: Ellerton and Henderson, 1824).

Enquiry Which of the Two Parties Is Best Entitled to Freedom?, contrasted the long, patient suffering and restraint of the black rebels in the recent West Indian uprising with the ferocity and brutality of the whites in stamping out the rebellion.[34]

Among the most active defenders of West Indian slavery was Alexander McDonnell, whose two pamphlets in 1824 emphasized the potential dangers in the emergence of 800,000 people from "barbarism." He also argued the point of property rights. Anyone who concurred in depriving another of his property should remember that his own turn might be next. Surely Parliament would not want "to contravene that great principle of English liberty" that no subject can be injured in his property or his possessions without consent through representation. He charged the dissenting missionaries with being foes of the colonial system, and both them and the antislavery people in England of "mangling the facts" in order to stir up insurrections.[35]

The year 1824 was an important one, by all odds, in the antislavery movement. While the parliamentary contest in Great Britain was at its height, diplomats were trying and failing to conclude the slave-trade convention of 1824. In the United States proslavery and antislavery forces locked horns over the control of Illinois. Mrs. Heyrick's pamphlet calling for immediate, not gradual, abolition was hurled like a bomb into the midst of the battle. Slavery was a moral issue, she contended, and must be emphasized as such. Neither immediatism nor the sinfulness of slavery was a new idea, of course, but the timing of Mrs. Heyrick's appeal was all-important, for it caught at its full the tide of disillusionment with gradualism.

We have noted that early in the eighteenth century John Hepburn called for immediate emancipation and argued that slavery was a sin necessitating repentance from each individual slave-

34. *An Enquiry Which of the Two Parties Is Best Entitled to Freedom? The Slave or the Slave Holder? From an Impartial Examination of the Conduct of Each Party, at the Bar of Public Justice.*

35. Alexander McDonnell, *Considerations on Negro Slavery . . .* (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Brown & Green, 1824); McDonnell, *Emancipation of the Negro Slaves in the West India Colonies Considered, with Reference to Its Impolicy and Injustice; in Answer to Mr. Wilberforce's Appeal . . .* , no. I (London: Whitmore & Fenn, 1824).

holder. More recently, the Reverend George Bourne, an immigrant to America from England, had taken the same ground but in a more militant fashion. Bourne had prepared for the Presbyterian ministry in England, visited America before the War of 1812, and later returned to Virginia, where he took a pastorate. Dismayed by the situation he witnessed, he expressed his hatred for slavery in *The Book and Slavery Irreconciliable,* published in 1816.[36] In it he advocated unconditional emancipation without compensation. It is the enemy of souls, he declared, who advises "prudent and moderate" reform, although meanwhile the church groaned under its weight of guilt.

Bourne's doctrine, combined with the vehement language of his denunciation of slavery, proved too much for his fellow Virginians. The Lexington Presbytery suspended him, and his case was taken to the General Assembly. Refusing to recant, Bourne made the most of his opportunity to force that body to consider the question of slavery, a strategy that may have been decisive in the passing of a set of resolutions concerning slavery in 1818.[37]

The resolutions declared that the enslaving of one human being by another was a "gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature . . . inconsistent with the law of God" and "totally irreconciliable" with the spirit of the Gospel. Although they decreed that no communing Presbyterian should sell a slave who was also in communion and in good standing in the church, and that any Presbyterian who mistreated a slave should be subjected to church discipline, they did not, as has recently been pointed out, put teeth in the resolutions by providing for expulsion of guilty members.[38] In this regard they were unlike the Society of Friends, which in the eighteenth century had recommended the disownment of members who clung to the sin of slave trading.

Bourne's significance has generally been underestimated by historians because in 1816 he was just another voice crying in

36. George Bourne, *The Book and Slavery Irreeonciliable, with Animadversions upon Dr. Smith's Philosophy* (Philadelphia: J. M. Sanderson, 1816).

37. *Emaneipator,* I, no. 4 (July 31, 1820). The information is in a letter dated June 2, 1818, signed by J. J. Janeway, moderator of the General Assembly.

38. John W. Christie and Dwight L. Dumond, *George Bourne and "The Book and Slavery Irreconeiliable"* (Baltimore: J. H. Furst Co., 1969), 63–64.

the wilderness, but his contribution to the doctrine of immediatism was far-reaching. We know that William Lloyd Garrison was indebted to him both for his ideas on immediatism and for the model he provided of vehement and uncompromising language. When the abolition movement was well under way in the 1830s, Bourne's 1816 pamphlet was reprinted as *Picture of Slavery,* and he furnished several more pamphlets to the cause.[39] It is highly likely that Elizabeth Heyrick was also indebted to him, for she emphasized the same points: the moral evil of slavery, the necessity of immediatism, and the absurdity of compensating slaveholders for their sins.

An American edition of Mrs. Heyrick's pamphlet was arranged almost immediately, and Lundy reprinted it as a serial in his *Genius of Universal Emancipation.*[40] One of her arguments was especially telling with her American readers of the 1820s: the futility of trying to appeal to or compromise with slaveholders. Gradualism, which she termed the "masterpiece of satanic policy," simply did not materialize in anything. The only method was to take high ground on the basis of a just cause and then enforce majority opinion against the slaveholders. "The great interests of truth and justice are betrayed, rather than supported," she cried, "by all softening, qualifying concessions. Every iota which is yielded of their rightful claims, impairs the conviction of their rectitude, and consequently, weakens their success. Truth and justice make their best way in the world, when they appear in bold and simple majesty; their demands are most willingly conceded when they are most fearlessly claimed." Consideration for the planter, she argued, was but a feather when weighed against the rights of the slaves, and if anyone deserved compensation, it was the latter.

39. [George Bourne], *Picture of Slavery in the United States of America* (Middletown, Conn.: Edwin Hunt, 1834); Lewis Tappan diary, clipping on "Rev. George Bourne" from the *Independent,* Oct. 31, 1861, Tappan Papers; Theodore Bourne, "George Bourne, the Pioneer of American Anti-Slavery," *Methodist Quarterly Review,* LXIV (1882), 68–91. Theodore Bourne credits his father with the resolutions passed by the Presbyterian General Assembly in 1818. Alice Adams gives the credit to Dyer Burgess. See Adams, *The Neglected Period,* 59; Dumond, *Antislavery,* 93; Dillon, *Lundy,* 15.

40. Dillon, *Lundy,* 107; *Genius of Universal Emancipation,* Nov. 26, 1825, and following issues.

From bitter experience Americans had learned that voluntary relinquishing of slavery on an individual basis could not be expected from even such an enlightened thinker and man of good will as Thomas Jefferson. The Missouri Compromise and the failure of the slave-trade convention had produced a wholesale loss of faith in either the ability or the will of the federal government to use its power. Her pamphlet, therefore, did much to crystallize determination that uncompromising, forceful action against a spreading slavocracy was imperative.

As previously noted, several antislavery newspapers had come into being just before or after the Missouri Compromise. Later in the decade two more were added to the list in the United States: the *African Observer* was edited by Enoch Lewis, a brother of Evan Lewis; and *Freedom's Journal* became the first Negro antislavery paper in the country, dedicated to fostering pride in being black as well as to antislavery. Its editors, Samuel Cornish and John Russworm, combed history for notable accomplishments of Negroes, and its editorial stand was against colonization and for immediate emancipation.[41] Like Benjamin Lundy's *Genius*, it, too, had distributing agents in England as well as in Haiti and Canada. In London Zachary Macaulay began the *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter* in 1825 as the organ for the newly organized Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery. While its major emphasis was on West Indian slavery, it kept abreast of the American situation as well with articles on the internal slave trade, kidnapping of free blacks, notices of new antislavery societies, antislavery activities of the churches, and the colonization movement. Extracts from the *Genius of Universal Emancipation* were included from time to time.[42]

Even in newspapers and periodicals not particularly antislavery in viewpoint there was a decided increase in articles on slavery after the Missouri debates.[43] The British *Quarterly Review*, which was especially energetic in criticizing the United States, found itself engaged in something of a debate with the

41. Bella Gross, "*Freedom's Journal* and the Rights of All," *Journal of Negro History*, XVII (July, 1932), 241–286.

42. *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter*, I–VI (1825–1833).

43. Adams, *The Neglected Period*, 32–33.

North American Review, particularly after the former published Faux's book *Memorable Days in America.* The *North American Review* retaliated with accounts of British cruelty in the West Indies, charging that as long as slavery continued there, the British were in no position to adopt a holier-than-thou attitude.[44] By the end of the decade the *Quarterly Review* conceded defeat in its struggle to defend the West Indian planters, and the *Westminster Review* sometimes printed antislavery as well as anti-abolition articles.[45] The *Christian Observer* had long been a chief vehicle for antislavery views, with Zachary Macaulay as its editor from 1802 to 1816. Other British religious publications taking antislavery ground were the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine,* the *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle,* and the *Missionary Herald,* a Baptist paper. The *Edinburgh Review* was an outright champion of emancipation, while the *Gentlemen's Magazine,* the *Monthly Review,* and the *Scot's Magazine* lent occasional support.[46]

It is unmistakably clear that already by the 1820s the southern states were extremely worried that the federal government, in response to pressure from the North and from Great Britain, might take some action against slavery. Even though it might not be total emancipation all at once, any action would provide a stepping-stone in that direction. For this reason they could brook no regulation of the internal slave trade, no ameliorative measures, not even any proposals (such as colonization) possibly beneficial to the free blacks undertaken on the grounds of "general welfare." And if they were going to maintain successfully their rights to property in slaves even in the South, the fight for property rights in slaves must be won in the territories. The British picture of progression was clear: abolition of the slave trade had led to interference with the master in all of his rela-

44. *Quarterly Review,* XXIX (Apr.–July, 1823), 475–508, XXX (Oct., 1823–Jan., 1824), 559–587, XXXIV (June–Sept., 1826), 579–608; *North American Review,* XIX (1824), 92–125; John B. McMaster, *A History of the People of the United States, from the Revolution to the Civil War,* 8 vols. (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1924–1927), V, 338.

45. Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England,* 247.

46. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 426–427. See, for example, *Gentlemen's Magazine,* XCIV (1824).

tionships with his slaves; registry and ameliorative measures had led to plans for gradual emancipation that were now being extended to demands for immediate and total emancipation. Even worse, some British abolitionists (James Cropper, for example) were already speaking in terms of a worldwide crusade against slavery. It was imperative that the South keep a strict vigilance to prevent the federal government from getting a foot in the door on the slavery question. If possible, the whole topic should be kept out of the national political arena.

It was natural, then, that the tocsin of alarm should be sounded immediately when in 1824 the legislature of Ohio passed resolutions recommending a plan of gradual emancipation linked to colonization under the aegis of the federal government. Resolutions were sent to the federal Congress and circulated among sister state legislatures.[47] It was a simple plan: all children of slaves would be freed at age twenty-one if they agreed to be colonized somewhere outside the United States. Plans for gradual emancipation had come in many sizes and shapes before, but this one was founded on the principle that slavery was a national problem and required action by the federal government—the very point the southern states could never allow.

Following the Ohio resolutions, in 1825 Rufus King introduced a resolution in the Senate providing that after the United States had paid her national debt, the proceeds from the sale of public lands should be used to pay for the emancipation and removal of Negroes to colonies in some foreign region.[48] Senator Robert Y. Hayne quickly offered a counterresolution denying the constitutionality of any such step, and Governor George M. Troup of Georgia became so excited that he admonished his people, "Stand to your arms."[49] To cap the excitement, in the summer of 1827 the American Colonization Society asked for federal financial aid under the general-welfare clause. Again Hayne was on his

47. Dumond, *Antislavery*, 131; *Annals of Congress*, 18 Cong., 1 sess., 418; *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, Mar., 1824.

48. *House Reports*, no. 283, 27 Cong., 3 sess.; *Annals of Congress*, 18 Cong., 2 sess., 623.

49. *Annals of Congress*, 18 Cong., 2 sess., 696; Dumond, *Antislavery*, 131–132; McMaster, *History*, V, 205–208.

feet to challenge its constitutionality.[50] Again the South was refusing to consider proposals based on compensation for slave property, though, as noted before, the "radical" abolitionists were blamed for taking such "high ground" that moderate plans for emancipation could not be worked out. As late as 1845 Pennsylvania abolitionists petitioned Congress to appropriate money from the public domain for the purchase and liberation of slaves, but the House of Representatives turned it down. A South Carolina representative denounced it as a "flagrant outrage." [51]

It was inevitable that Great Britain should figure in the excitement and debate over emancipation proposals just as she had in the Missouri debates, and the British minister, Henry Addington, kept his home government informed of such accusations.[52] For one thing, there already was British cooperation and aid in the colonization projects in Africa, and in 1827, on the request of the U.S. minister to England, Albert Gallatin, Britain agreed to provide facilities in Sierra Leone to aid in the return to their homes of captives taken off American ships seized in the slave traffic.[53]

Still another failure in the 1820s that reinforced abolitionist conviction that it was futile to look to the American government to ameliorate slavery or to protect the rights of free blacks, and which also intensified southern fears of northern and British cooperation, was in regard to the Negro seamen acts of several southern states. Trouble over the seamen developed when South Carolina, in December, 1822, in the wake of the Denmark Vesey conspiracy, passed an act requiring every free Negro seaman to be kept in custody while his ship was in port and his captain to pay the expenses of his detention. If the captain defaulted, the free man would be considered a slave and sold. The act was applicable to seamen on foreign and American ships.[54]

50. *Annals of Congress,* 19 Cong., 2 sess., 289–296, 318–334.

51. *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Jan. 22, 1845.

52. Addington to George Canning, Apr. 4, 1825, F.O. 5/198, I, PRO.

53. Gallatin to Viscount Dudley, June 1, 1827, and Dudley to Gallatin, July 7, 1827, F.O. 84/72, PRO.

54. Philip M. Hamer, "Great Britain, the United States, and the Negro Seamen Acts, 1822–1848," *Journal of Southern History,* I (1935), 3–28.

Irate American captains petitioned Congress against the act,[55] and an international crisis developed when a mate and four sailors on a British ship from Nassau were imprisoned. Stratford Canning sent a strong protest to John Quincy Adams, who consulted two influential congressmen from South Carolina, Joel Poinsett and James Hamilton. Believing he had proper assurances from them, Adams promised Canning it would not happen again, but two months later it did. The state argued that it had as much right to restrict entry on the grounds of safety (Denmark Vesey was a free black sailor) as it did to quarantine on grounds of health. When a judge of the U.S. Circuit Court held the state law to be unconstitutional, South Carolina newspapers refused to print the decision, and local officials ignored it. The affair provided another good opportunity to hit the "antislavery conspiracy" of New and Old England, and Great Britain was roundedly denounced for sowing "tares of discontent" in the South. President Monroe and Attorney General Wirt, who upheld the decision of the circuit court, were criticized for putting the rights of foreigners above those of American citizens.[56] Excitement ran high in Washington: on one occasion, reported by John Quincy Adams, South Carolina's Senator Robert Y. Hayne became so emotional that it was necessary to change the conversation at the dinner table.[57]

Repeated protests by the British were of no avail, and a similar Georgia law of 1829, plus support for the states from the new Jackson administration, compounded the ills. In the 1830s, when John Quincy Adams was in the House of Representatives, the House Commerce Committee (in response to a memorial from the citizens of Boston) declared against the laws, and in the forties Massachusetts even sent agents to Charleston and New Orleans to protect its free Negro seamen. They were forced to retreat in the face of threats of lynching. One of the agents,

55. *Annals of Congress,* 17 Cong., 2 sess., Appendix, 1305; also in *Niles Weekly Register,* XXIV (1823), 31–32.

56. James Calder to Benjamin Moodie, Jan. 15, 1823, enclosed in Stratford Canning to John Quincy Adams, Feb. 15, 1823, F.O. 5/176, PRO; Hamer, "Negro Seamen Acts."

57. Adams, *Memoirs,* VI, 176.

Samuel Hoar, was described as an "emissary of a foreign government." [58] Whether this implied that he was acting for Britain, or whether by that time Massachusetts was considered foreign, is unclear.

Certainly the total situation was a frustrating one for American abolitionists. While their English counterparts were making headway in getting government action to ameliorate slavery in the West Indies, because of the federal system in America the southern states seemed immune to any type of political pressure and were, in practice, nullifying federal court decisions. Although southerners might be worried by what the national government might do, northern abolitionists were becoming more and more cynical about its will to do anything at all.

A direct attack on Great Britain appeared in Robert Turnbull's essay *The Crisis,* probably the most complete and able exposition before the 1830s of the southern constitutional position and the strategy the South must follow on the slavery question.[59] For Turnbull, British and American abolitionists, including colonizationists, were all one. The lesson of the West Indies was clear, he said. Because Parliament had interfered with slavery there, the islands were decaying. American colonizationist strategy was exactly that of Wilberforce and company: first to decrease the value of slave property and then to push for emancipation at a "trifling" cost to the government. Colonization, therefore, was a "NEST EGG" placed in the halls of Congress by the abolitionists, and it must be got rid of. The recent proposals in Congress had opened the door to a discussion of slavery; that door must be closed, or the South was lost. Again he pointed to the British example: discussions had led directly to slave insurrections, for the Negroes were so alert to parliamentary proceedings that not even a simple trade regulation could be passed without their be-

58. Hamer, "Negro Seamen Acts"; Pakenham to Aberdeen, Dec. 29, 1844, F.O. 84/536, PRO. William W. Freehling's *Prelude to Civil War: The Nullification Controversy in South Carolina 1816–1836* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965) has a good treatment of the implications of South Carolina's successful defiance of federal authority in the case of the seamen acts.

59. [Robert Turnbull], *The Crisis: Or, Essays on the Usurpations of the Federal Government . . .* (Charleston, S.C.: A. E. Miller, 1827).

lieving it had done something for them. The same example could be pointed out in France: discussion of slavery in the National Convention was the direct cause of the revolt in Haiti.

Turnbull noted the appearance of a new newspaper, the *Genius of Universal Emancipation*, dedicated to the subject of slavery. "Are we prepared, my fellow citizens," he asked, "to submit to a public discussion of this subject?" While the southern states were no more under the legislature of Ohio or other northern states than they were under the British Parliament, there was the grave danger that discussions in the federal Congress would furnish an entering wedge for interference with slavery. "Discussion will be equivalent to an act of emancipation," he warned, "for it will universally inspire amongst the slaves that hope." Besides, just as an antislavery minority in Parliament grew to a majority, so it might in the U.S. Congress if discussion were tolerated. Abolitionists in Pennsylvania had just returned John Sergeant to Congress, "that the labours of this Wilberforce of the Western world, in the next Congress, may not be in vain." In addition, he noted that the headquarters of the abolition society had been moved from Philadelphia to Washington, the better to cooperate with the American Colonization Society for the ruination of the southern states.

After the insurrections and exposed plots of slave rebellions in the early 1820s, David Walker's *Appeal* of 1829 calling for bloody reprisal against slaveholders scarcely seemed an idle threat.[60] It was not surprising that the southern states tightened their laws prohibiting the teaching of slaves to read.[61] The revolts of the 1820s were capped by the horrible devastation of the Jamaican rebellion of 1831 and the panic created by Nat Turner's uprising in Virginia that same year. Too often these insurrections have been viewed separately, but taken together, one can see that their cumulative effect carried much more impact. Because of constant

60. Herbert Aptheker, *"One Continual Cry," David Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World (1829–1830): Its Setting and Its Meaning* (New York: Humanities Press, 1965), 36.

61. Adams, *The Neglected Period*, 93–94.

communication, British, West Indians, and Americans reinforced each others' fears.[62]

In this light it is easier to understand what otherwise might seem like a sudden decision on the part of the British government to acquiesce in the antislavery argument that only complete emancipation could possibly be of any avail and must be carried through whether the planters wanted it or not. In the United States the insurrections served as a catalyst to polarize the factions more definitely. Defenders of slavery felt they must tighten its restrictions and those over free blacks; opponents pledged themselves anew to more forceful action to eliminate the root of the evil. Since slavery in the West Indies was not surrounded with the same constitutional protections, and since West Indian planters no longer commanded either economic or political power in Britain commensurate with that of southern planters in the United States, victory there could be more quickly achieved.

In Great Britain a few of the more optimistic abolitionists such as Clarkson had regained some hope of success via the method of working through the colonial legislatures, provided public opinion kept strengthening the hand of the ministry at home.[63] Consequently abolitionists continued to send in petitions as reminders of their watchfulness, and in 1826 the London Anti-Slavery Society published a report, *The Progress of Colonial Reform.* In a detailed rundown of each colony, it exposed the delaying tactics of the colonies and the loopholes in the orders in council. Its conclusion was that Parliament should adopt a uniform set of laws and regulations for all, and reminded that body that in its consideration for planters' property rights it must not

62. See, for example, William Birney, *James G. Birney and His Times* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1890), 48, on the reaction in Alabama to the Jamaican insurrection and the Nat Turner rebellion, which resulted in heightened tension and the tightening of controls.

63. Clarkson to Crowdson Tunstall, Apr. 20, 1824, Mss Portfolio 14.86, Friends House Library; *Order in Counеil for Improving the Condition of the Slaves in Trinidad, 1824, in Speeeh of the Right Honourable George Canning* (London, 1824); *An Order of the King in Counеil, for Consolidating the Several Laws Reeently Made for Improving the Condition of the Slaves in His Majesties* [sie] *Colonies of Trinidad, Berbiee, Demerara, Saint Lucia, Cape of Good Hope and Mauritius, 8 Feb., 1830* ([London, 1830]).

forget that it was equally pledged to work out the eventual freedom of the slaves. "The Court of Policy may be assured, that from the final accomplishment of this object this country will not be diverted." [64]

When the Privy Council and Parliament called in witnesses, it became clearer than ever that there was little to be expected from voluntary action on the part of the planters. Most of the witnesses from the West Indies defended the local slave laws and avowed that progress was being made, while hotheads from Jamaica renewed their talk of secession to join the United States.[65] In 1828 Lord Brougham stated that progress was so slow as to be "imperceptible" to all eyes but their own, and in a course of lectures the Reverend Benjamin Godwin characterized the reforms as proceeding "with all possible slowness." [66] Godwin called for another unmistakable expression of public opinion, for "if it is true that the people can do nothing in this business without Parliament, it is, perhaps, equally true, that Parliament will do nothing in it without the people." [67] After a conference with Sir George Murray early in 1830, the London Anti-Slavery Society concluded that the "determination of the Ministry at present is to

64. London Anti-Slavery Society, *The Progress of Colonial Reform; Being a Brief View of the Real Advance Made since May 15, 1823, in Carrying into Effect the Recommendations of His Majesty, the Unanimous Resolutions of Parliament, and the Universal Prayer of the Nation, with Respect to Negro Slavery* (London: Hatchard & Son, 1826). For an example of the petitions, see the one submitted from Bury St. Edmonds by Earl Grosvenor in the House of Lords, Mar. 4, 1824, in *Parliamentary Debates*, X, 703–705; *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter*, I (July 31, 1826), III (Aug. 20, 1830).

65. William Wilberforce, "Questions to be asked Witnesses," Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; *Minutes of Evidence Taken before His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, at the Council Office, Whitehall, in the Matter of the Demerara and Berbice Manumission Order in Council* (London, 1827); R. Wilmot Horton, *First Letter to the Freeholders of the County of York, on Negro Slavery: Being an Inquiry into the Claims of the West Indians for Equitable Compensation* (London: Edmund Lloyd, 1830); Alexander McDonnell, *An Address to the Members of Both Houses of Parliament on the West India Question*, 2nd ed. (London: James Ridgeway, 1830); *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter*, III (Dec., 1829).

66. Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition*, 193; Benjamin Godwin, *The Substance of a Course of Lectures on British Colonial Slavery, Delivered at Bradford, York, and Scarborough* (London: J. Hatchard & Son, 1830), 135.

67. Godwin, *Substance of a Course of Lectures*, 143.

do nothing; and that if left to Government and the colonial legislatures, West India Slavery may exist, with little mitigation, for ages yet to come." [68]

After reaching such a conclusion, it is not surprising that the abolitionists once more decided on reorganization and a change of strategy. Gradualism had failed; immediatism became the cry. They hoped that under this new banner public spirit could be aroused to the point where it would force the government to exercise its authority over the heads of the foot-dragging colonial legislatures. It seemed the only way to achieve ultimate success.

In the United States by 1830, or certainly by the end of the Nat Turner rebellion in 1831 and the debates of the Virginia legislature in 1832, the southern defensive position was well defined: they would consider no plans for gradual emancipation, even with compensation; they would hold to their rights of property in slaves, to the constitutional position that only the states themselves could legislate on slavery, and to the philosophy that the subject should not be discussed in the federal Congress or in the public press and that to do so was incendiary and insurrectionary.

Perhaps one need look no further for reasons why the abolitionist movement of the 1830s became more aggressive, more militant, more radical. There was cause enough for the antislavery forces to despair: despite prohibitive legislation the slave trade continued, and attempts at an Anglo-American treaty had failed. Though foreign importation had decreased, the internal slave trade not only compensated to provide a labor supply for the deep South and expansion into the territories but had contributed to the economic prosperity and thereby to the vested interest of the upper South in continuing the "peculiar institution." Slavery had not been contained within the states of the Old South. Not only had it been allowed west of the Mississippi, but there was a serious threat of its persistence and revival in the nominally free states of Illinois and Indiana, through the loophole of the indenture system if not by outright legalization. Colonization as a solution was not acceptable to the slaveholders, the abolitionists, or

68. Committee on Slavery, Minute Books, entry for Feb. 9, 1830, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, E 2/3.

the free blacks themselves. Even compensated emancipation was rejected by the South. Legislative and diplomatic efforts had clearly failed. The election of a slaveholding states-rights' man to the presidency in 1828 dimmed any hope on the political front.

To sincere opponents of slavery it was clear that the country had departed from its great founding principles of liberty and equality under God. It must be awakened to the sin; it must repent and reform. Old tactics had failed, a new strategy must be found. The only possible course open, therefore, was to launch a great moral crusade, appealing to humanitarian ideals, to the Christian conscience, and most of all to the great vision of progress. The chains of the slave were shackling the entire nation. It could never move forward toward its great destiny with a slave collar about its neck. Since their British brethren seemed on the verge of victory, it was natural and logical to look to them for advice and aid. The British abolitionists, in turn, felt eminently qualified to play the role of elder statesmen. The 1830s, therefore, saw the lines of Anglo-American antislavery cooperation drawn closer than ever.

The New Vigor of Immediatism: The British Example

IX

Over the years the antislavery forces in Great Britain had learned from experience that the formula for success lay in a combination of effective, organized leadership and the rallying of public opinion. Together they could produce the pressure necessary to force the hand of the government. It had worked in 1807 to achieve the prohibition of the slave trade and again in 1823 to obtain an acknowledgment from the government that it would proceed toward total emancipation, to be accomplished gradually. Hence it seemed logical to apply the same strategy now in what abolitionists looked upon as the last, big push to win immediate emancipation.

The campaign was launched on May 15, 1830, with a mass meeting of antislavery friends who drew up and signed a new petition to Parliament.[1] Wilberforce and Clarkson were both there to inspire, and T. F. Buxton and Lord Brougham were there to promise the necessary political leadership in Lords and Commons. By the time the petition was presented in July, steps had already been taken to reorganize the abolitionists more effectively under the new Society for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions. By officially dropping the word "mitiga-

1. Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition,* 195; Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England,* 254.

tion," they were serving notice that only total abolition would be acceptable. It was also a taeit recognition of the passing of the old African Institution, which had been "addicted to moderation, compromise and delay." According to Joseph Sturge it had "died of its own dignity." [2]

In conjunction with the presentation of the petition to Parliament in July, Lord Brougham made one of the most stirring speeches of his career and in the history of the antislavery struggle. Arguing from evidence collected by the parliamentary investigation, he concentrated principally on the decrease of the slave population and the crime and degradation prevalent because of their unjust treatment. He categorically denied the legality of chattel slavery, standing on the higher-law doctrine, a doctrine Americans would take up principally in defianee of the fugitive-slave law. "There is a law above all the enactments of human codes," Brougham challenged his listeners, "the same throughout the world, the same in all times . . . it is the law written by the finger of God on the heart of man; and by that law, unchangeable and eternal, while men despise fraud and loathe rapine, and abhor blood, they will reject with indignation the wild and guilty phantasy that man can hold property in man!" [3]

By the spring of 1831 the leaders in the new antislavery society had decided that an effective mode of operation would be to form an Agency Committee, which would send out lecturers to appeal directly to the country. According to George Stephen's *Antislavery Recollections,* the plan was first discussed at a Quaker dinner, and while after-dinner drinks were being passed, James Cropper, impulsive and eager for action as usual, took the initiative by donating £500. Joseph Sturge followed with £250, and Wilberforce and James Stephen added what they could. In their enthusiasm they agreed that the committee would meet daily at the noon hour, and in order to keep functioning steadily and

2. Committee on Slavery, Minute Books, entry for June 8, 1830, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, E 2/3; Henry Richard, ed., *Memoirs of Joseph Sturge* (London: S. W. Partridge, 1864), 78 (hereinafter cited as Sturge, *Memoirs*).

3. *Parliamentary Debates,* 2nd ser., XXV, 1171–1214.

flexibly, any three members would constitute a quorum. Whoever arrived first each day should preside as chairman.

Each agent was to compile a list of names in the various localities of those people who would be willing to work for the cause and exert influence in parliamentary elections. They were instructed to see that the lectures were reported in the local newspapers and to help organize local antislavery societies where none existed. The nation was mapped out in districts and subdistricts so that tours could be systematically planned to cover all areas. A principal group of paid lecturers were known as the stipendiary agents, and these were aided by a host of volunteers.[4]

Among the stipendiary agents were three men who had a direct connection with the American antislavery movement as visiting lecturers in the United States: Captain Charles Stuart, George Thompson, and John Scoble. Scoble later worked closely with the American lecturers James G. Birney and Henry B. Stanton when they toured the British Isles, and Thompson became Garrison's right-hand man in Great Britain.

Stuart was known as the "antislavery Quixote" because of his unbounded enthusiasm and the eccentric appearance he made, especially to Americans, dressed in Scottish kilts and a shoulder cape. He was born in Jamaica, had served in the British Army in India, and was something of an ascetic—never using alcoholic beverages, coffee, tea, or tobacco. Yet along with his oddities he was evidently a very lovable person, warm and sincere, capable of arousing both immediate enthusiasm and lasting loyalties.[5] George Thompson, up to this point in the story, had been a clerk with little formal and no classical education, but he had a real gift for oratory. Later, after his days as a lecturer for the anti-

4. *Report of the Agency Committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, Established in June, 1831. For the Purpose of Disseminating Information by Lectures on Colonial Slavery* (London: S. Bagster, 1832); George Stephen, *Antislavery Recollections,* 129–132.

5. George Stephen, *Antislavery Recollections,* 144; Gilbert H. Barnes and Dwight L. Dumond, eds., *Letters of Theodore Dwight Weld, Angelina Grimké Weld, and Sarah Grimké, 1822–1844* (Magnolia, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1965; originally published in 2 vols. by the American Historical Association, 1934), I, xx (hereinafter cited as *Weld-Grimké Letters*).

slavery cause, he was to serve the British government in India, and on his return he was elected to the House of Commons.[6] Scoble was one of the most hard-working of the British abolitionist organization men right down to the American Civil War and, because of his leading role in management, was to become a controversial figure in the split of the forties. In later years he left England for Canada to manage a settlement of fugitive slaves.

Intent on not being outmaneuvered in the developing contest, the Society of West India Planters and Merchants sent out counterlecturers and literature. In 1828 their secretary had made a tour of the Midlands and southwest England to visit the cities and market towns, in each of which he left copies of David Barclay's *Present State of the West Indies* and Alexander McDonnell's *Epitome of the West Indian Question. Fraser's Magazine, Blackwoods,* the *West Indian Reporter,* and *John Bull* all supported the planters' side of the controversy, and the years 1831–1833 witnessed another outpouring of pamphlets debating emancipation.[7] A typical exchange was that between John Jeremie, a former justice in St. Lucia, and William H. Burnley, deputy and agent for Trinidad.

Jeremie, in his *Four Essays on Colonial Slavery,* charged the colonial legislatures with "downright contumacy" in evading parliamentary orders. He scoffed at the argument that the West Indian situation was analogous to that of the American colonies in 1775, for this time Parliament's role was to protect its subjects from oppression, not to oppress them.[8] Burnley objected to the label "contumacy" applied to actions of the colonies standing on their constitutional rights. He compared the House of Commons

6. George Stephen, *Antislavery Recollections,* 150. There was some consternation when it was discovered that Thompson had at one time misused funds of a company for which he worked, but he had made restitution and been forgiven by his employer.

7. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 84; Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay,* 424. *John Bull's* attacks on the abolitionists were such that in 1824 Zachary Macaulay had begun a suit for libel and defamation of character against its publishers. See the *West Indian Reporter,* XLIV (July, 1831), for an attack on Buxton and a defense of the West Indians.

8. John Jeremie, *Four Essays on Colonial Slavery* (London: J. Hatchard & Son, 1831). A second edition appeared in 1832.

to a bewildered child with a complicated toy: unable to comprehend or regulate its machinery, he tears it in pieces.[9]

Viscount Howick, Undersecretary for the Colonies who later joined the antislavery side and voted for emancipation, predicted that if Parliament passed laws regulating colonial internal affairs, it would be compelled to go further and deprive the colonies of the means of resisting those laws, which they surely would do. All Parliament ought to do, he insisted, was to set a date when slavery must end, and then let the colonial legislatures work out the procedure. Moreover, the interval between the announcement of the date and the termination should be as short as possible to avoid danger.[10]

Also approaching the question from the constitutional point of view was an anonymous pamphlet that put forth an argument similar to that of the American colonists in 1775: the plantations had been granted by the crown, not by Parliament, and in some cases with the stipulation that they be cultivated by slave labor. The writers also reminded the government that when the colonial legislatures had asked for restrictions on the slave trade, the crown had refused because of profits accruing to the mother country. Now, therefore, if the slaves were to be freed, the owners were entitled at least to compensation.[11] Still speaking for the planters was the veteran pamphleteer Alexander McDonnell, who contributed at least three pamphlets in addition to the ones he had written in 1824.[12]

9. William H. Burnley, *Opinions on Slavery and Emancipation in 1823 . . .* (London: James Ridgeway, 1833). See also Anthony Davis, *The West Indies: Comprising a Detail of Facts in Opposition to Theory* (London: Saunders & Otley, 1832); the anonymous *British Colonial Slavery, Compared with That of Pagan Antiquity* (London: James Ridgeway, 1830).

10. Viscount Howick, *Corrected Report of the Speech of Viscount Howick, in the House of Commons, May 14, 1833, on Colonial Slavery, with an Appendix, Containing a Plan for the Abolition of Slavery* (London: James Ridgeway, 1833).

11. *Plain Statement of the Rights &c. Claimed by Our Colonists, under the Charters Granted to Them by Our Sovereigns; and the Light in Which Those Rights &c. Have Been Viewed by the Parent State . . .* (London: G. Davidson, 1833).

12. McDonnell, *Address to the Members of Both Houses of Parliament on the West India Question;* McDonnell, *Compulsory Manumission: Or An Examination of the Actual State of the West India Question* (London: John Murray, 1827);

A series of lectures and public debates between speakers of the two sides heightened public interest and involvement, particularly the debates between George Thompson and Peter Borthwick in Liverpool in 1832.[13] The antislavery people saw to the publication of Thompson's lectures and also Charles Stuart's *The West India Question,* which first appeared in the *Quarterly Magazine and Review* in April, 1832. Stuart's piece was republished in the United States as well, where it quickly became a standard reference for those arguing the safety of emancipation and indicting slavery on moral grounds. Stuart had included material on the slave system in the United States and contrasts between the slave and free states.[14] Stuart's insistence, like Mrs. Heyrick's before him—that if any of the parties ought to be compensated, it was the slaves, not the masters—became one of the basic tenets of the American Anti-Slavery Society.

Many clergymen became involved in the debate, to some extent because the treatment of missionaries was a recurring part of the argument and also because of criticism of the established church for not having done more in the way of providing instruction for the slaves. The emotional exchange was intensified when an Anglican clergyman, the Reverend G. W. Bridges of Jamaica, was directly involved in a case of extreme and brutal punishment of a slave, his cook, who was beaten for failure to prepare his dinner as he wanted it. That night she ran off, and the justice to whom she appealed for help later testified before the Council of Protection that he had never seen a woman so terribly lacerated. Nonetheless, the council voted 13 to 4 not to prosecute

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McDonnell, *A Letter to Thomas Fowell Buxton, Esq., M.P. in Refutation of His Allegations Respecting the Decrease of the Slaves in the British West India Colonies* (London: Effingham Wilson, 1833).

13. George Thompson, *Three Lectures on British Colonial Slavery . . .* (Liverpool: Egerton Smith & Co., 1832). For Borthwick's side of the argument, see *Speeches of Messrs. Thomson* [sic] *& Borthwick on the Question of Colonial Slavery . . .* (Glasgow: W. R. McPhun, 1833). Borthwick was a paid lecturer of the West India Committee.

14. Charles Stuart, *The West India Question . . . an Outline for Immediate Emancipation; and Remarks on Compensation* (New Haven, Conn.: Hezekiah Howe & Co., 1833).

Bridges, and when the Secretary of State ordered the attorney general of Jamaica to prepare an indictment, the grand jury refused to find a true bill.[15] Two years later, in 1831, in another case where there was ample evidence of extreme punishment of two women, the Council of Protection's decision was that neither the spirit nor the letter of the law of 1816 had been violated.[16]

Jacob Grimshaw, who had been a missionary in the Leeward Islands, published *Remarks on the British West Indian System of Slavery* in 1832.[17] The Reverend Samuel Charles Wilks of the Church of England contributed a sermon, *The Duty of Prompt and Complete Abolition,* which included a letter to the archbishop of Canterbury containing testimonies against slavery.[18] The Reverend G. F. W. Mortimer of Newcastle upon Tyne also argued vigorously for immediate emancipation. Gradual schemes, he said, were as foolish as the philosophy that one shouldn't go near the water until able to swim. Like Lord Brougham, he stressed the antislavery argument that bad treatment of the slaves was responsible for the decrease in the population.[19] The Jamaica *Watchman,* established by mulattoes in that island who took an antislavery position, kept its readers informed on the mistreatment of missionaries and slaves, and many of its accounts were reprinted by Zachary Macaulay in the *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter.*

The Wedgwood medallion of the kneeling slave, which had

15. The case of Kitty Hylton may be found in Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 62; also in the *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter* (London), III (Sept. 1, 1830). Brougham used it in his speech of July 12, 1830.

16. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 62–64.

17. Jacob Grimshaw, *Remarks on the British West Indian System of Slavery* (Haslingden, 1832).

18. Samuel Charles Wilks, *The Duty of Prompt and Complete Abolition of Colonial Slavery: A Sermon, Preached at Bentinek Chapel, St. Mary-Le-Bone, on Sunday, September 26, 1830* . . . (London: J. Hatchard & Son, 1830).

19. G. F. W. Mortimer, *The Immediate Abolition of Slavery, Compatible with the Safety and Prosperity of the Colonies* . . . (Newcastle upon Tyne: J. Blackwell & Co., 1833). See also Henry Duncan, *Presbyter's Letters on the West India Question* . . . (London: T. and G. Underwood, 1830), and for the pro-slavery view, *A Calm Inquiry into the Countenance Afforded by the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, to the System of British Colonial Slavery* . . . (London: Hamilton, Adams, & Co., 1832).

been used in the campaign against the slave trade, was once again reproduced in various materials to be worn or hung on walls. A well-organized placard campaign to keep London covered with antislavery posters was conducted by George Stephen. He operated a little "army of bill stickers" whose job it was to follow the West Indies agents and cover their proslavery placards with antislavery ones.[20] These posters were simply designed, to appeal to and be read by working-class people who would have neither the time nor the inclination to read books and periodicals.

With the outbreak of the Jamaica insurrection during the Christmas–New Year's season of 1831–1832, just a few months after the Nat Turner rebellion in Virginia, tension rose to a high pitch, and again the planters blamed Baptist missionaries for having incited the slaves. Several, including William Knibb, were put in jail after being forced to enroll in the Jamaican Army, although no evidence could be found to warrant an official charge. One missionary at Falmouth was tarred and feathered, and at least two were forced to leave the islands.

One of the latter, Henry Whitely, returned to England, where he published an account of his treatment and that of the slaves. At a great antislavery meeting in the spring of 1833, T. F. Buxton read excerpts from Whitely's book until the audience could no longer bear to hear of more cruelties and shouted for him to stop. But Hatchard's bookstore in Piccadilly (no doubt with help from agents elsewhere) sold 200,000 copies within two weeks.[21] William Knibb after his return to England became an active and fearless antislavery lecturer, despite the attempts of some fellow Baptist ministers to make him soft-pedal his charges. Like George Thompson, he engaged in public debates with Peter Borthwick that drew large audiences and much attention, and he appeared as a witness before the investigating committees of the

20. *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter,* III–IV (1830–1831); George Stephen, *Antislavery Recollections,* 167–168; Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England,* 273–274.

21. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 90–96; Henry Whitely, *Three Months in Jamaica in 1832: Comprising a Residence of Seven Weeks on a Sugar Plantation* (London: J. Hatchard & Son, 1833); *Liberator,* June 8, 1833.

Lords and the Commons.[22] In July, 1833, American abolitionists published Whitely's book *Three Months in Jamaica* as number 2 of volume I of their new *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* and in September of the same year the *Abolitionist* in Boston carried an article on the book that followed a previous report on the causes and costs of the Jamaican rebellion.[23]

In this atmosphere of excitement the heartstrings of British readers vibrated to a poem contributed by Robert Southey called "The British Slave," circulated by the Female Society for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, of which Elizabeth Heyrick was an officer:

> Oh! he is worn with toil; the big drops run
> Down his dark cheek! Hold,—hold thy merciless hand,
> Pale tyrant; for beneath thy hard command
> O'er wearied nature sinks. The scorching sun,
> As pitiless as proud Prosperity,
> Darts on him his full beams; gasping he lies,
> Arraigning with his looks the patient skies,
> While that inhuman master lifts on high
> The mangling scourge. Oh! Ye who at your ease
> Sip the blood-sweetened beverage! Thoughts like these
> Haply ye scorn: I thank thee, Gracious God!
> That I do feel upon my cheek the glow
> Of indignation, when beneath the rod
> A sable brother writhes in silent woe.[24]

The campaign put on by the abolitionists to force the passage of the emancipation bill was aided by both economic and political developments. One of these was the impact of sugar from Mauritius, which broke the West Indian hold on the British market. In 1825 there had been an equalization of duties on goods

22. John Howard Hinton, *Memoir of William Knibb, Missionary in Jamaica* (London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1847), 120–138; Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class,* 448.

23. *Abolitionist,* Mar., Sept., 1833; *Anti-Slavery Reporter* (New York), I, no. 2 (July, 1833).

24. Female Society for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, *The Fifth Report of the Female Society for Birmingham, West Bromwich, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Their Respective Neighborhoods, for the Relief of British Negro Slaves, Established in 1825* (Birmingham: B. Hudson, 1830).

from Mauritius, and by 1833 its effects were apparent. Zachary Macaulay had been making an intensive study of Mauritius ever since 1825, so the antislavery people were well abreast of the situation and ready to capitalize on the advantage it gave them. The report of a committee in the Commons, printed in 1832, also put the blame on overproduction in the West Indies, absentee landlordism, and competition from Brazil, Cuba, and the United States.[25] One measure of the decline in West Indian economic power was the fact that while in 1814 they bought one-sixth of the exported produce of Great Britain, by 1833 they were buying only one-fifteenth.[26] Josiah Condor's pamphlet *Wages or the Whip* took up James Cropper's oft-repeated argument of the relative costs of free and slave labor.[27] Professor Ragatz concludes that emancipation, "adopted when their [West Indian planters'] fortunes were at lowest ebb, struck the final, mortal blow at the old plantation system and completed in spectacular fashion the downfall of the planter class."[28] But in 1832, as in 1807, the planter class refused to face the reality of its own plight and fought desperately against reform measures.

As was the case in the passage of the 1807 slave-trade bill, the composition of Parliament and the ministry was an important political factor in the timing of the emancipation act. In the election of November, 1830, the Whigs came into power, and Earl Gray, who succeeded the duke of Wellington as prime minister, was more sympathetic to the antislavery position. Buxton, Brougham, Dr. Stephen Lushington, Lord Denman, and Lord Suffield, all leading members of the antislavery society, were Whigs. Since the major issue of the election had been the reform bill, it had to be dealt with first, but the election of the first reform Parliament in itself was a boost to the abolitionist cause.

25. Knutsford, *Life and Letters of Zachary Macaulay*, 432; *A Review of the Report of a Select Committee of the House of Commons, on the State of the West India Colonies . . .* (Liverpool: Egerton Smith & Co., 1833); Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 367–369.

26. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship*, 99–100.

27. Josiah Condor, *Wages or the Whip: An Essay on the Comparative Cost and Productiveness of Free and Slave Labour* (London, 1833).

28. Ragatz, *Fall of the Planter Class*, 383.

The reform candidates were especially responsive to public opinion, and there was no mistaking the country's feeling against slavery.[29]

Before the election the Agency Committee published lists in the daily papers of eligible, ineligible, and doubtful candidates—by antislavery standards. The support of antislavery M.P.s for Catholic emancipation now paid off politically too. Led by Daniel O'Connell, the weight of Irish votes was thrown behind emancipation.[30] Edward Stanley in the Colonial Office was particularly active in securing both parliamentary reform and emancipation, and it was he who drafted the government's bill after Buxton threatened that he would introduce one if they did not. Although Stanley had never been in the West Indies, he had made a tour of the United States in 1824–1825, where he had a first-hand look at slavery.[31]

Just on the eve of the colonial slavery debates in Parliament in 1831, the planters made a last desperate attempt to influence the vote by publishing what was purported to be the slave laws of the West Indies, showing them to have complied with Parliament's resolution for amelioration. But Lord Goderich, the Colonial Secretary to whom the publication was addressed, suspected trickery and, upon investigation, found that they had printed excerpts from his own proposals and the opinions of agents that had never been enacted into laws at all. A similar attempt by the West India Committee in 1830 had been exposed by Zachary Macaulay in the *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter*.[32] Their last-minute exposure now may have influenced some votes, but it was a boomerang against rather than for the planters' side.

A crucial milestone in the emancipation debates came in May,

29. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship*, 101–104; Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition*, 198–199.

30. George Stephen, *Antislavery Recollections*, 166; Klingberg, *Anti-Slavery Movement in England*, 248–249.

31. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship*, 111–113; E[dward] Stanley, *Journal of a Tour in America, 1824–1825* (Privately printed, 1930).

32. *Exposure of an Attempt Recently Made by Certain West-Indian Agents to Mislead Parliament on the Subject of Colonial Slavery* (London: Ellerton & Henderson, 1831).

1832, when a West Indian petition for financial relief was turned, by Buxton, into the occasion for moving a bill for the extinction of slavery, arguing that the planters were blind to the cause of their own economic distress: slavery. He emphasized, too, the danger of rebellion which would devastate the islands and quoted Jefferson: "I do, indeed, tremble for my country, when I remember that God is just, and that His justice may not sleep forever." Yet the old argument that the slaves were not ready for freedom carried more weight with the planters. However, when the vote came, despite all efforts to prevent Buxton from demanding a division, the size of the minority on his side (90 to 163) pointed to the growing strength of the abolitionist cause. In order to avoid as much antagonism as possible, Lord Althorp added an amendment to the resolution to include "a due consideration of the interests of all parties," a loophole through which compensation could be provided for the slave owners, thus helping to assure victory in the future.[33]

The initial emancipation bill was passed in Commons on July 31 and in the Lords on August 8, 1833.[34] It provided that children under six were to be free immediately as long as they were maintained by their parents; otherwise boys were to be apprenticed until age twenty-four and girls until age twenty. Other slaves were to be free as of August 1, 1834, but praedials were to be apprenticed until 1845 (twelve years) and nonpraedials until 1840 (six years). Under the apprenticeship they were to work three-quarters time for their masters with the working day set at ten hours; or a slave could demand a fixed rate of wages for the other quarter of his time, the money to be applied to purchasing his freedom more quickly. The first compensation fixed for the planters was £15,000,000, later raised to £20,000,000.

The main objection raised by the antislavery members was the length of the apprenticeship period, so that was where they concentrated their attack. When Buxton moved an amendment changing the term to only one year, and it was defeated by the close vote of 158 to 151, the government indicated its willingness

33. *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd ser., XIII, 34–97.
34. *Ibid.*, XV, 196–221, 783.

to compromise. In the final bill praedials were given a six-year term and nonpraedials four years.[35]

There was also some disagreement in antislavery ranks over the issue of compensation, but when such strong leaders as Buxton, Macaulay, and Wilberforce consented to it, their point of view carried the day. Even Clarkson accepted the inclusion of compensation and admitted afterward that he trembled to think what might have happened had the antislavery people rejected the whole bill because of it.[36] James Cropper approved the procedure in a campaign pamphlet entitled *A Vindication of a Loan of £15,000,000 to the West India Planters, Shewing That It May Not Only Be Lent with Perfect Safety, But with Immense Advantage, Both to the West Indians and to the People of England.*[37]

Success in 1833, as in 1807, was definitely promoted by the economic situation, but the complexion of Parliament and the ministry was a crucial factor in their favorable response to the concentrated attack culminating the long antislavery crusade.[38] Because of their cooperation with advocates of the reform bill of 1832, abolitionists were able to widen their appeal to the new middle class. Skillful use of propaganda in the prevailing romantic, sentimental literary style of the period had also won converts to the cause.

American abolitionists kept a close watch on the progress of British emancipation through its final stages. A letter from the Pennsylvania Abolition Society to the American Convention in 1825 noted that the same group of British philanthropists who were credited with the success of the legislation against the slave

35. House of Commons, *Sessional Papers, 1833, Public Bills,* IV, 209–233; Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 114–117.

36. Thomas Clarkson to T. F. Buxton, Sept. 25, 1833, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

37. Published in London, 1833.

38. I cannot agree with the analysis of Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 83, who maintains that success came after a long period in which the antislavery movement was "apparently moribund." He holds that success often comes out of a crisis which emerges suddenly and unexpectedly, and that this was the case with the passage of the Emancipation Act.

trade was now organizing to eradicate slavery itself, an action which inspired in the Pennsylvanians a "glow of enthusiasm to emulate their virtue and perseverance."[39] In 1828 the communication of the National Anti-Slavery Tract Society to the convention dwelt on the great moral revolution going on in England, which had made it possible for "the potent voice of the Nation" not only to be heard in Parliament but even to seal the doom of West Indian slavery.[40] At the 1833 meeting of the Pennsylvania Abolition Society the delegates, heartened by British success, pledged themselves to renewed efforts. Now, they said, was the time to take "the tide in the affairs of men" at its full.[41] They were well aware that British success provided a stepping-stone to their own.

Between 1830 and 1833 excerpts of the parliamentary debates were regularly published in American newspapers. While such conservatives as John Quincy Adams feared that the influence of British emancipation might "prove an earthquake on this continent,"[42] the abolitionists' faith and optimism led them to assume that once it could be demonstrated that West Indian emancipation was safe and profitable, American planters could be persuaded to follow suit. Much of their propaganda in the 1830s was to be directed to that point.

It has often been stated that once the British abolitionists had achieved success in their own emancipation crusade, they were able to turn their attention to the problem of world slavery, especially to the system in the United States. It also seems that American abolitionists were purposely waiting to organize a national society until they could capitalize on the enthusiasm engendered by the passing of the British Emancipation Act. The Association of Gentlemen, commonly known as the New York Anti-Slavery Committee, led by Arthur and Lewis Tappan and including George Bourne, Joshua Leavitt, Simeon S. Jocelyn, William Goodell, and Theodore Weld, had been laying the

39. *Minutes of the Nineteenth Session of the American Convention* (Philadelphia: Atkinson & Alexander, 1825).

40. *Minutes of the Adjourned Session of the Twentieth Biennial American Convention* (Philadelphia: Samuel Parker, 1828).

41. Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Minutes, II.

42. Adams, *Memoirs*, VIII, 269.

groundwork and were ready to move as soon as news came to them of the parliamentary victory.[43]

William Lloyd Garrison, acting for the New England abolitionists, was making his first visit to Great Britain at the time the bill was passed. The success of his timing was perhaps more due to coincidence than to strategy, for his trip was planned largely to counter previous action taken by the American Colonization Society, which had already sent an agent to England in 1831 to collect money and rally support for its cause. Although Garrison's announced reason for going to England was to collect money for a manual labor school for colored youths, actually it was to block the colonizationists from capturing the support of the British antislavery movement. As it turned out, the timing could not have been better. When Garrison arrived in England, there was already an argument in progress over emancipation versus colonization, and whether or not the latter could be an aid and adjunct to the former. He was able to capitalize on it, and on the high tide of antislavery emotion generally, and helped to channel this interest into aid for the American antislavery movement.

British doubts about the character of the American Colonization Society had already been stirred up by Captain Charles Stuart upon his return from the United States in 1829 and were heightened when Elliott Cresson, the colonization agent, arrived in 1831. Judging from Cresson's earlier letters and his close association with Roberts Vaux, he appears to have been more sincerely opposed to slavery than were many of his fellow colonizationists. For example, he frequently complained about the practice of allowing slaveholders to be officers in the society, and he spoke of the disgrace of their failure to manumit their slaves. He was especially perturbed about Judge Bushrod Washington's reputation of being a slave breeder and seller. That alone, he claimed, had lost the colonization society the support of tens of thousands of Quakers.[44] In England, sensitive to the strong feel-

43. Gilbert H. Barnes, *The Antislavery Impulse, 1830–1844* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964), 36.

44. See, for example, Cresson to R. R. Gurley, Nov. 18, 1830, Letters Received, ACS Papers. In a letter to Gurley from London, July 22, 1831, he said that the reports about Bushrod Washington were circulating in London.

ings there, he definitely emphasized, indeed was inclined to exaggerate, the antislavery position of the society. Consequently he enjoyed a measure of initial success. In one of his letters home he reported a cordial reception from the London Anti-Slavery Society, which, according to him, deemed colonization a "sister work."

Cresson visited Wilberforce at Bath for a whole week, and the antislavery veteran paid tribute to his "spirited benevolence" in crossing the Atlantic on behalf of his long-neglected fellow creatures. It was to Cresson that Wilberforce expressed his great faith in the efficacy of Anglo-American cooperation, quoting dramatically a passage from Scripture, "And there shall be no more sea." [45] Clarkson, too, received Cresson and declared, as he had so many times in correspondence with Americans, that he approved of colonization, even in Liberia, if there was no element of coercion associated with the emigration of free blacks.[46] Cresson was also invited to dine at the Buxton home, where the children, upon hearing that a slave could be bought for £7, decided to buy one so that they could emancipate him.[47]

Through Adam Hodgson and Dr. Thomas Raffles, Cresson met an editor of the *Times* of London, who gave him some free publicity through an article about his mission. The Reverend Josiah Pratt, editor of the *Missionary Review*, was so favorably impressed that he asked Cresson to have all of the society's publications sent to him.[48] Generally those magazines which opposed West Indian emancipation saw a chance to hit the antislavery society by supporting Cresson and colonization. The *Herald of Peace*, edited by John Bevan, printed material furnished by Cresson, and the *Missionary Register*, *Eclectic Review*, *Gentlemen's Magazine* (sometimes antislavery), and *New Baptist Miscellany* were among those which printed articles on colonization.[49]

45. Cresson to Gurley, Nov. 10, 1831, and n.d., Letters Received, ACS Papers. From the contents it seems clear the undated letter was written in 1831.

46. Clarkson to [?] Crisp, Oct. 24, 1833, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Cresson to Gurley, Sept. 6, 1831, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

47. Cresson to Gurley, June 23, 1831, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

48. *Ibid.*

49. Cresson to Gurley, Sept. 6, Oct. 6, 1831, June 6, 1832, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

Even Harriet Martineau promised him an article in *Tait's Magazine* and a volume on Liberia for a new series she planned.[50] One of his most faithful supporters was a London doctor, Thomas Hodgkin, whose pamphlet *On Negro Emancipation and American Colonization* came out in the summer of 1832 while Cresson was still in England. A later one in 1834, *On the British African Colonization Society,* advocated following the American example and cooperating with them in resettling free blacks from both the United States and the West Indies who wanted to go to Africa.[51]

One of Cresson's ideas for gaining the support of influential people was to honor them by placing their names on the board of directors or as vice-presidents of the American Colonization Society.[52] Another was to name places in Liberia to honor individuals or groups in return for monetary contributions. For example, a pledge of £2,000 was rewarded with the promise to establish the towns of Sussex and Wilberforce, and a settlement called Edina was to honor the people of Edinburgh who made contributions.[53] One Scotsman donated money to send a free black man to Liberia on condition that he take the name "Scotland" and all of his descendants should bear the name.[54] Another of Cresson's proposals was that the society should try to foster the raising of sugar in Liberia in order to gain the support of the free-produce movement in England.[55]

Cresson was not deceived about the difficulty of his mission.

50. Cresson to Gurley, July 25, 1832, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

51. Thomas Hodgkin, *On Negro Emancipation and American Colonization* (London, 1832); Hodgkin, *On the British African Colonization Society. To Which Are Added, Some Particulars Respecting the American Colonization Society; and a Letter from Jeremiah Hubbard, Addressed to a Friend in England, on the Same Subject* (London: Richard Watts, 1834).

52. Clarkson, Wilberforce, Brougham, and R. D. Alexander of Ipswich were all suggested by Cresson, but if invited, they did not accept. According to Cresson the duke of Sussex agreed to accept the honor, but his name does not appear in the records of the society. The names of Englishmen which do appear are the Right Honorable Lord Bexley, Dr. Hodgkin, and Gerard Ralston. Ralston donated money to Cresson and advised him on "strategy."

53. Cresson to Gurley, Nov. 10, 1832, Jan. 28, 1833, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

54. Cresson to Gurley, Sept. 6, 1831, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

55. Cresson to Gurley, Apr. 26, 1832, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

He found many of the British abolitionists to be as "thorough-paced" as Garrison himself and attributed their adamancy on immediatism to pamphlets that had been sent over by American abolitionists. Seemingly he was not aware of Mrs. Heyrick and other earlier British immediatists. Yet he was sanguine that his "patient elucidation" on the problem of the free blacks would carry weight in dispelling prejudice against colonization.[56]

Within a month after his arrival he reported a "cautious skirmish" with the "Quixotic" Stuart, and within two months they had exchanged open letters. To Stuart, who knew the extent of slaveholding interests in the colonization society, Cresson's claims for it seemed the epitome of hypocrisy. The emotion evident in Cresson's report to R. R. Gurley leads one to think he may have come off second best. Stuart, he charged, was a second Garrison, "canting, hypocritical & obnoxious"; he had been forced to handle him "without gloves." [57] The antislavery society refused to read his answer to Stuart in their branch meetings, but the *Westminster Review* and the *English Magazine* sided with him by printing several thousand copies for circulation.[58]

Garrison's *Thoughts on Colonization* arrived in England several months before he did, and by the time he got there, Stuart, James Cropper, and Zachary Macaulay had launched a full-scale attack on Cresson and colonization. In the *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter* Macaulay attacked the "startling boldness" of the American Colonization Society in avowing its purposes, which were based on "cruel and unjust expedients" and were therefore denounced by free blacks in the United States.[59] In 1832 Stuart produced *Remarks on the Colony of Liberia and the American Colonization Society,* and his *Prejudice Vincible* was coupled in a special anticolonization edition with James Cropper's *Letter to*

56. Cresson to Gurley, May 31, 1831, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

57. Cresson to Gurley, June 23, July 22, 29, 1831, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

58. Cresson to Gurley, Sept. 6, 1831, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

59. *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter,* V (Nov. 1, 1832); William Lloyd Garrison, *Thoughts on African Colonization, or An Impartial Exhibition of the Doctrines, Principles and Purposes of the American Colonization Society* . . . (Boston: Garrison & Knapp, 1832).

Thomas Clarkson, which remonstrated with Clarkson for seeming to lend his name to support the American society.

In *Prejudice Vincible* Stuart quoted resolutions from the various meetings of free black people that demonstrated their opposition to the Liberian scheme. He appealed to the British to give their money to emancipation, not colonization, societies and specifically recommended the New England Anti-Slavery Society, in which he held a life membership himself and of which Arnold Buffum was the president. Buffum had visited England in 1826–1827 so his name was already familiar to many of the antislavery people there. Stuart made a great plea to the British to use their power to influence America: "Where is the man in Britain who has not a father, mother, sister, friend, in the United States? . . . Let us remonstrate with them; let us rebuke them even as brother rebukes the brother whom he loves . . . let us set them the example even as the father should set the example of righteousness to the child of his heart. . . ." [60]

Cresson was quick to identify Stuart, Macaulay, and Cropper as his primary antagonists; Daniel O'Connell and J. J. Gurney were later added to his list of villains. He claimed that they were all influenced by Garrison's *Liberator* and Lundy's *Genius of Universal Emancipation.* Quakers (Cresson was one himself) such as Gurney were, he thought, victims of Hicksite propaganda. Cresson seems to have been particularly sensitive to the fact that Macaulay (whom he called "St. Zachariah") snubbed him by not receiving him socially. He was angered not only by the attacks in the *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter* but because Macaulay used his influence as the former editor of the *Christian Observer,* and his son's position as one of the editors of the *Edinburgh Review,* to control those publications. Cresson was, in fact, so vitriolic against Macaulay that he tried to revive the old rumors

60. [Charles Stuart], *Remarks on the Colony of Liberia and the American Colonization Society with Some Account of the Settlement of Coloured People, at Wilberforce, Upper Canada* (London: J. Messeder, 1832); Stuart, *A Letter to Thomas Clarkson by James Cropper. And Prejudice Vincible; or The Practicability of Conquering Prejudice by Better Means Than by Slavery and Exile; in Relation to the American Colonization Society* (Liverpool: Egerton Smith & Co., 1832); letter from Charles Stuart, *Liberator,* Mar. 30, 1833.

that Macaulay had investments in the slave trade. After an antislavery meeting in which O'Connell, among others, attacked colonization, Cresson could not refrain from a pun on the initials of the antislavery society by dubbing them "A.S.S.es or worse." [61] By the summer of 1832 he instructed Gurley to stop sending his mail to the antislavery office—it was equivalent to sending it in care of Garrison himself! [62]

Before Garrison arrived on the scene in person, two other American abolitionists appeared as thorns in Cresson's side: Charles Osborn, who had edited the *Philanthropist* in Mt. Pleasant, Ohio, and the Reverend Nathaniel Paul, a free colored minister who was representing the interests of the fugitive-slave colony of Wilberforce in upper Canada. Paul's purpose was to gain the sympathy of the British people and, consequently, the patronage of the crown.[63] He furnished Stuart and Cooper with much of the information on black opposition to colonization that they had incorporated into their pamphlets, and Stuart's *Remarks on the Colony of Liberia* was written in part to support Paul's agency.[64]

Cresson appealed to Osborn not to hinder his mission, but Osborn asserted he would continue to expose the "evil designs" of the American Colonization Society both abroad and at home.[65] Nathaniel Paul offered strong competition to Cresson in lectures, drawing such large crowds that some people had to be turned away for lack of room. As one of the first black abolitionists to go from the United States to Great Britain, he was the object of much curiosity, and his accounts of the treatment of free blacks in America were much more impressive than if they had come from a white man. Liberian colonization, he told his audiences, was just another way of depriving the free blacks of their rights at home.[66] Because he could make his appeal as a black man, the

61. Cresson to Gurley, Nov. 10, Dec. 28, 1831, Apr. 16, 26, May 14, 22, 1832, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

62. Cresson to Gurley, June 9, 1832, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

63. *Liberator*, Jan. 14, 1832.

64. Barnes, *Antislavery Impulse*, 214, note 18.

65. Julian, *Charles Osborn as an Anti-Slavery Pioneer*, 261.

66. Nathaniel Paul to Garrison, Aug. 25, 1832, Apr. 10, 1833, Jan. 22, 1834, in *Journal of Negro History*, X (July, 1925), 347–349.

British abolitionists welcomed and acknowledged his contribution to their own cause of West Indian emancipation.[67]

When Garrison landed in England in May, 1833, therefore, he was immediately plunged into the thick of the kind of controversy he flourished in, and since his reputation had already preceded him, he was in a position to deliver the *coup de grâce* to Cresson's mission, already "softened up" by Stuart, Paul, and Cropper. Cresson was well aware of the strength of Garrison as an adversary and of Garrison's style of attack as demonstrated in the *Liberator*. As early as 1830 he had referred to him as "that Bedlamite Garrison" and a "2nd [David] Walker" in his potential for stirring violent reaction.[68] He knew, too, that one of Garrison's major weapons was the official publication of the American Colonization Society itself, the *African Repository*, for it regularly published articles designed to allay southern fears of its being an antislavery mouthpiece.

Repeatedly in his letters back to the officers of the parent organization, Cresson pleaded with them to refrain from seeming to support the slaveholders and to recognize that if they wanted British backing and circulation for their magazine in Britain, they had to argue for colonization as beneficial to the free blacks, as being completely voluntary, and of great potential blessing to Africa. Moreover, Garrison was better supplied with recent copies of the *African Repository* than Cresson was (a source of long complaints on the part of the latter), who often, therefore, was in no position to make an adequate rebuttal to Garrison's accusations.[69]

Garrison lost no time in challenging Cresson to a public debate, and he printed his challenge in an open letter to the *Times*. The colonizationist declined a formal engagement, but they were both present at several meetings that became "vehement and even boisterous."[70] In July a meeting was held at Exeter Hall in Lon-

67. William H. and Jane H. Pease, *Black Utopia: Negro Communal Experiments in America* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1963), 58–59.

68. Cresson to Gurley, Sept. 28, 1830, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

69. Cresson to Gurley, June 6, Aug. 15, 1833, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

70. Wendell Phillips Garrison and Francis Jackson Garrison, *William Lloyd Garrison, 1805–1879: The Story of His Life Told by His Children*, 4 vols. (New

don for the express purpose of exposing the "antislavery pretenses" of the American Colonization Society.[71] During that summer several more anticolonization pamphlets were published, including Stuart's *Liberia; or, The American Colonization Scheme Examined and Exposed;* a new edition of Cropper's *The Extinction of the American Colonization Soeiety the First Step to the Abolition of American Slavery;* one by "Clericus," *Facts Designed to Exhibit the Real Character and Tendeney of the Ameriean Colonization Society;* and *Strictures on Dr. Hodgkin's Pamphlet on Negro Emaneipation and American Colonization,* which appeared in the *Imperial Magazine.*[72] Dr. Hodgkin responded with *An Inquiry into the Merits of the American Colonization Soeiety and a Reply to the Charges Brought against It.*

Back in the United States many of these or excerpts from them were published in the *Abolitionist,* the organ of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, beginning in July, 1833. The Reverend Leonard Bacon's *Review of Pamphlets on Slavery and Colonization,* which discussed Garrison's *Thoughts on Colonization* and Stuart's *Prejudice Vincible,* was circulated as a rebuttal of abolitionist charges.[73] The June, August, and November issues of the New York *Anti-Slavery Reporter* were devoted to reprinting British anticolonization pieces by Stuart, Cropper, and Clarkson.

York: Century Co., 1885–1889), I, 352–356, 365–368 (hereinafter eited as Garrison, *Lifc*).

71. *Ibid.,* 368–371; *Libcrator,* Nov. 9, 16, 30, 1833.

72. Charles Stuart, *Liberia; or, The American Colonization Schemc Examined and Exposed* . . . (Glasgow: W. R. McPhun & George Gallie, 1833); James Cropper, *The Extinction of the Amcrican Colonization Society thc First Step to the Abolition of American Slavery* (London: S. Bagster, 1833); "Clerieus," *Facts Designed to Exhibit the Rcal Character and Tendcncy of the American Colonization Society* (Liverpool: Egerton Smith, 1833); *Strictures on Dr. Hodgkin's Pamphlet on Negro Emancipation and American Colonization* (London: H. Fisher, R. Fisher, & P. Jaekson, 1833).

73. Thomas Hodgkin, *An Inquiry into the Merits of the American Colonization Society and a Rcply to the Charges Brought against It. With an Account of the British African Colonization Society* (London: J. & A. Areh, 1833); [Leonard Baeon], *Review of Pamphlets on Slavcry and Colonization,* 2nd ed. (New Haven, Conn.: A. H. Maltby, 1833); *Abolitionist,* July, Sept., 1833. The *Anti-Slavcry Reporter,* I, no. 1 (June, 1833), has a reprint of Cropper's *Letter to Clarkson* and Stuart's *Prejudice Vincible.* The August issue is *Extracts from Clarkson's "Thoughts* . . . ," and the Novcmber issue is a reprint of an old Granville Sharp piece first published in London in 1776.

The final triumph for Garrison came when he was presented with the signatures of the leading British abolitionists on a protest against support for the American Colonization Society. Buxton, Wilberforce, Macaulay, Cropper, William Smith, George Stephen, Dr. Stephen Lushington, William Allen, Samuel Gurney, and Daniel O'Connell were among those who signed. The original document was proudly carried home to the United States as a major trophy of the trip and was publicized in the New York *Emancipator*, the New York *Evangelist*, and the Lowell *Observer* as well as in the *Liberator*.[74] The fact that signing it was one of Wilberforce's last public acts before his death made it a document worthy of veneration by abolitionists everywhere.

Clarkson's name was conspicuously absent from the "Protest," although Garrison and Nathaniel Paul visited him to try to persuade him to add it. He insisted that since he regarded colonization as ancillary to emancipation when undertaken without compulsion, he wanted to remain neutral in the controversy. Evidently Clarkson's decision was based partly on his mistrust of Garrison, who had made some charges "which he could not substantiate by anything better than by vague report or by hearsay. . . ." Clarkson denied, however, that he had told Cresson that "the mad career of Mr. Garrison ought to be stopped" but admitted that he did consider Garrison "imprudent" and objected to his printing, out of context, what people said.[75]

Elliott Cresson did manage to organize the British African Colonization Society and to find some titled people to accept its offices—a policy in line with his conclusion that he could "sink" Garrison faster by patronage in high places than by confrontation. The duke of Sussex agreed to be its patron, the Right Honor-

74. Garrison, *Life*, I, 360–361. It was republished by Lydia Maria Child, ed., in *The Oasis* (Boston: Benjamin C. Bacon, 1834) and as late as 1853 by G. B. Stebbins in *Facts and Opinions Touching the Real Origin, Character, and Influence of the American Colonization Society: Views of Wilberforce, Clarkson, and Others, and Opinions of the Free People of Color of the United States* (Boston: John Jewett & Co., 1853). Garrison wrote to John B. Vashon, a free Negro in Pittsburgh, that the "protest" would be worth "thousands of dollars" to the cause. See "Letters of William Lloyd Garrison to John B. Vashon," *Journal of Negro History*, XII (Jan., 1927), 33–40.

75. Clarkson to [?] Crisp. Oct. 24, 1833, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Garrison, *Life*, I, 362–363.

able Lord Bexley (who had given £50 to start an Episcopal chapel in Liberia) accepted the office of president, and the vice-presidents included the duke of Bedford, Sir Gore Ouseley, Sir George Murray, the marquis of Westminster, and the archbishop of Dublin.[76] It was never to be either active or influential as an organization. Back in the United States David Lee Child pronounced Cresson's epitaph as "that fallen representative of a fallen concern." [77]

Cresson's mission cannot be said to have been successful, measured against his aims in going to England, but it had an important impact on the furtherance of the Anglo-American united front against slavery. Just as similar debates over colonization versus emancipation in the United States (such as the one at Lane Seminary in 1834) publicized the whole issue of slavery and pushed more people to take a stand for emancipation, the debates in England focused attention on the United States and resulted in Englishmen taking stands on how America should deal with her problem. Since the debate reached its height simultaneously with the passage of the British Emancipation Act, it was natural that all of the emotion and zeal engendered by it would find a new outlet in this controversy. Cresson's colonizationist mission gave the antislavery cause much more publicity than it would otherwise have enjoyed. He, perhaps as much as Garrison, was an agent in forging another link in transatlantic cooperation.

His mission has importance in another way as well. Through him American colonizationists and proslavery forces were alerted to the depth and extent of British antislavery opinion—something Cresson himself had not realized until he experienced it. The impact of British emancipation on Cresson is expressed in his letters to R. R. Gurley back in Washington headquarters. When it became evident that the British would pass their bill, he asked, "If they do, will our two million [slaves] rest quietly

76. Cresson to Gurley, Nov. 10, 1832, Nov. 2, 1833, Letters Received, ACS Papers. Charles Stuart characterized Cresson as "a thorough flatterer" who "loves to flit among the learned and rich, and honorable and titled." See Stuart to Arnold Buffum, June 29, 1833, in *Liberator*, Aug. 31, 1833.

77. David Lee Child to Mr. Newman, Aug. 14, 1833, Pritchard Letters.

as they are?," and confessed that he trembled for the fate of "those who act as we are doing," i.e., refusing to ameliorate the conditions of slavery. Such refusal would lead to more catastrophes "than we have yet experienced." [78] He also reported evidences of an "incendiary" spirit. One man in Aldermanbury had told Cresson that he would as soon join the American slaves as the Poles in fighting for their liberty.[79]

While Garrison undoubtedly benefited from the excitement of his competition with Cresson, he was the kind of person who would have created a stir all by himself. The *Liberator* was known in England and had an agent there, Joseph Phillips. Phillips had written to Garrison in the summer of 1831 to send him news of the antislavery movement in Great Britain, particularly the current petition campaign, and by 1834 he had obtained forty British subscriptions to the *Liberator*. His own interest in the cause stemmed from a long residence of twenty-eight years in Antigua.[80] Garrison had also corresponded with James Cropper, who in 1832 had sent him a bundle of British publications on colonization,[81] and Garrison and Charles Stuart were already friends from the time of Stuart's American sojourn. From time to time Garrison published letters from Stuart, and Stuart, too, supplied him with British antislavery pamphlets. Moreover, Garrison was already something of a hero because of his imprisonment in a Maryland jail until rescued by Arthur Tappan. Because of his vehemence, many of the Britishers assumed he was a black man and had advertised him as such. T. F. Buxton, for one, voiced astonishment at seeing his white skin.[82]

During his visit Garrison met all the English abolitionist leaders, who were congregated in London for the passage of the Emancipation Act. He attended their meetings, studied their procedures and organization. Each morning he joined them for

78. Cresson to Gurley, Sept. 6, 1831, Jan. 6, 1832, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

79. Cresson to Gurley, Aug. 15, 1833, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

80. Joseph Phillips to Garrison, July 25, 1831, in *Liberator,* Nov. 19, 1831; Garrison, *Life,* I, 432.

81. *Liberator,* Nov. 24, 1832.

82. Garrison, *Life,* I, 351; T. F. Buxton to Garrison, Nov. 12, 1832, in *Abolitionist,* I, no. 6 (June, 1833).

breakfast at the Guild-hall coffee shop, where plans were discussed. Three points of strategy seem to have especially impressed Garrison: the agency system, the active participation of women, and the emphasis on winning the overwhelming support of public opinion. In a letter home to the secretary of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, he stressed the importance of agents as the means of winning public support: "We must recollect that our business is emphatically with the *people;* it is their *will* which is to be consulted, enlightened and secured." Newspapers and publications would do their part, but nothing could be so effective as personal contact. Of the numerous petitions crowding Parliament, many had been drawn up and circulated by women. One, signed by 800,000 ladies, with Amelia Opie's name heading the list, moved Garrison to propose "three cheers for the ladies of Great Britain!" [83] and to return home convinced that American women should be encouraged to play a more prominent role in the cause.

Garrison's dedication was obvious. The British were impressed by him and he with them. To be present to witness the tremendous exhilaration of the achievement of British emancipation was an inspiration he would never forget. A second deeply moving experience while there was the death of Wilberforce. Garrison took his place in the funeral procession with other antislavery mourners as they marched to Westminster Abbey, where the antislavery leader was buried with other honored sons of Britannia. Garrison could hardly have helped wondering how long it would be before his own country would so honor an abolitionist. Perhaps there was a large ingredient of personal ambition in Garrison's planning his English trip so that he could emerge as the foremost American antislavery leader just at the time a national antislavery society was to be established, but regardless of his motivation, his trip gave a tremendous boost to the cause of Anglo-American antislavery union.[84]

83. *Liberator,* July 13, 1833.

84. See John L. Thomas, *The Liberator, William Lloyd Garrison* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1963), for this interpretation stressing Garrison's ambitions. Bertram Wyatt-Brown in *Lewis Tappan and the Evangelical War against Slavery,* 103, credits Tappan with having "dispatched Garrison to England."

The New Vigor of Immediatism in America

X

Abolitionists in Great Britain and the United States were well abreast of each other's progress, but by 1833 there were three specific lines of communication which were direct and important: (1) that established through Charles Stuart and his American protégé, Theodore Weld, who was emerging as one of the primary American leaders; (2) that established as a consequence of the personal contacts Garrison made on his English visit; and (3) that maintained by the Quakers, especially those in Philadelphia and London. Garrison, Weld, and such Quaker leaders as Evan Lewis were all influenced by the British movement and recognized the importance of a national antislavery society. Since each represented a particular American group, their leadership was highly important in effecting a liaison.

It was no accident that Philadelphia was chosen as the meeting place to organize the American Anti-Slavery Society. It, more than any other city, was the cradle of American antislavery because of early Quaker activities. Evan Lewis, a Philadelphia Friend, played a leading role in its selection and presided over the opening of the convention.[1] The Philadelphia Quakers also had the longest connection with the British in a variety of endeavors: abolition of the slave trade, education of free blacks, and

1. *Weld-Grimké Letters*, I, 118n.

projects for emigration, all of which dated back to the days of John Woolman and Anthony Benezet. The letters which passed between the yearly meetings in the years 1831 to 1833 contain frequent references to the slavery issue and reflect common rejoicing over the British accomplishment.[2]

While in England Garrison had been surprised and impressed by the number of Quakers not only involved in but leading the antislavery organizations. The Gurneys, Buxtons, Forsters, Sturges, Allens, Braithwaites, and Hoares all came from or married into Quaker families. They were wealthy people, and they generously contributed money as well as talent to most of the reform enterprises of the early nineteenth century.[3] British Quakers generally urged their American brethren to work with other abolitionists rather than in separate organizations.[4] Garrison, of course, represented the New England center of abolitionism, whose society had been organized in Boston in 1831. Theodore Weld was the main liaison man between the New York City group led by the Tappan brothers, the upstate group of the "burnt-over district," and western abolitionism with its main center in Cincinnati. The establishment of the axis, the American Anti-Slavery Society, to connect these areas and groups, gave strength to the abolitionist cause in the 1830s and thereby helped distinguish it from the relatively decentralized and disorganized movement of the earlier periods.

The call that went out for the meeting to organize the American Anti-Slavery Society in December, 1833, specifically acknowledged the inspiration derived from the British: "We have before us numerous examples of similar organizations, which, though feeble and obscure, and contemned by public opinion in the outset, have speedily risen to great influence, and have been the means, under God, of immense benefit to the human race. Especially is this true of the National Anti-Slavery Society of

2. London Yearly Meeting, Epistles Received, VII, and Letters to and from Philadelphia, I, Friends House Library.

3. Garrison, *Life*, I, 349. Information on these families and their numerous intermarriages can be found at Friends House Library, London, and at the Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore, Pa.

4. See, for example, Moses Brown to John G. Whittier, Aug. 13, 1834, Whittier Letters.

Great Britain, and of the American Temperance Society." [5] Like the British society, the American was based on the agency system. Salaried lecturers would be sent to organize local societies, solicit donations, and enlist volunteer workers. They envisaged a vast network of abolition organizations that would eventually cover the nation and convert it to the justice of the cause.

Like the British, they used the phrase "immediate emancipation" to describe their aim; but also like the British, what they meant was an immediate beginning. Neither the British in 1823 nor the Americans in 1833 were naïve enough actually to expect emancipation overnight. It had taken them ten years in England to get their bill passed, during which time some ameliorative measures were adopted, and there would be several years of apprenticeship for the slaves—all of which added up, in fact, to gradual emancipation. Similarly in the United States there was probably no one who did not envision a long campaign characterized by sporadic accomplishment. It was bound to take longer in the United States: the larger size of the country, the greater power of the planter group, the complications of the federal system, and the actual presence of blacks, which produced racial fears unknown and not understood by the British, all militated against sudden success. In the West Indies free mulatto planters were in a position to be a significant element of opposition to the white planters, but in the United States there was no comparable group. The free blacks had no more power than the slaves themselves. But while the use of the term "immediate emancipation" belied the actual expectations of the abolitionists, and probably did more than anything to distort both their contemporary and their historical "images," it was psychologically necessary. Gradualism was outmoded; it was getting nowhere. Something rousing was imperative.

The difference between the situations in America and Great Britain dictated a divergent line of emphasis and activity. This stemmed primarily from the seeming hopelessness of the American political picture. Under the federal structure the southern states, even when a minority, held sufficient power to block anti-

5. Elizur Wright, Jr., to Theodore Weld, Oct. 27, 1833, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* I, 117–118.

slavery legislation, and because of the three-fifths clause they enjoyed power in the House of Representatives out of proportion to the actual number of people in their white populations. Both of the major parties held strength in the South as well as in the North, and both, therefore, carefully avoided any antislavery commitment. Party discipline, in turn, effectively prevented the rise of any individual who might try to make a political career out of championing the antislavery cause. John Quincy Adams, for example, although he had said privately as early as the 1820s that maybe even a separation of the Union to end slavery would be worthwhile, did not come out openly as an antislavery champion until the mid-1830s, when as a former president he could afford to some extent to act independently of party considerations.

Very few known abolitionists could even get themselves elected to Congress in the 1830s. But outside the political arena the decade was characterized by a rash of reform activity—temperance, women's rights, prison reform, workingmen's parties, and Bible, tract, and missionary societies—all of which stemmed to some degree from the "Great Revival." It was only natural, therefore, that the antislavery movement should try to operate within the area that seemed most promising because of the "mood" of the time: moral reform. It would be incorrect to say the movement abandoned political activity. Abolition societies continued to bombard Congress and the state legislatures with petitions against slavery in the territories and in the District of Columbia. When political issues arose involving slavery, such as the annexation of Texas, they helped to mobilize public opinion, and they continued pressing for legislation to help the free colored people. It was not, therefore, an entire abandonment of political avenues but, rather, a shift in emphasis. During the thirties the chief targets were the American churches and the consciences of individual citizens. Like the British, though, American antislavery workers always kept in mind that this conversion of public opinion would eventually force government action, both state and federal.

The religious orientation of the American antislavery move-

ment accounts for its rejection of one feature of British emancipation: compensation. If slaveholding was a sin, as the abolitionists asserted, they must preach repentance and rejection of that sin. It followed that to compensate one for having owned slaves would be as illogical as to pay for giving up such other sins as lying, stealing, or adultery—as if conversion, the blessing of a clean conscience, and the consciousness of God's favor were not in themselves enough. Acceptance of this high ground did tend to put the American abolitionists in a position unfavorable to compromise, but it is unfair to put all the blame for the failure to compromise on them. One must keep in mind that the South had long since refused to consider proposals of emancipation with compensation and would continue to refuse right down to the Civil War, when Lincoln attempted that approach. It was as much southern as abolitionist adamancy that defeated compensated emancipation.

While Elliott Cresson was still in England, he wrote home that he had heard that those "firebrands" Charles Stuart and George Thompson were to be sent on a mission to the United States.[6] Some Britishers, including James Cropper, were a bit afraid of "stepping out of our proper place in paying agents to travel in the United States," but they quickly rationalized donations to support such an endeavor on the grounds that "there is a degree of apathy from which it is needful the people in your country should by some means be aroused."[7] The agents themselves rested their mission on the biblical command "Go ye into all the world . . ." and argued that the United States could not approve of sending out missionaries and then refuse to receive any herself.[8] Stuart and Thompson were well qualified as "arousers," and both arrived in 1834, Stuart in April and Thompson in September.

6. Cresson to Gurley, Aug. 15, 1833, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

7. Cropper is quoted in Garrison, *Life*, I, 444.

8. William Lloyd Garrison, ed., *Lectures of George Thompson, with a Full Report of the Discussion between Mr. Thompson and Mr. Borthwick, the Pro-Slavery Agent . . .* (Boston: Isaac Knapp, 1836), xviii; George Thompson, *Letters and Addresses by George Thompson, during His Mission in the United States, from Oct. 1st, 1834, to Nov. 27, 1835* (Boston: Isaac Knapp, 1837), 68.

For Stuart it was something of a homecoming, for he had taught at the academy in Utica, New York, before his return to England in 1829. He had met Theodore Weld there, had taken him under his wing, and had influenced him in the direction of the antislavery cause. While back in England he had corresponded regularly with Weld and kept him supplied with British antislavery publications.[9]

This time Stuart was to stay in the United States for more than three years, lecturing in New England, New York, and as far west as Ohio. Some of this traveling was at his own expense, but some was under the commission of the American Anti-Slavery Society. He arrived from England with $1,000 that he had collected for the New England Anti-Slavery Society's manual labor school (which never materialized), and one of his principal roles in the United States was collecting funds as he lectured. Although Stuart, like Thompson, was denounced as a "foreign emissary" and mobbed at least once in western New York, he aroused less hostility than his compatriot. Perhaps the fact that he worked mostly in western New York, where he had lived and taught for several years, made him more acceptable.[10]

George Thompson's stay was shorter and stormier, not only because of his closer association with Garrison, who was already typed as a radical, but because Thompson's style, like that of Garrison, was harsh and denunciatory. Upon his arrival he was hailed by antislavery friends as another Lafayette who had come to "espouse the cause of a brave but injured people, in their unequal struggle for liberty."[11] American newspapers, on the other hand, referred to him as an "infamous foreign scoundrel" and charged that he had been sent by the British government to disrupt the Union. Others, in ridicule, noted that he was financed by a "bevy of old maids" in Scotland. The *New York Courier*

9. *Weld-Grimké Letters*, I, xx–xxii, 48–49, 74, 101.

10. American Anti-Slavery Society, Agency Committee Minutes, Oct. 1, 1834, Boston Public Library; William L. Garrison to Mrs. Garrison, Dec. 28, 1835, in Garrison, *Life*, II, 67.

11. Garrison, ed., *Lectures of George Thompson*, xi–xii; Thompson, *Letters and Addresses*, v–vi.

and Enquirer announced him as the "apostle of the old pussy cats of Glasgow" and as "this tool of Tappanism." [12]

As a matter of fact, the Glasgow Ladies' Auxiliary Emancipation Society was supporting him, and through him it established connections with individual women and ladies' auxiliary societies in the United States. Thompson seems to have been very popular with the ladies, and because of their support, everywhere he went in the United States he made a point of addressing their groups and helping them to form new societies. When he went home, he carried with him from the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society an address "To the Women of Great Britain" thanking them for sending Thompson and soliciting continuing prayers and aid. Lucretia Mott of Philadelphia, Juliana Tappan of New York, and Maria Weston Chapman of Boston were among those sending individual letters. All praised the work of Thompson and asked for advice from their British sisters on everything from conducting antislavery bazaars to how to interest children in the cause.[13]

Elizabeth Pease, of a well-to-do British Quaker family, used the connection with Thompson to open a correspondence with Angelina Grimké, and a subsequent letter from Miss Grimké to the Ladies' Society in Darlington, England, suggested several ways in which they could aid the American cause: (1) offer sympathy and prayers; (2) keep the issue of American slavery before the British public; (3) send resolutions and appeals to American churches; (4) give pecuniary aid if possible; (5) send

12. Garrison, ed., *Lectures of George Thompson,* xxi–xxii; Oliver Johnson, *William Lloyd Garrison and His Times; or, Sketches of the Anti-Slavery Movement in America, and of the Man Who Was Its Founder and Moral Leader* (Boston: B. B. Russell & Co., 1880), 136; *Proceedings of the Anti-Slavery Meeting Held in Stacy Hall, Boston, on the Twentieth Anniversary of the Mob of October 21, 1835* (Boston: R. F. Wallcut, 1855).

13. John G. Whittier to Elizabeth Whittier, Apr. 12, 1835; Sarah L. Forten to Elizabeth Whittier, Mar. 23, 1835; and Louise Marie [?] to Elizabeth Whittier, Nov. 13, 1834, all in Whittier Letters; Glasgow Ladies' Auxiliary Emancipation Society, *Three Years' Female Anti-Slavery Effort . . .* (Glasgow: Aird and Russell, 1837); board of managers of Ladies' New York City Anti-Slavery Society to secretary of Society for the Abolition of Slavery, London, Dec. 9, 1835, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

articles of handwork for the antislavery bazaars; and (6) "above all, keep *our* intrepid champion, George Thompson, in the field." [14] It is not surprising that most of the women abolitionists in both America and Britain tended to sympathize with the Garrison-Thompson group after the great split of 1840.

Thompson's lectures in America took him throughout the northern states. He denied that he wanted to interfere in American politics: his mission was one of religion and humanity. He had come, he said, to assure American abolitionists that multitudes across the Atlantic were watching their progress and cheering them on. Now that emancipation was accomplished in the British dominions, all eyes were turned toward the United States to see if she would "direct her matchless energies to the blessed work of enfranchising her slaves." [15] Although both English and American abolitionists now operated under the label of immediatists, what Thompson actually advocated was a plan of gradual emancipation: first free the children, then the old, then the "grateful" slaves, and last of all the "revengeful residue." This would insure safety and could be handled by the proper legal officers.[16]

Since the 1830s was the era of anti-abolitionist mobs, Thompson was the target of special indignities simply because he was a foreigner. Before he arrived at his lodging after landing in New York, the other boarders threatened to move out if he would not, and in Boston he and his family were turned out of their hotel rooms because of the refusal of a southern guest to stay under the same roof with him.[17] In Portland, Maine, the windows were broken in the house where he was staying, and a citizens' committee ordered him to leave town. In some towns no one would rent him a lecture hall, and in others where he found a place, he was the target of brickbats and other missiles thrown through the windows. In "a certain place misnamed

14. Elizabeth Pease to Angelina Grimké, Dec. 27, 1836, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* I, 349–353; Angelina Grimké to Darlington Ladies' Society, Mar. 17, 1837, in *Three Years' Female Anti-Slavery Effort.*

15. Thompson, *Letters and Addresses,* 1, 6.

16. *Ibid.,* 21–27.

17. Weld to Birney, Oct. 6, 1834, James G. Birney Papers, William L. Clements Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Garrison, *Life,* I, 451.

Concord," as John Greenleaf Whittier described it, Whittier and Thompson were both stoned.[18] In New York City placards signed "Judge Lynch" were posted, announcing that Thompson was a guest of Lewis Tappan at 40 Rose Street. They invited the public to bring him to the merchants' exchange to be "dealt with according to my code of laws." A mob was organized, but a warning from the mayor prevented an eruption.[19]

When called a meddling foreign emissary, even by President Jackson in his message to Congress in December, 1835, Thompson's answer was that he would quit and go home on condition that those who objected to him would furnish him "a plea which shall avail in the day of judgment, when my Maker shall ask me why I did not do, in America, that which all the feelings of my heart, and all the dictates of my judgment, and all the principles too, of God's own gospel, so powerfully prompted me to do." His censures of the United States were severe. "How long," he asked, "shall the deeds of America clog the wheels of the car of Universal Freedom?" [20]

When Thompson departed, he carried with him tracts, pamphlets, handbills, notices of the sale of slaves, advertisements for fugitives, and publications of the American Colonization Society that could be displayed to "make their own unaided appeal to British hearts and British understanding." He was also pledged to plead with his compatriots to boycott slave-grown produce.[21] Thompson had been literally run out of the country. For him it was a nice turn of the wheel of public opinion that thirty years later he was to be an honored guest at the ceremonial raising of the Stars and Stripes over Fort Sumter in 1865.

While most British travelers continued to criticize American slavery, few who came in the decade of the 1830s were ready to give active support or encouragement to the abolitionists. Harriet Martineau was an exception. She arrived in the States when mob violence was at its height, but she dared to attend a meeting of

18. Whittier to Harriet Minot, Sept. 7, 1835, typescript, Whittier-Taylor Mss, Friends Historical Library; Thompson, *Letters and Addresses*, 13, 31; Garrison, *Life*, I, 520–521.

19. Lydia M. Child to Thompson, Nov. 21, 1835, Whittier-Taylor Mss.

20. Thompson, *Letters and Addresses*, 68, 107–112.

21. *Ibid.*, 119–121.

the Boston Female Anti-Slavery Society and to speak from the platform. In *Society in America* and *Retrospect of Western Travel* she criticized slavery, but in *The Martyr Age of the United States* she went a step further and eulogized the abolitionists: "Let us not, therefore, wait as it has been the world's custom to wait, for another century to greet the confessors and martyrs who stretch out their strong arms to bring down Heaven upon our earth; but even now . . . while sympathy may cheer and thanks may animate, let us make our reverent congratulations heard over the ocean which divides us from the spiritual potentates of our age." [22] She thought that Americans more than Englishmen needed courage to be abolitionists, because in England slavery was not woven into the social fabric.

Of course American abolitionists were grateful for the support of the name and fame of such a woman, and the more conservative of them believed that her writing would do more good than all of the agitation stirred up by George Thompson. James G. Birney exclaimed in a letter to Lewis Tappan, "How providential it seems that Miss Martineau should just at this time be sent to give us the aid of her popularity!" [23] That part of *Society in America* dealing with slavery was extracted and published in New York as a separate pamphlet, and 2,000 copies of *The Martyr Age* were printed.[24] After her return to England Miss Martineau was sent a life membership in the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, and in her thank-you note she promised to give whatever assistance she could when called upon in the future.[25]

Many of the travelers across the Atlantic came on religious missions, and given the moral approach of the antislavery society, it was inevitable that the churches should be pressured with con-

22. Harriet Martineau, *The Martyr Age of the United States* (Boston: Weeks, Jordan & Co., 1839).

23. Birney to Tappan, Nov. 28, 1835, in Dwight L. Dumond, ed., *The Letters of James G. Birney, 1831–1857*, 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1938), I, 274–277 (hereinafter cited as *Birney Letters*).

24. Harriet Martineau, *Views of Slavery and Emancipation; from "Society in America"* (New York: [American Anti-Slavery Society], 1837).

25. Harriet Martineau to corresponding secretary of Women's Anti-Slavery Society of Lynn, Mass., June 20, 1838, in *Liberator*, Sept. 14, 1838; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Feb. 7, 1839.

frontations on the slavery issue. While George Thompson was still in the United States, two Baptist ministers, the Reverend F. A. Cox and the Reverend Dr. J. Hoby, were sent from England as delegates to the general convention of Baptists in Richmond, Virginia. According to the British abolitionists, they were expected to promote the cause of emancipation and had resolved to bear "reproach, and persecution, and death itself" in the performance of their duty.[26] Instead, both kept silent on the topic of slavery. Since one of them was a member of the British antislavery society, they were invited to the 1835 annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in New York. They chose to observe from the gallery rather than be seated as delegates on the grounds that they did not want to compromise the "spiritual and sacred" object of their trip. George Thompson chose to reprimand them publicly, thus eliciting letters of defense published by each of them in the *London Patriot* after their return home.[27]

Their failure to take a stand against slavery was deplored by the Baptist Union in Great Britain. A board of Baptist ministers in and near London wrote a letter addressed to pastors and ministers of the Baptist denominations throughout the United States that emphasized the success of emancipation in the West Indies and besought their American brethren to adopt a similar measure. No publicity was given to the letter when it reached the United States, and the American abolitionists then accused the Baptist Board of Missions with having purposely suppressed it. Nathaniel Paul, who was still traveling in the British Isles when the reply was received, probably sent back the report

26. E. S. Abdy, *Journal of a Residence and Tour in the United States of North America, from April, 1833, to October, 1834,* 3 vols. (London: John Murray, 1835), III, 314.

27. American Anti-Slavery Society, *Second Annual Report . . . with the Speeches Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting . . . and the Minutes of the Meetings of the Society for Business* (New York: William S. Dorr, 1835); Garrison, *Life,* I, 480–481. Cox's letter is dated May 31, 1836, and Hoby's May 25, 1836; both are reprinted in the *Liberator* (from the *London Patriot*), Aug. 27, 1836. The *Liberator* during this period carried many articles and letters from the British papers on the Cox-Hoby affair. See, for example, the reprint of a long, critical article from the *Evangelical Magazine and Missionary Chronicle* of London in the Nov. 5, 1836, issue.

leading to its exposure in America. When it was made known, 183 American Baptist ministers replied in an antislavery tone.[28] Two years later, in 1838, a similar letter from the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland pointedly asked how long the American brethren were going to allow slavery to defile them.[29] Dr. Thomas Price and a group of London Baptists established a periodical called *Slavery in America* in order to keep all denominations in Great Britain posted on slavery and antislavery developments.[30]

In the summer of 1835 the British Wesleyan Conference sent the Reverend William Lord to the United States bearing an address to the bishops of the Methodist-Episcopal church in America. Although it only "tenderly" touched the topic of slavery, it proved to be a firebrand at the Methodist conference in Cincinnati in 1836. Lord read the address to the convention and received for reply a strong rebuke from the Reverend Nathan Bangs of New York, who complained of the trouble abolitionism was stirring up in the country. This was followed by a resolution to gag all discussion of slavery. Orange Scott of Vermont, who had tried to direct the Methodist organ, *Zion's Watchman*, into an-

28. *Britain and America United in the Cause of Universal Freedom: Being the Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Emancipation Society . . .* (Glasgow: Aird and Russell, 1837) (hereinafter cited as *Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Emancipation Society*); *Fourth Annual Report of the Board of Managers of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, with Some Account of the Annual Meeting, January 20, 1836* (Boston: Isaac Knapp, 1836).

29. "To the Ministers and Members of the Baptist Churches in the United States, the Baptist Union of Great Britain sendeth Christian salutation," Jan. 19, 1838, *Liberator*, Apr. 27, 1838. Two British Congregational ministers, the Reverend Andrew Reed and the Reverend James Matheson, received the same type of criticism as Hoby and Cox for not refusing to fellowship with slaveholders. See George Shepperson, "The Free Church and American Slavery," *Scottish Historical Review*, XXX, no. 110 (Oct., 1951), 126–143; *Liberator*, Sept. 20, 1834, June 27, 1835; Andrew Reed and James Matheson, *A Narrative of the Visit to the American Churches, by the Deputation from the Congregational Union of England and Wales*, 2 vols. (London: Jackson and Wolford, 1835), II, 383–388.

30. Thomas Franklin Harwood, "Great Britain and American Antislavery" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas, 1959), 284. The fourteen issues of this monthly publication, dating from July, 1836, through Aug., 1837, are bound together and published as Thomas Rice, *Slavery in America: With Notices of the Present State of Slavery and the Slave Trade throughout the World* (London: G. Wightman, 1837).

tislavery channels, was punished by not being reappointed as presiding elder of the Providence district. James G. Birney, attending the conference to report it for his *Philanthropist*, was ordered to stop taking notes and forbidden to publish his report (an order he ignored).[31] Moreover, the pastoral letter to the Methodist churches admonished them "to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications."[32] To such a position had the church of John Wesley come. To publicly embarrass the Methodist hierarchy, the American Anti-Slavery Society chose LaRoy Sunderland and Simeon S. Jocelyn to get out a new edition, in miniature, of Wesley's *Thoughts on Slavery*.[33] The English Baptist periodical, *Slavery in America*, called for English Methodists to suspend all further fellowship with American Methodists "til they have retraced their steps and humbled themselves before the Lord."[34]

In 1837 the annual report of the American Anti-Slavery Society noted that "memorials and remonstrances have been borne across the Atlantic by every breeze."[35] The British and Foreign Bible Society attacked the southern biblical defense of slavery, asserting that the Bible and slavery could not coexist and, therefore, Bible societies must of necessity be antislavery.[36] Remonstrances from Great Britain were sent to the American churches by the Glasgow Emancipation Society and the Friends of Universal Freedom, the United Associate Synods, the Congregational Union of Scotland, the Congregational Hill Street Chapel in Perth, the Paisley Emancipation Society, and the Inhabitants of Dumbarton and the

31. *Liberator*, May 28, June 11, 1836; *Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Emancipation Society;* Louis Filler, *The Crusade against Slavery, 1830–1860* (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), 123–124; Mathews, *Slavery and Methodism*, 139–144; Betty Fladeland, *James Gillespie Birney: Slaveholder to Abolitionist* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1955), 134–135.

32. "Fourth Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society," *Quarterly Anti-Slavery Magazine*, II (July, 1837), 378–380; Dumond, *Antislavery*, 344.

33. American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Nov. 14, 1838.

34. *Slavery in America*, no. III, Sept., 1836.

35. American Anti-Slavery Society, *Fourth Annual Report . . . with the Speeches Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting . . . and the Minutes of the Meetings of the Society for Business* (New York: William S. Dorr, 1837).

36. *Liberator*, June 27, 1835.

Vale of Leven.[37] The last of these was signed by over 4,000 Scots. An extract from a speech by the Reverend Andrew Somerville at a public meeting in Paisley, "Our Right to Interfere with American Slavery," was published as an appendix to the Edinburgh edition of Angelina Grimké's *Appeal to the Christian Women of the Slave States of America.* An appeal from several county assemblies in Wales was sent to the United States with the request that it be read to their congregations by all Welsh ministers.[38] In 1835 the New England Anti-Slavery Society sent a circular to the leading churches throughout Great Britain inviting British Christians to join their American brethren in a day of fasting and prayer for the slaves, a practice which became a regular affair. By 1840 a Presbyterian minister, the Reverend Nathan S. S. Beman, just home from Europe, where he had been authorized to "represent" the American Anti-Slavery Society, reported to Weld that in England his abolitionism had been the "finest feather" in his cap and that no American minister who was not an abolitionist could hope to be well received there anymore.[39]

English Quakers who were themselves so active in the British emancipation movement were concerned about American Friends' reluctance to cooperate in "mixed" antislavery societies. The epistle from the Meeting for Sufferings in London in 1832 had reminded Virginia Friends of the need to maintain their testimony against slavery, and in 1834 the London Meeting for Sufferings addressed a letter to "the several Meetings for Sufferings in America" that recalled the long interest of their society in abolishing slavery and rejoiced over the achievement of West Indian emancipation. The letter acknowledged that it was much easier for the English "to raise the voice of compassion and justice on behalf

37. See appendix to *Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Emancipation Society* for the list with eomplete titles.

38. "The Weleh People Convened in County Assemblies in Merwnythshire, Carnarvonshire, and Montgomeryshire, in the Month of May and June, 1837, send greetings to the Weleh people in Ameriea, with referenee to the Condition of Slaves in that immense Country," *Liberator,* Oet. 27, 1837.

39. Harwood, "Great Britain and Ameriean Antislavery," 284; American Anti-Slavery Soeiety, Executive Committee Minutes, Jan. 3, 1839; Beman to Weld, Feb. 3, 1840, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 820–822.

of people in distant colonies," yet the principle of obligation remained the same for Americans. English Friends, therefore, entreated the Americans to avow fearlessly these sentiments and to stand uncompromising in the face of expediency or commercial interests.[40] In 1835 a similar appeal asked, "Has the pure spirit which actuated Fox, Penn, Woolman and Benezet departed from among those who profess the same principles?" [41] In response, the Indiana Yearly Meeting in 1836 decided to print 2,000 copies of the epistle from London, and in June, 1837, the *Friend*, a Quaker organ, began to publish excerpts from London epistles going all the way back to 1758 to remind Friends of the long and consistent Quaker testimony against the slave trade and slavery.[42]

In 1837 the British Quaker abolitionist J. J. Gurney arrived in the United States to try to help counteract the Hicksite "heresy" and to encourage American Quakers to continue their antislavery work. He landed in Philadelphia, went west to Ohio and Indiana, to North Carolina, and then to Washington, D.C., in 1838. There he met with President Van Buren to stress the need for Anglo-American cooperation against the slave trade, consulted with John Quincy Adams on antislavery efforts, and met many congressional leaders including Clay and Webster. Although a "foreign emissary," Gurney's approach was so cautious that he was invited to preach a sermon in the House of Representatives. Definitely wary of being associated with "Garrisonian radicalism," Gurney chose not to be in when the fiery New Englander called to visit him in Philadelphia.[43]

40. Meeting for Sufferings in London to Yearly Meeting of Friends in Virginia, Feb. 6, 1832, and Meeting for Sufferings in London to the several meetings for sufferings in America, Mar. 7, 1834, Casual Correspondence, 167–168 and 204–206, Friends House Library.

41. "Appeal from Great Britain to the Several Meetings for Sufferings in America," *Liberator*, Apr. 25, 1835.

42. *Friend*, X, no. 6 (Nov. 12, 1836), 46–47; also nos. 35, 37 (June 3, 17, 1837). The *Friend* was a religious and literary journal edited by Robert Smith in Philadelphia.

43. J. J. Gurney journal, XIII, 1837–1840, microfilm, Friends Historical Library; Joseph B. Braithwaite, ed., *Memoirs of Joseph John Gurney; with Selections from His Journal and Correspondence*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Book Association of Friends, 1854), II, 118–119 (hereinafter cited as Gurney, *Memoirs*); Anna Gurney to J. J. Gurney, Mar. 13, 1838, Gurney Mss; Garrison, *Life*, II, 212.

After leaving Washington and while convalescing from an illness, Gurney penned a few "Free and Friendly Remarks on a Speech Lately Delivered in the Senate of the United States, by Henry Clay, of Kentucky, on the Subject of the Abolition of North American Slavery." Although it was published anonymously, it did not take much perspicacity on Clay's part to discern who its author was, and when Gurney returned to Washington a year later, Clay indicated his awareness—all, evidently, in a friendly spirit.[44]

Meanwhile British Quakers continued to give money to aid the cause of free blacks in America. A special project in the 1830s was that of the North Carolina Friends to emancipate slaves by buying them and sending them to the free western states or territories. In 1834 the London Meeting for Sufferings pledged £500 for this purpose. As even nominally free states made it more and more difficult for blacks to enter, the London Friends continued to exhort Quakers in the North on their duty to press for full citizenship rights for Negroes.[45]

Once American abolitionists realized the potential that lay in keeping their cause before the British public, they pursued this goal steadfastly. The Reverend Samuel H. Cox of New York, who had been the victim of mob violence, was chosen to go to England in 1835 to counteract a delegation of three prominent American colonizationists who were decidedly against immediatism: the Reverend Gardiner Spring, a Presbyterian pastor in New York; President Heman Humphrey of Amherst College; and Robert J. Breckinridge of Kentucky. Cox himself had been sympathetic to the cause of colonization when he visited England in 1833, but in the course of debates with the English he swung over to complete abolition without colonization. If white and black couldn't live together on earth, he asked, what would they do in Heaven—set up a Liberia there?[46] The arguments over

44. Gurney, *Memoirs*, II, 169.

45. Meeting for Sufferings in North Carolina to Meeting for Sufferings in London, Apr. 14, 1834, and another undated (internal evidence puts it in 1834), Casual Correspondence, 207–211 and 228–229, Friends House Library.

46. Elizur Wright, Jr., to Weld, Mar. 16, 1835, in *Weld-Grimké Letters*, I, 208–210; *Liberator*, May 3, Nov. 29, 1834.

colonization were also continued by George Thompson when he returned home. A much-publicized debate was the one he held in response to a challenge from Robert J. Breckinridge, which ran for five consecutive evenings in Glasgow.[47] Robert Purvis, a Philadelphia Negro who was a charter member of the American Anti-Slavery Society, and Wendell Phillips were among the Americans who traveled to Great Britain in the 1830s and were received by prominent leaders there.[48]

The financial generosity of the British abolitionists was not only drawn upon by the Quakers but had been one aspect of Garrison's mission to England as well as that of the Reverend Nathaniel Paul. After the panic of 1837 the monetary appeals increased. Oberlin College, playing up the fact that it had opened its doors to Negro students, decided to send an agent to solicit donations, since "in England there is an abundance of money, the anti-slavery campaign is over. . . ."[49] Fully persuaded that Oberlin's story would "burn and glow" in England and Scotland, John Keep, one of the professors, tried to talk Theodore Weld into undertaking the mission, but failing to pry Weld out of his seclusion, Keep decided to go himself. Weld and his wife, the former Angelina Grimké, drew up "An Appeal to the Philanthropists of Great Britain on Behalf of Oberlin College," which not only explained the college's antislavery origin as a result of the Lane Seminary secession but stressed the fact that its professors, eking out livings on low salaries, had trained a large share of the antislavery lecturers in the United States and several who went to the West Indies as missionaries. They hailed Oberlin as a bastion for freedom of speech, press, and conscience and claimed that it could do more for the cause of liberty and to remove caste and color distinctions than any other institution in the United States.[50]

47. "Fourth Annual Report of the American Anti-Slavery Society," *London Patriot*, June 20, 23, 27, 1836.

48. *Liberator*, Aug. 23, Nov. 15, 1834, Jan. 13, 1839; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 55, July 26, 1839.

49. James A. Thome to Weld, Nov. 10, 1838, in *Weld-Grimké Letters*, II, 711–714.

50. John Keep to Weld, Jan. 11, 1839, in *Weld-Grimké Letters*, II, 737–740. The "Appeal" follows on pp. 741–744.

Along with the Reverend John Keep, Oberlin sent Mr. William Dawes, and the two collected £6,000, practically enough to pay off Oberlin's indebtedness. The names in the subscription book for Oberlin were publicized as so many witnesses against oppression on the other side of the water. Charles Grandison Finney was a colleague of Keep and Dawes at Oberlin, and the popularity of his lectures on revivals helped to give them an entry into religious circles in England.[51]

Several American antislavery works of the 1830s were published and republished in Great Britain. Francis Lieber's book *The Stranger in America,* which voiced his disgust with slavery, was first published in London in 1835.[52] A very powerful pamphlet dealing with the moral aspects of slavery and its sinfulness was Angelina Grimké's *Appeal to the Christian Women of the Slave States of America,* which was republished in Edinburgh in 1837 with an introduction by George Thompson and was especially recommended to British women. The publication was suggested by Elizabeth Pease and underwritten by the Pease and Beaumont families. The antislavery societies of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle, Shields, and Darlington saw to its circulation "amongst all grades of society from the nobleman to the humble cottager." [53] The fact that all of this was arranged without consulting the author indicates the "oneness" of mind that existed between American and British abolitionists, and it is reminiscent of the same kind of confidence which prompted similar action by Anthony Benezet and Granville Sharp in the eighteenth century. An appeal for money was appended at the end of the book,

51. Charles Grandison Finney, *Memoirs* (New York: A. S. Barnes and Co., 1876), 337–338; William Dawes to Birney, Aug. 4, 1840, and John Keep to Birney, Aug. 4, 1840, Birney Papers; John Keep to Thomas Clarkson, Oct. 17, 1839, Add. Mss 41267A, f. 16, British Museum; Anna Gurney to J. J. Gurney, Feb. 14, 1840, Gurney Mss, sec. III, 67.

52. Frank Freidel, "Francis Lieber, Charles Sumner and Slavery," *Journal of Southern History,* IX (1943), 78; notebook titled "Slavery," Francis Lieber Papers, Huntington Library. The full title of Lieber's book was *The Stranger in America: Comprising Sketches of the Manners, Society and National Peculiarities of the United States,* 2 vols. (London, 1835).

53. Elizabeth Pease to Angelina Grimké, June 26, 1837, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* I, 405–407.

along with a list of recommended reading. The list included William Jay's *An Inquiry . . .* , George Bourne's *Picture of Slavery,* and E. S. Abdy's *Journal of a Residence and Tour in the United States, from April, 1833 to October, 1834.*[54]

Abdy, who was referred to by an American Quaker as "our eccentric friend Abdy," had left the United States determined to be severe on slavery, so much so that he said he could probably never return without being subjected to the tar-and-feathers treatment. Unlike many other abolitionists, he was just as disdainful of the hypocritical North as he was of the slave-owning South. He pointed out the discrimination against blacks in the northern churches, their unequal punishment for crimes, and the withholding of political rights from them. Even the New York Manumission Society paid higher salaries to white teachers than to black teachers in its African school. While Abdy touched on all aspects of slavery, accounts of atrocities committed against slaves stood as his chief indictment of the South, and he took to task the "liberal" Jefferson for himself being guilty of miscegenation.[55] Samuel J. May wrote that Abdy "was too much exasperated by our tyranny to be enamoured of our democratic institutions." [56]

54. Angelina E. Grimké, *Slavery in Ameriea. A Reprint of an Appeal to the Christian Women of the Slave States of Ameriea. By Angelina E. Grimké of Charlestown, South Carolina, with Introduction, Notes and Appendix by George Thompson* (Edinburgh: William Oliphant & Son, 1837).

55. Abdy, *Journal;* Jacob Harvey to Henry Newman, Nov. 23, 1834, Pritchard Letters. Evidently Abdy's book made quite an impression on American abolitionists and was passed around to be eagerly read. In 1838 Lydia Child wrote to Angelina Grimké Weld to inquire if her copy, a gift from the author, had been left at the Welds by Charles Stuart, to whom she had last lent it. See Child to Weld, Oct. 2, 1838, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 702–704. The rumors of Jefferson's having children by his slaves were commonly reported by British travelers. Thomas Hamilton in *Men and Manners in America* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood & Sons, 1843; 1st ed., 1833), 186, wrote of Jefferson: "Continually puling about liberty, equality, and the degrading curse of slavery, he brought his own children to the hammer, and made money of his debaucheries. Even at his death, he did not manumit his numerous offspring, but left them, soul and body, to degradation and the cart whip." Jefferson's epitaph, Hamilton concluded, should read, "Who dreamt of freedom in a slave's embrace."

56. Samuel J. May, *Some Recollections of Our Antislavery Conflict* (Boston: Fields, Osgood & Co., 1869), 274. When Abdy died, he left £500 in his will to the American antislavery cause. See Maria Weston Chapman, "Edward S. Abdy," *Liberty Bell,* 1846.

T. F. Buxton had long contemplated writing something to be circulated in America. "I know I must write so as not to give offense to your countrymen," he wrote to Garrison, "but certainly it is not easy to speak of the existence of Slavery in your free states with moderation." [57] One aspect of the topic that arrested his attention was the continuation of the illegal slave trade, and he published his book on that subject at the end of the decade, to be followed in 1840 by a second, *The Remedy*.[58] The yearly meeting of the Philadelphia Association of Friends immediately arranged for the publication of extracts from the first, and by 1841 it had put out a second edition of 5,000.[59] Anything coming from Buxton was bound to have a warm reception from his fellow abolitionists. Stephen Grellet reported from New Jersey to Rachel Forster in England that it was making a "serious impression." [60] The *Friend* said it was to the foreign slave trade what Theodore Weld's *American Slavery as It Is* was to slavery: a mortal wound.[61] Weld's compilation of slavery atrocities had the widest circulation in Great Britain of any antislavery publication. The American Anti-Slavery Society was eager to have it reviewed in such magazines as the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Westminster Review*, which circulated widely in the United States, including the South. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society saw to its distribution among government officials and to the various libraries and colleges.[62]

Antislavery periodicals as well as private correspondence

57. Buxton to Garrison, Sept. 30, 1834, in *Liberator*, Nov. 15, 1834.

58. Thomas Fowell Buxton, *The African Slave Trade*, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1839); Buxton, *The Remedy* (London: W. Clowes & Sons, [1840]).

59. *Report of the Proceedings of the Association of Friends, for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery, and Improving the Condition of the Free People of Color* (Philadelphia: Merrihew & Thompson, 1841); Lewis Tappan to Joseph Sturge, Nov. 23, 1839, Tappan Papers. J. J. Gurney donated $200 to the American Anti-Slavery Society to print a second American edition as early as 1839 because the first Philadelphia edition had omitted a chapter.

60. Grellet to Forster, July 6, 1839, Gurney Mss.

61. *Friend*, XII, no. 36 (June 8, 1839).

62. Barnes, *Antislavery Impulse*, 263–264, note 20; letters in *Anti-Slavery Standard*, July 13, 1843; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, May 20, 1839; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 95–96, Sept. 27, 1839; H. B. Stanton to Tredgold, Aug. 23, 1839, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 10/68.

flew back and forth across the Atlantic as never before. The American Anti-Slavery Society arranged for an agent to see that its publications were on sale in London and advertised in the *British Emancipator.*[63] Reprints of newspaper articles and pamphlets were freely made and used. James G. Birney, Theodore Weld, and other antislavery lecturers drew generously from the English *Anti-Slavery Monthly Reporter* for their own materials. Although Charles Stuart was still a British citizen, he was appointed to the Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society, in which position he continued to act effectively as a liaison with the British organizations and kept abreast of all their publications.[64]

Although Daniel O'Connell did not visit the United States, his strong criticism of America was already attracting much attention and eliciting rebuttal from American patriots. A group in Philadelphia took him to task for a speech in 1837, reported in the *London Morning Chronicle,* in which he stated that the people of the United States, instead of being the highest in the scale of humanity, were the "basest of the base, and the vilest of the vile." The Philadelphians reminded him that the Irish had been "hospitably received and honorably admitted" to all the rights of American citizens but that he was handicapping rather than helping their cause. O'Connell, as usual, minced no words in replying. Slavery, he retorted, was "wholesale villany," and he felt an obligation to use the strongest terms possible to denounce this "demonaical tyranny—a tyranny more detestible, because perpetrated by men prating of liberty and boasting of freedom." [65]

One of the things O'Connell set out to do was to force the American minister to Great Britain, Andrew Stevenson, to take a stand on the slavery issue. Stevenson was a Virginia slaveholder whom O'Connell accused of being a slave breeder, as a conse-

63. American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Nov. 1, 1838.

64. Weld to Birney, Aug. 7, 1834, Dec. 22, 1835, and Stuart to Birney, Mar. 7, 1836, Birney Papers. Stuart was active in obtaining English subscriptions for Birney's newspaper, the *Philanthropist.*

65. Committee of William Dickson, Alexander Diamond, William Doherty, James Fay, and John Binns to Daniel O'Connell, Jan. 29, 1838, Ferdinand J. Dreer Collection, English Statesmen Series, Historical Society of Pennsylvania.

quence of which Stevenson challenged the Irish statesman to a duel. American abolitionists were quick to publicize such conduct on the part of an American official. John Quincy Adams introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives that there should be an inquiry into Stevenson's conduct, but it was tabled.[66] The Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society directed Joshua Leavitt to prepare a broadside containing O'Connell's portrait, his speech at Birmingham attacking Stevenson, and the correspondence that had passed between the two men, 5,000 copies to be issued. The following year it was proposed that James G. Birney, who was of Irish descent, should write to O'Connell requesting him to send an address to the Irishmen in America on the subject of slavery.[67]

American abolitionist papers like the *Liberator* consistently played up such attacks as those of O'Connell—that of the *London Morning Herald,* for example, which satirized the "land of the free" by reprinting ads for runaway slaves. As usual, slavery's defenders saw mounting evidence of an international conspiracy against America's "peculiar institution." When the British and Foreign Society for the Abolition of the Slave Trade sent over an address to the president and Congress, the *Christian Gazette* charged that organization was planning a crusade against the American Constitution for "the avowed Purpose of revolutionizing our government."[68] Upon receiving the address, even the American Anti-Slavery Society considered discretion to be the better part of valor and wrote back that they thought the anti-slavery cause would not be furthered by its presentation. It would serve only as another occasion for congressmen and senators from

66. *British Emancipator,* Oct. 31, 1838, Jan. 9, 1839; clippings on James G. Birney, in private possession; Howard R. Temperley, "The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1839–1868" (Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1961), 63. See Francis F. Wayland, *Andrew Stevenson, Democrat and Diplomat, 1785–1857* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1949), 183–189, for a good account of the whole affair of the challenge. James Hurnard, an Englishman, wrote a poem addressed to Stevenson admonishing him to "Go back! place-faced ambassador, To thy own land of slaves. . . ." It was published in the *Liberty Bell,* 1847.

67. American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Oct. 18, Aug. 15, 1838.

68. *Liberator,* Nov. 22, 1834, Nov. 28, 1835.

slaveholding states to raise the accusation of conspiracy. The federal government had no jurisdiction over slavery in the states, they explained, and as American citizens they were bound to know this. To submit the British petition would be considered an ignorant as well as a disrespectful move.[69]

One of the possibilities that stimulated the most hope in abolitionists and the most fear in slaveholders was the developing program of emancipation in the West Indies. From the beginning each side tended to see what it hoped to see: unequivocal success or overwhelming failure. Needless to say, the antislavery side used every shred of evidence it could muster to play up its success. With the approach of August 1, 1834, the day slavery officially ended, everyone held his breath for fear celebrations might turn into riots, looting, and general upheaval. When such fears proved to be unfounded, and news came that the "Jubilee" had usually taken the form of religious gatherings with singing, prayer, and thanksgiving, American abolitionists immediately began to use this in their propaganda to argue the safety of emancipation.[70] "An Appeal and Declaration" purporting to come from American slaves, although written by an amanuensis, took note of the freedom granted 800,000 of their fellow slaves and of the fights for freedom currently being waged by the Greeks and the Poles. The message was that America was falling behind the rest of the civilized world.[71] August 1 became an annual day of celebration for American black people.

Already outraged over what they looked upon as the incendiary and inflammatory writings of the abolitionists, the slaveholders now became even more worried that American slaves might try to seize by violence the liberty their West Indian brothers had been granted by law. Governor George McDuffie of South Carolina

69. William Jay for American Anti-Slavery Society, Dec. 28, 1835, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 18/91.

70. Buxton to Garrison, Sept. 30, 1834, in *Liberator,* Nov. 15, 1834; *Liberator,* Oct. 11, 1834. The *Anti-Slavery Record,* I, no. 1 (Jan., 1835), carried reprints from the *St. Jago Gazette* and the *Watchman and Jamaica Free Press.*

71. "An Appeal and Declaration Made by the American Slaves, August 1, 1834. With Introductory Remarks Made by Their Amanuensis," *Liberator,* Nov. 22, 1834.

warned his legislature that both revolutionary emancipation in Santo Domingo and British emancipation had grown from small beginnings. The West Indian planters, he asserted, should have hanged the first missionary who came among them. Vigilance must be maintained to keep abolitionists and their propaganda out of the South, for slavery, rather than being an evil, was "the cornerstone of our Republican edifice."[72] Alfred Cuthbert of Georgia declared in the U.S. Senate that the spirit of abolition was un-American: it originated on the foreign soil of England. The British colonies must not be compared with the United States when speaking of slavery and abolition, for West Indian planters, unlike American planters, were not people of character. Even Wilberforce, he proclaimed, would not have considered interfering with the society of the slaveholding states had he been an American.[73] Fears that publications regarding emancipation in the West Indies would reach the slaves, as well as fears of other abolitionist propaganda, tightened southern censorship of the press. Another result was the passage of "gag laws" in Congress which provided for tabling any petitions or resolutions that introduced the topic of slavery.

From the beginning both British and American abolitionists were dubious about the interim apprenticeship system in the West Indies, and almost at once the British began to attack it with the purpose of shortening it or eliminating it altogether. Too much leeway, they argued, had been left to the local legislatures, who conceived of the system as essentially coercive. They also accused the planters of forgetting their obligations as soon as they had received their compensation money.[74]

On May 15, 1835, at their annual meeting in Exeter Hall, London antislavery leaders called for an investigation and sent a memorial to Lord Glenelg requesting one.[75] A similar meeting in Birmingham said that in some ways the apprentices were worse

72. Reprint of McDuffie's message to the legislature, *Liberator,* Dec. 12, 1835.

73. [Alfred] Cuthbert, *Speech of Mr. Cuthbert, of Georgia, on the Petition of the Society of Friends of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Praying for the Abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia . . .* (Washington, D.C.: Blair & Rives, 1836).

74. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 168–169, 335–336.

75. *Ibid.,* 168.

off than the slaves because now injustice flourished under a greater pretense of legality. A great contrast was made between Antigua and Bermuda, where emancipation was immediate, and the other colonies, which had the interim apprentice system. They quoted George Canning: "The masters of Slaves are not to be trusted in what concerns legislation for slavery . . . because there is something in the nature of absolute authority . . . which makes despotism in *all* cases, and under *all* circumstances, an incompetent and unsure executor, even of its own provisions in favour of the objects of its power." [76] The Reverend Robert Hall of Boston, a member of the New England Anti-Slavery Society who was present at the Birmingham meeting, spoke to the point of American abolitionist disappointment when the British set the example of the apprenticeship system; John Scoble supported him by citing his correspondence with Americans. The Reverend William Knibb, who had returned to Jamaica, wrote that apprenticeship would ruin that island unless it should immediately be abandoned for full freedom.[77]

With public opinion once more aroused for support, in 1836 Buxton moved for a parliamentary investigation. Both he and O'Connell were appointed to the select committee, and four other British abolitionists set off for the West Indies on a first-hand investigation of their own. They were John Scoble, Joseph Sturge, William Lloyd, and Thomas Harvey.[78] That same year the Amer-

76. [Birmingham Anti-Slavery Society], *The Practical Defeat of the Abolition Act, by Colonial Legislation and Stipendiary Magistrates,* 2nd ed. (Birmingham: B. Hudson, 1835).

77. *Proceedings of the Great Anti-Slavery Meeting, Held at the Town Hall, Birmingham, on Wednesday, October 14, 1835* . . . (Birmingham: B. Hudson, 1835); Hinton, *Memoir of William Knibb,* 240.

78. Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 335, 339–340; Charles H. Wesley, "The Abolition of Negro Apprenticeship in the British Empire," *Journal of Negro History,* XXIII (Apr., 1938), 155–199. The editor of Sturge's memoirs reports that when Lord Brougham expressed the view that it would be visionary to try to end the apprenticeship system, Sturge asked him, "Lord Brougham, if when Lord Chancellor thou hadst a ward in chancery who was apprenticed, and his master was violating the terms of indenture, what wouldst thou do?" Brougham's answer was "Why I should require good proof of the fact, Joseph Sturge, before I did anything." Thereupon Sturge rejoined, "Then I must supply thee with proof," packed his portmanteau, and set off for the West Indies. See Sturge, *Memoirs,* 179–180.

ican Anti-Slavery Society at its annual meeting decided to send two agents to visit both the West Indies and Haiti to collect information on the conditions of the colored populations and to study the effects of the various schemes of emancipation that had been adopted.[79] David and Lydia Child volunteered to make the trip, but the Executive Committee thought they (especially Mrs. Child) could contribute more by writing antislavery articles for the commercial and political journals.[80] Instead they chose the Reverend James A. Thome, who had been at Lane Seminary during the great antislavery debates and was the son of a Kentucky slaveholder, and J. Horace Kimball, editor of the Concord, New Hampshire, *Herald of Freedom.*

While the British abolitionists now stood to progress by an all-out attack on apprenticeship as a stepping-stone to full freedom, the Americans were in somewhat of a quandary about how to balance criticism of the apprenticeship system with praise for West Indian emancipation generally. To overdo the criticism might discourage support for any form of emancipation. When speaking in Britain, they, too, could be critical, but at home it was necessary to keep a generally optimistic picture before the public. At the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1836, Robert Purvis tried to strike the proper balance in a resolution: "That we regard the remarkable and happy results of the experiment of Immediate Emancipation in those West India islands, whose colonial legislatures rejected the system of apprenticeship, as signal evidence of God's approbation of the measure and as conclusive proof of the safety and policy of such emancipation." [81]

It was suggested to the Executive Committee that steps be taken to open correspondence with the West Indies and Haiti, particularly with the editors of the Jamaica *Watchman*, so that up-to-date reports could be published. Letters to individual abo-

79. American Anti-Slavery Society, *Third Annual Report . . . with the Speeches Delivered at the Anniversary Meeting . . . and the Minutes of the Meetings of the Society for Business* (New York: W. S. Dorr, 1836).

80. Elizur Wright, Jr., to David L. Child, Oct. 8, 1835, Jenkins Autograph Collection.

81. American Anti-Slavery Society, *Third Annual Report.*

litionists were given wide publicity in antislavery newspapers, and in 1839 the Executive Committee voted to send $3 to $5 worth of antislavery publications to each missionary in Jamaica with the understanding that any of them who would agree to carry on a regular correspondence with the editor of the *Emancipator* should receive that publication free. C. S. Renshaw, about to leave for missionary work in Jamaica, was presented with a full set of the publications of the American Anti-Slavery Society.[82]

Lord Sligo, governor of Jamaica, encouraged the abolitionists by his reports on the prosperity and tranquillity of that island despite the misrepresentations of the proslavery press, and Sir James Carmichael Smyth, governor of British Guiana, said, "It would be difficult in the annals of the most civilized and best informed countries of Europe to select stronger proofs of the respect and obedience paid to the laws than are hereby daily afforded by the untaught and uneducated labourers who have so lately been released from the bonds of slavery." [83] Nothing could have pleased the abolitionists more than such official testimony.

T. F. Buxton wrote from England that even officials and planters who had opposed emancipation were changing their minds, and he cited as an example Mr. Burnley of Trinidad, who had fought abolition in the pamphlet war of 1833.[84] In fact Burnley even wrote to the American Anti-Slavery Society to suggest that now Trinidad would be an ideal place to colonize free American blacks. While the society hesitated to encourage emigration at all, this particular offer fitted in well with their current campaign of emphasizing liberty in the West Indies. Similar changes of mind and heart on the part of the planters were related by a correspondent of Gerrit Smith and published in the *Friend.* The same correspondent noted the peacefulness of the

82. Amos Phelps to Lewis Tappan, Mar. 5, 1836, Tappan Papers; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Oct. 17, 1839.

83. *Friend,* X, no. 5 (Nov. 11, 1836). Smyth is quoted in Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition,* 254–255.

84. Buxton to Professor Wright, Apr. 10, 1835, in *Liberator,* May 30, 1835; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Sept. 3, 1839. Professor Mathieson concludes that planters were more pleased with compensated emancipation than they cared to admit. See *British Slavery and Its Abolition,* 253.

freedmen, the good relationship between blacks and whites, and the growth of churches and schools.[85]

William Knibb, the Baptist missionary who had been arrested and later run out of Jamaica, wrote glowing reports of his warm reception by the blacks upon his return and exclaimed over the joys of their new freedom.[86] These were given full coverage in the *Liberator.* When Parliament issued a lengthy colony-by-colony summary, giving on the whole a favorable picture, this, too, was circulated in the United States. Nathaniel Paul, still in England collecting money for the Wilberforce colony, used the West Indian theme to great advantage by telling his audiences that American slaves were aware of what had been accomplished in the West Indies and they now expected British help for themselves.[87]

In 1837 and 1838 the reports of the British and American investigators who had gone to the West Indies came off the press. Lloyd's *Letters from the West Indies* reads more like a travel account than a critique; descriptions of flora, fauna, and local customs occupy as much or more space than his observations on apprenticeship.[88] *The West Indies in 1837,* prepared jointly by Sturge and Harvey, was based on more thorough investigation, and it concluded, as was to be expected, that complete emancipation was far superior to apprenticeship. They did admit, however, that while the apprenticeship system was the worst in Jamaica, even there it was better than they had anticipated. Sturge donated 100 copies of his book to the American Anti-Slavery Society.[89]

Probably of far more consequence in persuading public opinion

85. Letter to Gerrit Smith, Sept. 20, 1836, in *Friend,* X, no. 13 (Dec. 31, 1836).

86. Letter from Knibb reprinted from the London Baptist magazine in *Liberator,* Apr. 18, 1835.

87. "Facts in Regard to the Working of the British Abolition Act," *Anti-Slavery Record,* II, no. 11 (Nov., 1836); *Liberator,* June 27, 1835.

88. William Lloyd, *Letters from the West Indies, during a Visit in the Autumn of MDCCCXXXVI, and the Spring of MDCCCXXXVII* (London: Darton and Harvey, 1839).

89. Joseph Sturge and Thomas Harvey, *The West Indies in 1837 . . .* , 2nd ed. (London: Hamilton, Adams and Co., 1838); American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Apr. 18, 1839.

was another pamphlet for which Sturge had arranged publication, *Narrative of James Williams.* Williams had been brought back to London by Sturge so that he could be seen in person and tell his story of brutal treatment as an apprentice. His account did for the cause in 1838 what Whitely's account of slavery had done in 1833. When doubts were expressed regarding the authenticity of Williams's recital, the government ordered a commission of inquiry to be set up by Sir Lionel Smith, governor of Jamaica. It reported that "every material fact has been supported and corroborated by an almost unbroken chain of convincing testimony," a distinct victory for the abolitionist side. Williams himself appeared before a committee of the House of Commons.[90]

Thome and Kimball's *Emancipation in the West Indies* presented the most favorable picture—one which would serve the objectives of American abolitionists in allaying fears about the dangers of emancipation. They found that the freedmen worked faithfully and efficiently for wages and that they were rising perceptibly in the scale of civilization, morals, and religion. They corroborated previous testimony that the planters themselves were beginning to like the new system and opined that caste principles were fast disappearing. In short, they had the utmost confidence in the perfect safety of immediate emancipation. The Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society decided that 100,000 copies of the Thome-Kimball book should be published if the funds could be raised.[91] It is interesting to note that in the United States the reviews of the books on the West Indies credited them with being much more favorable to the system in operation than was the case with the reviews of the same books in England. There the parts of the books which pointed out the weaknesses of apprenticeship got the most attention; in America, successes rather than weaknesses were stressed.[92]

90. *A Narrative of Events since the 1st of August, 1834, by James Williams . . .* (London: For the Central Negro Emancipation Committee, 1838); Sturge, *Memoirs,* 164–165.

91. *Anti-Slavery Examiner,* no. 7; James A. Thome and J. Horace Kimball, *Emancipation in the West Indies. A Six Months' Tour in Antigua, Barbadoes, and Jamaica, in the Year 1837* (New York: American Anti-Slavery Society, 1838); American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Apr. 5, 1838.

92. *Friend,* X, no. 43 (July 29, 1837); no. 51 (Sept. 23, 1837).

In England there was another round of antislavery meetings rallying to the goal of "emancipation now." Sturge led the fight in the face of Buxton's more cautious approach, and O'Connell took up the parliamentary leadership by telling the British taxpayers they had been swindled out of £20,000,000. To emphasize this point the *British Emancipator* printed lists of the amounts paid to individual planters. In Parliament the Central Negro Emancipation Committee, chaired by A. L. Palmer of Jamaica, reported that apprenticeship had fallen between two stools and was not serving the purpose of preparing the slaves for complete freedom as had been envisioned. The London Anti-Slavery Society published a detailed indictment of the abuses of apprenticeship, and its more expressive lecturers such as George Thompson referred to the West Indian workhouses as "brothels, bastilles, slaughter-houses." [93]

As in 1823 and 1833, public opinion responded, the issue was made a political one, and by the end of May, 1838, 3,501 petitions against apprenticeship had been sent to Parliament. In this instance Lord Brougham became the agent whose power in the government turned the tide toward success. The resulting "Act to Amend the Emancipation Act" gave the colonial legislatures little choice. One by one they bowed to Parliament's will and agreed to total emancipation for both praedials and nonpraedials as of August 1, 1838.[94]

As in 1834, August 1 came and went with no violent upheavals, much to the joy of the abolitionists; and as before, testimony to this effect from officials and missionaries was played up in their newspapers and other publications. Thome and Kimball's report was published as one issue of the *Anti-Slavery Examiner* and distributed by antislavery agents. Philanthropic and abolitionist joy also expressed itself through financial donations to set up schools for the freedmen, and preachers and teachers went from both Great Britain and the United States to volunteer their ser-

93. *British Emancipator,* Mar. 14, 21, 1838; London Anti-Slavery Society, *Negro Apprenticeship in the British Colonies* (London, 1838).

94. *British Emancipator,* May 30, 1838; Burn, *Emancipation and Apprenticeship,* 344–356; Mathieson, *British Slavery and Its Abolition,* 289–305.

vices. Among those going from the United States to Jamaica was Amos Dresser, who, while selling Bibles, had been publicly whipped in Nashville, Tennessee, for having antislavery literature in his possession.[95] Others who went were Charles Stuart; Mahlon Day, a Quaker abolitionist from New Jersey; the British Quaker John Candler and his wife; and J. J. Gurney. Gurney, Candler, and Day cooperated in meetings that drew crowds of as many as 3,000 people. Baptists, Methodists, and Independents were forgetting denominational differences, Gurney reported, in their cooperation to help the freedmen.[96]

When Sir Lionel Smith, the former governor of Jamaica, visited New York in 1839, the American Anti-Slavery Society voted to issue a testimonial commending him for his vigorous prosecution of the emancipation laws. An English civil servant, David Turnbull, who came from the West Indies to the United States, was invited to sit with the Executive Committee to report. Turnbull later wrote his account in *Travels in the West; Cuba with Notices of Porto Rico and the Slave Trade.*[97]

As usual, Charles Stuart sent back lengthy, detailed letters to Theodore Weld praising the happy and tranquil state of affairs and the great improvements since he had last been in the West Indies in 1836.[98] Much of Stuart's traveling was done in the company of John Scoble of the British delegation. Instead of returning directly to England, Scoble paid a visit to the United States, where he lectured in New York, Albany, Philadelphia, Boston, and other towns in southern New England under the sponsorship of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Having fresh

95. Lewis Tappan to Joseph Sturge, Nov. 23, 1839, Tappan Papers; L[ouisa] Hoare to "Lucy," Apr. 6, [?], Gurney Mss.

96. J. J. Gurney to Sister Rachel [Forster], Mar. 5, 1840, Mss Portfolio 42.21, Friends House Library.

97. American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Mar. 21, Nov. 6, 1839; Annie Heloise Abel and Frank J. Klingberg, eds., *A Side-Light on Anglo-American Relations, 1839–1858, Furnished by the Correspondence of Lewis Tappan and Others with the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society* (Lancaster, Pa.: Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, 1927), 69, note 30.

98. Stuart to Weld, Oct. 15, Dec. 11, 1838, [June 8], Oct. 10, 1839, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 705, 720–724, 766–767, 802–805.

facts and figures from the West Indies at his fingertips, he could "speak with power and authority." [99] By the end of the decade of the 1830s mob action in the North had definitely subsided. Scoble traveled in the same areas where George Thompson's life had daily been in danger; now they were either "abolitionized" or inured to a point where no opposition to a "foreign emissary" was evident.

J. J. Gurney also returned to the United States from the West Indies, landing in the South, where he visited fellow Quakers in Georgia and South Carolina. Although he found southern hospitality very pleasant, he admitted not being "wholly at our ease" because of anti-abolitionist feeling. Indeed, in the West Indies he had been cautioned against going to Georgia lest he be caught by "Lynchlaw." His intention was to stick to religion in public discussions, but his antislavery reputation had preceded him, and the newspapers would not even print an announcement of a religious meeting at which he was scheduled to talk.[100] In South Carolina he could not refrain from pleading with a judge the case of two Negroes who were to be executed for simple robbery. Not only was South Carolina's code "Draconic," but he noted that Negro offenders were usually given the extreme penalty. In Charleston he actually proposed to the mayor that he might call together a few of the principal leaders in the city to hear a report on the workings of emancipation in the West Indies, but the mayor considered such a step imprudent because of Gurney's reputation of being "of that frightful class of animals—abolition agents." Instead Gurney left a written statement with one of his friends, James McCarter, whom he trusted to "make considerable of it." In the South, he concluded, "the subject is best approached . . . by *quiet* appeals to the *pocket.*" [101]

99. American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Aug. 15, 1839; Henry Stanton, corresponding secretary of American Anti-Slavery Society, to British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Sept. 27, 1839, Minute Book I, 95–96, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Stanton to Tredgold, Aug. 23, 1839, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 10/68; Angelina E. Weld to Elizabeth Pease, Aug. 14, 1839, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 781–787; Lydia Child to David Child, Aug. 18, 1839, Anti-Slavery Papers, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y.

100. J. J. Gurney to his children, Apr. 24, 1840, Gurney Mss.

101. J. J. Gurney to his children, May 2, 1840, Gurney Mss.

From Charleston Gurney traveled northward to Washington, D.C., where he spoke at a public meeting to the "intellectual nobility of the land." Although the gag rule was in effect in Congress, on the day after Gurney's speech the House did receive one petition from New York Quakers and reported it to committee, contrary to its own rules. Gurney attributed this to the favorable impression made in the meeting at which he spoke. He stayed in Washington long enough to attend a session of Congress, have a second private interview with President Van Buren, and have others with Chief Justice Roger Taney, cabinet members, and leading statesmen including Henry Clay and John C. Calhoun. To all he related his favorable impressions of the way freedom in the West Indies was working. Calhoun refused to admit that emancipation would work everywhere just because it did in the British colonies, but Gurney found Clay not yet completely "steeled" in his mind. Consequently it was with some hope of still winning him over that Gurney wrote his report on the West Indies in the form of a series of letters to Clay.[102]

The "letters" were first published in the American press and then in book form when Gurney returned to London. They were specifically intended to "bear on the people of the United States." [103] The points made by Gurney in portraying the favorable results of West Indian abolition included a rise in property values, a decrease in crime, an increase in trade, the growth of schools and churches, and a generally improved moral tenor. In Letter No. XII he contrasted the condition of American slaves with West Indian freedmen in regard to quality of labor, comforts of the laborers, and their morals and religion. In line with his idea that the best appeal was to the pocketbook, he also contrasted the values of property and the comparative expenses of each labor system. He called Clay's attention to the continuing illegal slave trade to the West Indies, charging that nine-tenths of the vessels in the Cuban trade were American-built and operated. Moreover, he openly accused the American consul in Ha-

102. J. J. Gurney to Sister Catherine Gurney, May 25, 1840, Gurney Mss; Joseph J. Gurney, *A Winter in the West Indies, Described in Familiar Letters to Henry Clay, of Kentucky* (London: John Murray, 1840).

103. Gurney, *Letters to Clay*, xi.

vana of conniving in fraudulent transfers without making a move to interfere. Clay himself was taken to task for a recent speech in Congress in which he had referred to the idea that man cannot hold property in man as "visionary dogma" and "speculative abstraction." Gurney stood on the Declaration of Independence as well as on natural law for rebuttal.

Gurney's *Letters to Clay* was circulated among American congressmen, a copy was sent to the Library of Congress, and T. F. Buxton saw to it that copies were presented to men in high places in the British government.[104] The book was widely advertised and reviewed and by early 1841 had sold out three English editions and one American edition of 2,000. By March, 1841, there was a fourth English edition under way and an American newspaper edition of 50,000.[105] John Greenleaf Whittier reported to Gurney that it had even found its way into the slave states. Gurney was urged by his American friends, among them Whittier, to print another volume on his visit to the United States. As one of the Quakers pointed out, there had been reports from men of other religious groups and there should be one from a Quaker. Moreover, there was a "vast importance at this time of promoting a good understanding with our transatlantic brethren."[106] Gurney did subsequently publish *A Journey in North America* and also inspired William Ellery Channing to write his article on "Emancipation."[107] In addition, Gurney contributed a more personal bit of transatlantic good will by marrying an American, Elizabeth Kirkbride.

British and American abolitionists who were involved in the free-labor movement saw specific cause for rejoicing over West

104. Certificate from the Library of Congress acknowledging receipt of *Letters to Clay*, Jan. 6, 1841, Gurney Mss; S. B. Parsons to Gurney, Oct. 9, 1840; Palmerston to Buxton, Oct. 20, 1840; Clarendon to Buxton, Oct. 26, 1840; and Lansdowne to Buxton, Nov. 6, 1840, all in Gurney Mss; Alexander Taylor to Thomas Clarkson, Mar. 23, 1841, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

105. John Murray to Gurney, Oct. 23, 1840, and Josiah Fletcher to Gurney, Jan. 9, 1841, Gurney Mss; Alexander Taylor to Clarkson, Mar. 23, 1841, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

106. Whittier to Gurney, July 31, 1841, and Thomas Brightwell to Gurney, Nov. 20, 1841, Gurney Mss.

107. Arthur W. Brown, *Always Young for Liberty: A Biography of William Ellery Channing* (Syracuse, N.Y.: Syracuse University Press, 1956), 238.

Indian emancipation, for now there would be additional competition for slave-produced sugar. Special note was taken of this when a meeting was held in Philadelphia in the fall of 1838 to organize the American Free Produce Association after the Requited Labor Convention had been forced to disband in May because of the burning of Pennsylvania Hall. Concurrently, the newly formed British India Society was bending its efforts to promote the production of cotton in India which could favorably compete with American slave-produced cotton.[108]

The two great abolitionist victories of 1833 and 1838 were bound to result in great optimism about what actually could be achieved through organization and unremitting pressure. British abolitionists had acquired not only an imperial but a world perspective through their cooperation with the Americans and also through their diplomatic negotiations with the other European powers over ending the slave trade. It was clearly evident by now that slavery and the slave trade were so closely related that both must be fought simultaneously if either was to be killed. It was also clear that this was going to take international cooperation. After 1838 British abolitionists felt that they were, more than ever, in the forward position and were therefore qualified to organize and lead such a world movement. It was with this in mind that they gathered once more to reorganize on a larger scale. A provisional committee was set up in February, 1839, and the result was the formation of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in April, 1839.[109]

It would be inaccurate to say, however, that 1839 constituted a sharp break in either British abolitionist thinking or activities. They had been unremitting in their efforts at international cooperation against the slave trade ever since the Napoleonic wars, and it is also clearly apparent that since the 1820s especially they had been cooperating with American abolitionists in their attacks on slavery itself. Their activities after 1839 were simply build-

108. Call to first annual meeting of American Free Produce Association, Sept. 17, 1839, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 797; *Liberty Bell,* 1839, 81–83; American Free Produce Association, *First Annual Report,* microfilm, Friends Historical Library.

109. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 11, Apr 17, 1839.

ing on that previous foundation. The fact that Great Britain in the nineteenth century led the world in both sea power and diplomacy gave her abolitionists a strong political and therefore practical basis on which to rest their moral leadership.

It was with these advantages well in mind that the British abolitionists reorganized themselves in 1839 and began plans for the great world antislavery convention of 1840.

New Organizations: Broadening Horizons

XI

"The efforts which Great Britain and the United States are making for the conversion of the world, will constitute the chief glory of the age in which we live." [1] So wrote George Thompson shortly after his return to England from his lecture tour in America, which had nearly cost him his life at the hands of hostile mobs. A few years later William Ellery Channing, in a letter to Thomas Clarkson, declared that the antislavery cause had become "a bond of union to good men through the world." [2] In making such statements, Thompson and Channing were voicing what had become accepted antislavery doctrine: that the problem of slavery was more than a national one, that international cooperation was required for an effective crusade against it, and that the Anglo-American peoples occupied a special position of leadership in that crusade.

This sense of common purpose was especially important to American abolitionists. Psychologically speaking, they were eager to share both the guilt of slavery and the responsibility for ending it. Since they constituted a beleaguered minority at home, they took pride and comfort from the thought of standing shoulder to

1. Quoted from George Thompson's introduction to the British reprint of Angelina Grimké's *Appeal to the Christian Women.*

2. Channing to Clarkson, July, 1841, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

shoulder with like-minded people outside the United States. Despised at home as fanatics, they were eager to compensate with sympathy and respect from abroad. Such recognition, they reasoned, would force their own countrymen to look at them from a new perspective, would improve their image, and would result in a new hearing for their cause.

It was with delight, consequently, that American abolitionists hailed the news of the formation of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in 1839. The new organization, while not really new in leadership and not completely new even in name, was to be new in emphasis. Once they were working within the context of a world rather than a national arena, the British were forced to some degree to change their strategy. Instead of focusing pressure on their own Parliament, which after all could not legislate for the world, they needed now to focus on world opinion. They tended, consequently, to move away from political avenues and toward moral pressure, at the very time the American antislavery movement was moving toward greater emphasis on the political.[3] But this did not result in working at cross-purposes, for American abolitionists realized full well that they could capitalize on the moral support of world opinion to justify direct political action at home. They would be the beneficiaries of British practical experience as well as of the new, broader British orientation.

Some, not all, Americans wanted to follow the example of British political action but to go further and establish a distinct antislavery party. This issue became a major one in the splitting of the American abolitionists into two camps—this and the "woman question"—which came to a head at the annual meeting of the American Anti-Slavery Society in 1840. The new American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, led by the Tappan brothers, James G. Birney, Henry B. Stanton, and Joshua Leavitt (and

3. Temperley, "The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society," 5–6, makes the point that once the British began to operate on the world scene, they encountered the same difficulty as the Americans: no clear-cut constitutional or central authority on which to focus attack. They could only pressure and cajole. This, he concludes, also resulted in more arguments in the ranks over methods. I agree with him in general, but we must keep in mind that in two specific areas the British abolitionists continued their direct political approach: against the slave trade and for the equalization of sugar duties.

whose name was obviously patterned after the British), became the agency advocating political organization, which led to the formation of the Liberty party. The group led by Garrison, which retained control over what was left of the old American Anti-Slavery Society, rejected the political approach. Actually, although each accused the other of being too narrow, both groups were broadening their horizons: while one was expanding to include the political as well as the moral approaches, the other was branching out to include a broader spectrum of reform—women's rights and peace as well as antislavery. And just as the political abolitionists never completely abandoned their moral stance, the Garrisonian group was never completely divorced from political aims, if not methods. The Garrisonians were far from unified in their beliefs about the amount and kind of political action that was justifiable.[4] Neither group lost sight of the significance of international (i.e., British) support, and in some ways the schism became a bond of strength rather than a weakening factor in Anglo-American cooperation, although at the same time it tended to weaken the cause in America.

Although the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was in many ways a new name indicating a new emphasis for the same old group of abolitionists, to some extent there was a shift in leadership indicative of the shift away from political action. Wilberforce, Buxton, James Stephen, Stephen Lushington, William Smith, and Henry Brougham—big names among the old leaders—had all been in Parliament and came from a somewhat aristocratic or intellectually elite background. Wilberforce, of course, was now dead, as was James Stephen. James Cropper died early in 1840. Several of the others, because of age, were ready to pass the torch on to younger hands. Some of the political figures—Buxton and Brougham—were periodically called back to duty to chair conventions or lend prestige to public rallies; others, like O'Connell, increased rather than slackened their involvement. O'Connell, like most of the abolitionists, realized that

4. See Aileen Kraditor, *Means and Ends in American Abolitionism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1969), especially chs. 5 and 6; James B. Stewart, "The Aims and Impact of Garrisonian Abolitionism, 1840–1860," *Civil War History*, XV (Sept., 1969), 197–209.

a "world" organization would concentrate on America as its first target: "Specify America if you choose," he suggested, "or leave the name out of your plan. But frame your argument in such a way as to enable us to begin the work with the vile and sanguinary slaveholders of Republican America. I want to be *directly* at them. No more side-wind attacks; firing directly at the hull, as the seaman says, is my plan." [5] Thomas Clarkson, an old and feeble man by 1839, was honored with the presidency of the new society and constituted another link between the old and the new, but it was a purely nominal position. The real leader was Joseph Sturge, son-in-law of James Cropper and representative of the Quaker-business group that had long constituted a strong element in British abolitionist ranks. Another was John Scoble, also nonpolitical in background. In short, while there was something of a shift away from political leadership, there was no real break in the continuity of the group.[6]

The constitution of the new society stated that its aim was to abolish slavery wherever it existed in the world, and the first resolution recorded in its minutes was "To open an active correspondence with the abolitionists in America, France and elsewhere, and to encourage them by every means in our power." Such a resolution was purely rhetorical in its application to America because, as we have seen, such correspondence was already well established.[7] They immediately subscribed to the leading antislavery publications, to some that would acquaint them with the proslavery point of view, and to the debates of Congress and major law digests, so that they could thoroughly familiarize themselves with background material.[8] "We rely much, very

5. O'Connell to Sturge, July 7, 1838, in Sturge, *Memoirs,* 175–176.

6. Temperley concludes that the contrast between the new and the old groups was in the shift from aristocratic to middle-class, nonconformist leadership, with emphasis on the Quakers. I agree, but I do not see so sharp a break as he does, and think it grew out of the de-emphasis on political strategy. I definitely agree with him that there is no room here for a "status revolution" thesis such as has been suggested for American abolitionist leadership. The same group that was taking over reform leadership was currently increasing its economic and political power.

7. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 3, Feb. 27, 1839.

8. *Ibid.,* 36, 144, Dec. 31, 1839; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Feb. 6, 1840.

much, under God upon the rebuke of Great Britain for the destruction of slavery among us," Henry B. Stanton wrote the British society, and it was largely with this in mind that plans were formulated for a great antislavery convention to be held in London in 1840.[9]

In order to have more information for discussion at the convention, a committee of the British society, aided by Dawes and Keep, who were still lecturing there, prepared lengthy queries for countries intending to send delegates.[10] Copies were then sent to such leading abolitionists as Garrison, Stanton, Gerrit Smith, and Amos Phelps, to Hiram Wilson working with fugitives in Canada, to William Ellery Channing, and to such abolitionists in Congress as Thomas Morris and Joshua Giddings of Ohio, William Slade of Vermont, and, not least, to "Old Man Eloquent" himself, John Quincy Adams, who had by this time aligned himself with the antislavery forces to fight the gag laws. The American Anti-Slavery Society acted as a clearinghouse to receive all of the answers, and the tremendous task of collating, arranging, and condensing was done by James A. Thome and Theodore Weld.[11] The finished product became the "working paper" of the London convention and in 1841 was published in London as *Slavery and the Internal Slave Trade in the United States.*[12]

Although all of the American abolitionists were enthusiastic about the idea of a world convention, the actual task of choosing delegates was not so simple. Several of the men whose names would have added luster to the gathering could not go for personal reasons. In this category were William Ellery Channing,

9. Stanton to J. H. Tredgold, June 10, 1839, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 10/67; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 34–35, May 31, and 58, July 26, 1839; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, July 2, 1839.

10. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 61–67, July 26, and 82–83, Aug. 14, 1839.

11. *Ibid.*, 86, Aug. 30, 1839; Stanton to Tredgold, Aug. 23, 1839, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 10/68; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, May 7, 1840. Editing the replies to the queries was not only a big job in itself, but in the midst of the work a fire destroyed about thirty pages of the finished document, which Weld had then to do over. See Weld to Birney, Apr. 27, 1840, Birney Papers.

12. *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 817.

perhaps the best-known New England divine of the day; William Jay, a lawyer and son of the distinguished first chief justice; Gerrit Smith, wealthy land owner and gentleman, descended from the old Dutch aristocracy of upstate New York; and John Greenleaf Whittier, the one male literary celebrity the American antislavery movement could then claim (Lydia Maria Child was already a well-known novelist). Lewis Tappan, wealthy New York philanthropist who had business as well as antislavery connections in England, felt that he should stay at home to see the case of the *Amistad* captives through the courts.[13] Each sent his blessing. Channing furnished letters of introduction for James G. Birney, who was a delegate, with the hope that the convention would be a bond of peace between nations as well as marking a new era of reform. He was particularly concerned that the British power should be used as a moderating influence in American relations with Cuba and Mexico vis-à-vis the slavery problem.[14] William Jay, while recognizing that the conference could not propose anything to interfere with the sovereignty of nations, thought that a vote of disapproval of the U.S. Senate would have a good effect. The Senate had recently passed resolutions, introduced by John C. Calhoun, which objected to slaves being freed if they were landed on free soil as a consequence of a ship's being blown or otherwise forced off course.[15] As an Episcopalian, Jay was hopeful that the Church of England would use its influence to undermine the degree to which American churches were the "great buttress" of slavery.[16]

13. Lewis Tappan to William Allen, May 5, 1840, and to Joseph Sturge, May 5, 1840, Tappan Papers.

14. Channing to Birney, Apr. 14, 1840, Birney Papers.

15. The essence of Calhoun's resolutions of 1837 had been that not only could the federal government not "interfere" with slavery where it already existed, but it could not prohibit it in the territories and was, in fact, obligated to extend to it positive protection from attacks of other states or individuals. This provided a basis for banning antislavery speakers and the sending of antislavery propaganda through the mails. The recent resolutions that Jay was the most concerned about were related to international affairs and grew out of the cases of the *Enterprise* and the *Amistad*. Calhoun insisted that slaves landed on foreign soil remained slaves and must be returned to the United States.

16. William Jay to Birney, Apr. 20, 1840, Birney Papers; Jay to Birney, Mar. 28, 1840, reprinted in the *London Sun*, June 19, 1840.

Whittier declined appointment as a delegate because of his health, but he produced a poem to honor the occasion that began

> Yes, let them gather! Summon forth
> The pledged philanthropy of earth.
> From every land, whose hills have heard
> The bugle blast of Freedom waking. . . .[17]

It was published in the *Liberator,* and the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society reprinted 1,000 copies for distribution.[18] Negro delegates had special problems. Robert Douglass, a portrait painter from Philadelphia, was at first refused a passport because of his color; Charles Lenox Remond, who traveled with Garrison's party, was forced to go steerage.

Aside from individual handicaps in finding delegates were two issues that had produced factional quarrels within the antislavery ranks: the "woman question" and the Hicksite "heresy." Both Orthodox Friends and Hicksites had argued among themselves over the appropriateness of activity in non-Quaker antislavery organizations. Some from each group continued as active members, but it was generally recognized that the Hicksites had been less reluctant than the Orthodox in giving wholehearted support to cooperation. There would naturally, therefore, tend to be more delegates to London who were Hicksites, but since the English Quakers were Orthodox, the question arose about whether or not their attendance would cause friction. Fundamentally, the British Orthodox Friends had enough in common with the Hicksites as far as antislavery was concerned that while there were some overt expressions of hostility, many of them went out of their way to be friendly.[19] This was true of William Howitt

17. John G. Whittier to Elizabeth Whittier, May 5, 1840, Whittier Letters; Whittier to Birney, Apr. 16, 1840, Birney Papers; John Greenleaf Whittier, *Anti-Slavery Poems: Songs of Labor and Reform* (Cambridge, Mass.: Riverside Press, 1888), 72–80; Lewis Tappan to Sturge, May 5, 1840, Tappan Papers. In a letter to J. Miller McKim, Apr. 6, 1840, Anti-Slavery Papers, Cornell University, Whittier said he could not afford to go and did not think he could do enough to justify having his expenses paid by the Executive Committee.

18. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 186, Mar. 13, 1840.

19. Lucretia Mott, "Memoranda during a Passage to and from England and Three Months Travel in Great Britain and Ireland," 38, Lucretia Mott Mss,

and his wife, Mary, both popular writers of the day; the Pease family, including Elizabeth; the Webbs, who were Irish Quakers; and many others who invited the Hicksite contingent to their homes. This included William Forster, the brother of Josiah Forster, who had challenged the Motts' good standing as Friends. William Bell, an Irish Friend, asserted that he stayed friendly with everyone simply by not asking their theological views and not stating his own.

Of much larger proportions was the quarrel over the appointing and seating of women delegates, since this was one of the issues leading to the split between the Garrisonians and the Tappanites. The latter group charged that Garrison was "using" the issue to increase his numerical backing so that he could take complete control of the American Anti-Slavery Society; they also objected, on principle, to the introduction of any "extraneous" issues into the movement. All energies must be concentrated on one evil, slavery. Such reforms as women's rights, temperance, and peace would diffuse efforts and so weaken the cause. The Garrisonians, on the other hand, pointed to the inconsistency of arguing for emancipation and equality regardless of skin color and then denying them on grounds of sex.

Following the example set in Great Britain, American women were very active in the antislavery movement. They had organized auxiliary societies, and they had given time and effort in the petition campaigns. Some—Prudence Crandall, Phebe Mathews, Emeline Bishop, and Lucy Wright—had volunteered as teachers for black schools. A few, like the Grimké sisters and Abby Kelley, had taken the courageous step of lecturing in public. And others,

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Friends Historical Library; Frederick B. Tolles, ed., *Slavery and the "Woman Question": Lucretia Mott's Diary of Her Visit to Great Britain to Attend the World's Anti-Slavery Convention of 1840*, Supplement 23 to *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* (Haverford, Pa.: Friends Historical Association and Friends Historical Society, 1952), 25, 41 (hereinafter cited as Tolles, ed., *Mott's Diary*); Garrison, *Life*, II, 375, note 3, 388. Whittier, who might be expected to defend the Orthodox group, expressed to Richard Mott in a letter of Nov. 15, 1840, his conclusion: "I think the simple fact that they were *females*, fully accounts for their exclusion, without resorting to any sectarian suspicions." See typescript, Whittier-Taylor Mss.

such as Margaret Chandler, Lydia Maria Child, and Maria Weston Chapman, had dedicated their pens as well as their hearts to the cause. There was no denying that many of them were in every way as able as the men who held the offices and administered the national society. In theory the Garrisonians were right; as a matter of practical procedure there was something to be said for the opposition.

Having won on the woman question at home when they took control of the American Anti-Slavery Society, the Garrisonians were enthusiastic about the possibilities of another victory at the world convention in London, and they forthwith proceeded to include women among the appointed delegates of the American Anti-Slavery Society and the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society.[20] Lucretia Mott, who was to earn the name "Lioness of the Convention," officially represented the American Anti-Slavery Society, the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society, and the Association of Friends for Promoting the Abolition of Slavery. Others who accepted appointments as delegates were Lydia Child, Sarah Pugh, Abby Kimber, Mrs. Wendell Phillips, Maria Weston Chapman, Abby Kelley, and Emily Winslow.[21] It is noteworthy that Elizabeth Cady Stanton, who was later to be most active for women's rights, did not go as a delegate. She had just been married to Henry Stanton, of the Tappan group, and the trip to London was their honeymoon.

The women counted heavily on the fact that Garrison was personally better known in England than most of the leaders in the new organization and particularly on the influence of George Thompson, who had been so zealous in urging American women to engage in public activities. It was logical, too, to think that the active British women abolitionists would support their fight. With this in mind, the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society appointed Harriet Martineau, who had been given an honorary life member-

20. Tolles, ed., *Mott's Diary,* 3, 9. Another issue in the split was the question of centralized control versus autonomous state societies.

21. Garrison, *Life,* II, 351–353. The New York Ladies Anti-Slavery Society, led by Juliana Tappan, asked Birney to act as their delegate. See Juliana A. Tappan to Birney, n.d., Birney Papers.

ship, as one of its delegates. She did not, however, appear in London (by this time she was so deaf that she had to be shouted at through an ear trumpet), but she wrote a letter indicating moral support, and after the meetings in London had ended, she received several of the American delegates in her home at Tynemouth.[22]

"With a young woman placed on the throne of Great Britain, will the philanthropists of that country presume to object to the female delegates from the United States as members of the Convention, on the ground of their sex?" asked Garrison.[23] The answer was yes, they would. Warned by the new organization's leaders in America, and perturbed over the possibilities of this disruptive issue, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society tried to ward off trouble by resolving and giving advance warning "that the Delegates to the Convention do consist exclusively of Men."[24] The announcement was not enough to dissuade the American women from proceeding to London to try to win over the convention, but they were not giving sufficient weight to European respect for custom and tradition.

While there were a few sympathetic British voices raised in their behalf, these were not numerous or strong enough to result in the ladies being seated as delegates. William Ashurst, a London solicitor, declared that holding a world convention and denying the right of women to be delegates was like disfranchising half of creation. Dr. John Bowring, an abolitionist Member of Parliament, deplored the fact that lact of organization and advance preparation had failed to unify all of the ladies and their allies among the men.[25] But even George Thompson proved to be a disappointingly lukewarm champion. First, he tried to persuade

22. Garrison, *Life,* II, 378–379; copy of Harriet Martineau to friends [Lucretia Mott], Aug. 9, 1840, Mott Mss; Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Eighty Years and More, 1815–1897; Reminiscences of Elizabeth Cady Stanton* (New York, 1898), 91.

23. Garrison, *Life,* II, 361.

24. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 206, May 15, 1840.

25. Garrison, *Life,* II, 371, 378. Bowring wrote a number of poems on Anglo-American cooperation that Maria Weston Chapman published in the *Liberty Bell* throughout the 1840s. See, for example, the issues of 1841 and 1842.

Wendell Phillips to withdraw the motion to accept all appointed delegates; failing in that, he voted reluctantly to seat the women. As soon as the motion was defeated, he expressed the hope that the question would be forgotten—unlike Mr. Ashurst, who recommended that the American societies should continue to delegate women and raise a debate on their rights at every future gathering. Garrison's disappointment in Thompson was conveyed in a letter to his wife: "Dear Thompson has not been strengthened to do battle for us, as I had confidently hoped he would be." [26]

Before the convention opened, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society reaffirmed its position and sent a deputation consisting of W. D. Crowdson and William Ball to so inform the American ladies who had arrived. Joseph Sturge breakfasted with them at their boardinghouse on Queen Street and begged them not to raise a fuss. He even produced a letter from the venerable Thomas Clarkson on the subject. The ladies gave him all of their arguments, especially stressing the point that the whole idea of immediatism should be credited to a British woman, Elizabeth Heyrick—but to no avail. Defeated but undaunted, the ladies capitulated, but in a document of protest.[27]

When the convention opened on June 12, it was evident that the dissension between the two American factions had crossed the Atlantic along with the delegates, and it is a moot point as to what extent a vote against the ladies was really not opposition to them so much as a vote against Garrison. It would be unfair to accuse the American ladies of using this issue to gain the limelight, but that was clearly the result. As a matter of fact, they enjoyed a great deal more publicity by being rejected than if they had been quietly seated. Relegated to the gallery, they were openly "on display" and were joined from time to time by such British celebrities as Lady Byron and the novelist Amelia Opie, who was described by Mrs. Stanton as more interesting than Westminster Abbey. By this time Mrs. Opie had forsaken the

26. Garrison, *Life*, II, 372–373, 377, 379, 385.

27. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 223–224, June 9, and 226–227, June 11, 1840; Mott, "Memoranda," 20, 22, 28, 30–31, Mott Mss.

Unitarian church to become a Quaker and had given up novel writing as too "worldly." [28]

Garrison missed the first round of excitement by arriving late at the convention, detained first by the annual meeting in New York and then by adverse sailing weather. Then, declaring that his credentials were no better than those of the women, he chose to join them off the convention floor as a nondelegate. Charles Remond, Nathaniel P. Rogers, and William Adams, who arrived with Garrison, also joined in the dramatic secession to the gallery, and the same group signed a protest of their own that was tabled by the convention.[29] Remond, it should be noted, was indebted to the Bangor Female Anti-Slavery Society, the Portland Sewing Circle, and the Newport Young Ladies' Juvenile Anti-Slavery Society for most of his financial aid for the trip to London. The Bangor ladies had sent with him a direct solicitation for money from Mrs. Clarkson and other British ladies. Their printed circular copied the familiar figure of the kneeling slave, only theirs was a female asking, "Am I not a woman and a sister?" [30] One cannot help but note that while Garrison chose to be segregated with the women at the convention, he had made no move to forsake his cabin for the steerage quarters in order to protest Remond's racial segregation on the ship.

Almost as if to make up for the lack of official acceptance, the British antislavery people seem to have made extra efforts to give the American ladies a social welcome. They were lavishly entertained and squired about on sight-seeing trips to view schools, hospitals, and other evidences of social progress, while distinguished British leaders, both male and female, called on them at their boardinghouse. When word came that Thomas Clarkson (by then always referred to as "the venerable") would visit them to acknowledge the debt of gratitude the cause owed to American women, there was a good deal of bustle and excitement. Each of the ladies had a chance to converse with him individually

28. Clipping in Misc. Mss and note in Wood Collection, 94, Friends Historical Library.

29. Garrison, *Life*, II, 374–382.

30. To Mary Clarkson, a printed leaflet from Bangor, Me., May, 1840, addressed "To Female Abolitionists," Add. Mss 41267A, British Museum; Aptheker, ed., *Documentary History of the Negro People*, 196.

for a few moments, and then Clarkson's daughter-in-law passed out locks of his hair. These were carefully preserved, taken back to the United States, and distributed hair by hair as publicity for the cause.[31]

In the afternoons at tea and in specially arranged evening "soirées," the ladies were given a chance to participate in the discussions and make up for the silence enforced on them at the regular sessions. No doubt all of the social activity helped to assuage hurt feelings, but, more important, it created the strong personal friendships and bonds so significant for the continuation of Anglo-American antislavery cooperation. Perhaps the divisive woman question, which resulted in the sending of so many strong-minded and intelligent women to London, was a blessing in disguise to strengthen the connection.

No one interested in the cause of emancipation could fail to be stirred by the proceedings of the convention, which opened on June 12 in the great hall of the Freemasons' Tavern with approximately 500 delegates present.[32] Thomas Clarkson was honored with the post of president, but word was passed that he was too feeble to stand the excitement of applause, so when he entered the hall, the whole assembly rose in silent tribute to their veteran champion. The vice-presidents, including James G. Birney from the United States, did the actual presiding. Although questions pertaining to the African slave trade and to slavery in British India, the French and Dutch colonies, Cuba, Brazil, and the Mohammedan countries occupied some of the sessions, the focus was definitely on the United States. Major topics were: the churches and slavery, constitutional problems because of the federal system, the conditions of slaves, the internal slave trade, the status of free blacks, fugitives in Canada, the Texas question, suppression of the slave trade, and the inefficacy of coloniza-

31. Garrison, *Life,* II, 386–367; Mott, "Memoranda," 36, 38, 39, 40, 42, 58, 74, 77, Mott Mss; Elizabeth Cady Stanton to Angelina E. Weld and Sarah Grimké, June 25, 1840, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 845–849; Gerrit Smith to Clarkson, Nov. 2, 1840, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

32. For the complete account, see *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention, Called by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and Held in London . . . 1840* (London, 1841). See also the *London Sun,* June 13, 16, 18, 19, 1840.

tion. Birney read Judge William Jay's letter asking that the Anglican "Mother Church" speak out to the American churches, and he also introduced a motion in line with Jay's suggestion that the conference disapprove John C. Calhoun's resolutions, growing out of the recent *Enterprise* and *Amistad* cases, that slaves landed on foreign soil remained slaves and must be returned to their owners.

Henry B. Stanton spoke to assure the British people that English literature did have a direct influence on American thoughts and acts. They must, therefore, make sure that it was saturated with criticisms of slavery and with abolitionist doctrines generally. He also discussed the relationship of the cotton market to slavery as well as the responsibility of Manchester manufacturers. It was they, he asserted, who had raised the price of cotton in 1835 and thereby created the mobs that had driven George Thompson out of America. Wendell Phillips discussed the difficulties of circulating antislavery materials in the United States, and John Keep dwelt on the failure of American churches to use their power against slavery. Copies of the resolutions applying to the churches and slavery and to the treatment of free black people were printed for distribution in the United States.[33] An address to the governors of the slaveholding states was mailed to them under the frank of Congressman Seth M. Gates, an act which earned Gates a severe denunciation by Governor James Polk of Tennessee. A wealthy Georgia slaveholder offered $500 to anyone who would deliver up Gates in Savannah.[34]

The world convention came to a close on June 23, but most of the delegates stayed to attend the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, which opened in Exeter Hall on the 24th. Again the British society's preference for the "new organization" in America was evident: they invited its representative, Birney, to sit on the platform with the notables while Garrison was completely neglected. Birney had also been chosen as the American member of a deputation that presented a memo-

33. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 249, July 3, 1840.

34. Henry Wilson, *History of the Rise and Fall of the Slave Power in America*, 3 vols., 3rd ed. (Boston: James K. Osgood & Co., 1875), I, 400.

rial to Lord John Russell opposing laws recently passed in Jamaica and Barbados.[35] The duke of Suffolk presided over the opening of the annual meeting, and, as at the world convention, a tribute of perfect silence marked the entry of Thomas Clarkson. But when he spoke with such feeling that the tears ran down his cheeks (and of those present), his audience could no longer be restrained and broke into a thunderous ovation.[36]

This was Clarkson's last public appearance. His last activity for the antislavery cause was to be directed toward America. As Clarkson related the story, a short time after the convention he had a sort of dream or vision in which a voice spoke to him, and he heard distinctly the words "You have not done all your work. There is America." It was so vivid that he sat upright in bed, listened, but heard no more; then the whole subject for a pamphlet, texts and all, came into his head, so he got up and began to write. Despite his feebleness, he was driven to work at it eight hours a day until it was finished, and he "hoped he had not left the Americans a leg to stand on." It was published as *A Letter to the Clergy of Various Denominations, and to the Slave-Holding Planters, in the Southern Parts of the United States of America.*[37]

The first section, to the clergy, dwelt on the sinfulness of slavery and the moral evils which accompanied it; the second part, to the planters, emphasized the happy results of emancipation in the West Indies. His statement that the black King Christophe of Haiti was a "man of greater genius and talents" and had a more "acute, penetrating, and capacious mind" than any president of the United States, was hardly one to win the sympathy of those he was addressing. But it is doubtful that many southern clergymen or planters actually read the book, even though the Amer-

35. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 257, July 6, 1840.

36. Mary Clarkson to Mrs. Clarkson, n.d., Add. Mss 41267A, British Museum.

37. Published in London, 1841. His account of the vision is in a copy of Thomas Clarkson to Joseph Sturge, Nov. 4, 1840, Birney Papers; Elizabeth and Hannah Doyle to Catherine Clarkson, Nov. 2, 1840, and Cassius Clay to Clarkson, July 25, 1844, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library. The manuscript copy of the pamphlet has a marginal note: "This manuscript was printed in London in 1841 and reprinted in the United States in the same year, with *good effect* upon *the clergy of the Northern States* but it was only conveyed by stealth into the Southern." In Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

ican antislavery press saw to it that they were informed of its existence. Clarkson's *Letter to the Clergy* formed an excellent companion piece to James G. Birney's pamphlet *The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery,* which was published first in London with the aim of stirring the Church of England to action. Copies of Birney's pamphlet were sent to the members of the hierarchy of the Anglican church, and enclosed with each was a letter requesting the church to do what it could to lead the American churches in the right direction. Birney also persuaded the Congregational Union of Scotland to send a remonstrance to fellow Christians in America.[38] It is impossible to gauge the extent to which such publications directly provoked the splits in the American churches that came in the middle of the decade; undoubtedly they played a part.

Another aspect of Birney's visit to the British Isles that later had repercussions in America affected the Irish and, therefore, the Roman Catholic church. Since Birney was of Irish descent, such abolitionists in Ireland as Dr. R. R. Madden, the Webb family, the Allen family, and O'Connell himself knew they could capitalize on his warm reception as a "native son" and thus advance the cause. Their basic strategy was to abolitionize Ireland, so that every emigrant would be a ready-made opponent of slavery once he got to America and would be prepared to cast his vote for the Liberty party, whose candidate for the presidency Birney now was. Birney presents the unique picture of the only candidate for that office in the history of the country who did all of his campaigning outside the United States and was not even at home for the election. This does not mean that he escaped criticism or that what he said abroad went unnoticed by his political enemies at home. Indeed, his very absence gave them a chance to impugn his patriotism and to charge that his candidacy was financed by British capital.[39]

While in Ireland Birney persuaded O'Connell that it would be

38. Fladeland, *Birney,* 202–203; Joseph Sturge to Mary Clarkson, Nov. 11, 1840, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

39. Francis P. Blair to Andrew Jackson, Sept. 10, 1840, in John Spencer Bassett, ed., *The Correspondence of Andrew Jackson,* 6 vols. (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Institution, 1933), VI, 75–76.

a good idea to formulate an address on slavery to the Irish Americans, which was circulated and signed by 60,000 Irishmen. The Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society in Dublin printed a circular "To American Emigrants" explaining the status of slaves, who the abolitionists were, and lists of the slave states to be avoided. Irish immigrants were encouraged to do their part in helping runaway slaves whenever possible.[40]

The world antislavery convention had further merged the British and American antislavery movements into the Anglo-American movement. The competition between the Garrisonians and the Tappanites helped to accelerate the pace of activity just at this juncture. As the rivalry continued, particularly through the early years of the 1840s, each group continued to solicit British support; the result was that the lining up on both sides in Great Britain produced almost as distinct a split as in the United States. Debates over the connection between the churches and slavery were also reinvigorated, while the agitation over the woman question and the advisability of political party action was sustained. Internal troubles as well as the ongoing fight against slavery kept the antislavery movement at a high pitch throughout the 1840s.

40. *American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Jan., 1841; "Address from the People of Ireland to their Countrymen and Countrywomen in America," Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 4/56c; *Signal of Liberty* (Ann Arbor, Mich.), Apr. 20, 1842; *Philanthropist* (Cincinnati), May 18, 1842; Richard Webb to J. H. Tredgold, June 25, 1841, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 4/52.

The Stimulation of Factional Rivalry

XII

When the meetings in London were over, several of the American delegates remained in Great Britain, some to travel, others to lecture on antislavery, and several to collect money for home organizations. Dawes and Keep were still working for Oberlin, and in addition to money, they acquired about 6,000 volumes for the college library, many of them antislavery pamphlets and books.[1] The Motts, William Lloyd Garrison, Charles Remond, William Adams, and Nathaniel Rogers of the "old organization" stayed to see Scotland and Ireland. James G. Birney and Henry B. Stanton of the new American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society embarked upon an ambitious lecture tour that took them to Scotland and Ireland as well as throughout England. John Scoble and G. W. Alexander of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society traveled with them.

It was inevitable that the two groups should clash, and the rivalry between them to see who could win over British adherents was intense—sometimes to the point of being childishly petty. On the surface, one is tempted to deplore this rivalry as weakening

1. These formed the basis of the valuable Oberlin Anti-Slavery Collection of today. See Geraldine Hopkins Hubbard, comp., *A Classified Catalogue of the Collection of Anti-Slavery Propaganda in the Oberlin College Library, Oberlin College Library Bulletin*, II, no. 3 (1932), v.

the abolitionist cause and bringing reproach upon it, and in the United States this was true: such squabbling frightened people away from the movement and gave ammunition to the proslavery opposition, always eagerly searching for evidence to discredit the abolitionists as agitators and fanatics. But in Great Britain the situation was different. The campaign there was not aimed at convincing a proslavery opposition; the appeal was to people already converted to the antislavery principle whose financial, moral, and diplomatic support was needed. Abolitionists there were a respected group with social prestige and influence in government circles. The competition between the two American camps, each side trying to outdo the other, resulted in a much livelier campaign and thus kept the whole issue of American abolition constantly stirred up. Neither faction could afford to relax for fear of losing out to the other. Indeed, some of the credit historians have given to the world antislavery convention, as the source of much of the energy expended immediately thereafter, might rightfully belong to the stimulating effect of the American schism.

The liveliness of effort extended beyond the rivalry between those lecturers who lingered after the convention. As we shall see, each organization continued throughout the forties and fifties to send agents to sustain support for its own side. For several years each group bombarded the British organizations via correspondence, and the British public through antislavery publications, with evidence of its own zeal and correct stand on issues dividing them. Each zealously exerted itself to elicit articles for its own publications in the United States, especially from such prominent leaders as Clarkson. Even the antislavery bazaars or fairs, sponsored by the ladies' auxiliaries, tried to outdo one another in soliciting items for display and donations from British friends.

By the summer of 1840 it was clear that the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society had already elected to support the new American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. But among the rank and file, minds were not yet completely made up. Despite Garrison's factiousness at the convention, he still retained some of his following from his earlier visit of 1833, many of the ladies in England as in America were naturally drawn to his side, and

many who were themselves interested in a variety of reforms were sympathetic. The fact that Garrison seemed to have a decided following among the free colored people was a consideration in his favor, and the presence at his side of the very able young Charles Remond was a constant reminder of this. George Thompson remained faithful to Garrison, while Charles Stuart, as was to be expected, aligned himself with the Tappan group, which Weld seemed to favor. The consequent debates between Thompson and Stuart alone, but many others as well, kept the American cause in the spotlight.

If any one issue could unite the two factions, it was their mutual dislike of colonization, but the battles with colonization leaders contributed to the factiousness, which often included petty and malicious attacks on one another, thus reinforcing the image of abolitionists as "radical agitators." The debates over colonization revived at the time of the world convention, stimulated by T. F. Buxton's new Society for the Civilization of Africa, which was in a sense the product of his study and writing on the slave trade. He wanted England to make treaties with the Africans that would give her control of the whole coastline of western Africa; depots could be set up there to handle trade in agricultural products in order to supplant the slave trade. Teams of teachers, black people whenever available, would be sent into the interior to organize communities that would furnish the goods and to teach improved methods of production and marketing. Military troops were to be completely excluded. There would be provision for experiments in producing cotton and sugar with free labor to prove its practicability and also to break the American monopoly in slave-produced cotton. This whole plan was set forth by Buxton at one of the sessions of the London convention. It had the backing of both Samuel and J. J. Gurney, although there was some apprehension on the part of many Friends that Buxton might find it necessary to request military protection from the government.[2]

As soon as the American Colonization Society heard of Buxton's project, they claimed it as akin to their own goal and hailed

2. Joseph Sturge to [Gurney], Oct. 16, 1840, Gurney Mss; Gurney to Ellis Yarnall, Jan. 26, 1841, Cope Mss, Friends Historical Library.

Buxton as their new hero. As a matter of fact, in the very origination of the American Colonization Society, Dr. William Thornton had said they ought to gain control of 1,000 miles of the African coast, and the society had long been concerned about the persistence of the slave trade and the laxity of the American government in regard to it. In 1828 Elliott Cresson had suggested to R. R. Gurley that they try to interest the black Philadelphia merchant James Forten in the idea of establishing a trading line to Liberia.[3] They had also continued efforts to get the American government to give official protection to Liberia in order to stop the slave trade, and Cresson had gone as far as to say that if President Jackson refused, the colony ought to request protection from the British.[4] He thought the threat of such a step might move Jackson to act.

By the time the American delegates were sailing off to the London convention in 1840, R. R. Gurley was making his own plans to go to England to form an alliance with Buxton and the Society for the Civilization of Africa. He arrived just after the convention ended but while the American delegates were still there to join forces against him.[5] Just as Garrison and Nathaniel Paul demolished Cresson in England in 1833, now the whole flock of American abolitionists temporarily closed ranks and swooped down on Gurley. While Garrison was still there, he persuaded Clarkson finally to come out publicly with a denunciation of the American Colonization Society, and when Garrison left, Remond remained to carry on for the American Anti-Slavery Society.[6] Gurley accused Remond of advocating a war by England against the United States to free the slaves, and Remond countered with a challenge to debate Gurley. William E. Forster wanted to pit Birney and Gurley against each other in debate, but such strategy was not congenial to a man of Birney's tempera-

3. Cresson to Gurley, Jan. 1, 1828, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

4. See, for example, Cresson to Gurley, Sept. 23, 1831, Letters Received, ACS Papers; journal of Board of Managers, Nov. 30, 1836, Aug. 23, 1838, ACS Papers.

5. Gurley to Judge [Samuel] Wilkeson, May 27, 1840, Letters Received, ACS Papers; R. R. Gurley, *Mission to England, in Behalf of the American Colonization Society* (Washington, D.C.: William W. Morrison, 1841), 14–16.

6. Garrison, *Life*, II, 388; Catherine Clarkson to Thomas Hodgkin, n.d., Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

ment, and Gurley, like Cresson before him, preferred not to meet head-on in open combat.[7] When Gurley continued to claim Buxton and Samuel Gurney as colonizationists, the abolitionists arranged a show-down meeting in which they forced Gurley to admit that Buxton had repudiated any connection between his plan and colonization. Buxton was asked to publish a statement to clarify his position once and for all, and he did. He was an immediate abolitionist without equivocation. He believed that the American Colonization Society palliated and even justified the sin of slavery and lent itself to the oppression of free blacks in America.[8] Like Cresson before him, Gurley had failed in his own mission but had certainly contributed to keeping before the British public the whole debate over American slavery and what to do about it.

One part of Gurley's assignment was to seek British recognition of Liberia, but according to Cresson, he had succeeded only in arousing commercial jealousy. So during the next summer (1841) Cresson, who flattered himself on his connections in high places, undertook another mission to England. He availed himself of a letter of introduction from the duke of Sussex to see Lord Palmerston to try to explain that since Liberia was not a colony of the American government, she was quite willing to trade with Great Britain but would like in return a guarantee of her borders. Palmerston was in no disposition to "concede one iota," and Mr. Stevenson, the American minister, warned Gurley that Liberia would go the way of Denmark whenever she became an obstacle to British commercial interests.[9]

Charles Fenton Mercer, long one of the main supporters and officers of the American Colonization Society, also tried while in England in 1841 and 1842 to convince Palmerston of Liberia's

7. Remond to Garrison, Nov. 13, 1840, in *Journal of Negro History,* X (July, 1925), 493–494; R. R. Gurley, *Letters to the Hon. Henry Clay . . . and Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton . . . on the Colonization and Civilization of Africa* (London: Wiley and Putnam, 1841), 18–19.

8. William Forster to Birney, Aug. 15, 1840; Birney and Stanton to Buxton, Sept. 5, 1840; and Buxton to Birney and Stanton, Oct. 14, 1840, all in Birney Papers; Birney to Lewis Tappan, Sept. 3, 1840, in *Birney Letters,* II, 597–599.

9. Cresson to Board of Managers, July 19, Aug. 18, 1841, Letters Received, ACS Papers. His reference to Denmark harked back to the British attack during the Napoleonic wars.

just claims, but to no avail. His conclusion was that nothing was more mortifying to an American than a trip to Europe: American prestige was at a low ebb, owing to the quality of her president, her Congress, and her state legislatures.[10] His despair was, however, a bit premature. Before the decade ended, both England and France recognized Liberia's independence and signed treaties of amity and commerce with her. One of the conditions of the British treaty was that Liberia must declare the slave trade to be piracy and allow search of her vessels.[11] Not until the southern states had seceded from the Union did the United States recognize the Negro republics of Liberia and Haiti.

The last of the American delegates to the 1840 convention had not yet left England when the Garrisonians decided to send over a special agent for their side, John A. Collins. His specific mission was to collect money, which was desperately needed to keep the American Anti-Slavery Society operating, particularly in the publication of its new organ, the *National Anti-Slavery Standard.* By this time the British were growing accustomed to such pleas for funds, but they generously agreed that since they did not have to face the battle with slavery "hand to hand, foot to foot, face to face," as the Americans did, it was no more than right that they should make their contributions in cash.[12]

But Collins was not welcomed by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. In fact, they drafted a letter to him declining any monetary support on the grounds that the American Anti-Slavery Society had "alienated the confidence of this Committee by the course they have recently pursued."[13] John Scoble wrote

10. Mercer to E. Whittlesey and Anderson, Aug. 2, 1842, Letters Received, ACS Papers.

11. G. Ralston to Cresson, Nov. 24, 1848, and President J. J. Roberts [of Liberia] to Anson G. Phelps, president of New York State Colonization Society, Dec. 6, 1848, in *Maryland Colonization Journal,* IV, 286 and 299–300; see also V, 123, for a copy of the treaty between Great Britain and Liberia.

12. Garrison, *Life,* II, 415–417; American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Sept. 25, 1840. The *National Anti-Slavery Standard* was first edited by Nathaniel P. Rogers and then by Mrs. Child with her husband, David, as her assistant editor—an arrangement nicely illustrative of the Garrisonian position on women's rights.

13. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 319, Jan. 1, 1841.

to Birney that Collins was acting "outrageously" in trying to undermine Birney and Stanton and the new organization.[14] James Marriage reported that at a meeting in Chelmsford, Collins and Charles Remond had insinuated that the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was composed of abolitionists who were once sincere but had bowed to the pressure of public opinion and had deserted the high ground they once held.[15] Charles Stuart became as vehement against Collins as he had been against colonizationists Cresson and Gurley.

Undaunted, Collins and Remond proceeded to make some headway, not so much in England, where the London Broad Street Committee's influence was paramount, but mostly in Scotland and Ireland, where there was a bit of nationalistic spirit not entirely reluctant to challenge the London leadership. In February, 1841, the Hibernian society in Dublin objected to the London committee's sending them documents prejudicial to Collins without stating clearly why they refused to support the American Anti-Slavery Society, and by March they were demanding explanations of "certain aspersions." If letters such as John Greenleaf Whittier's opposing Collins were published, so should those of J. J. Gibbons and the editors of the *National Anti-Slavery Standard* and the *Pennsylvania Freeman,* which supported him. They did not, they asserted, presume to dictate the right of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to unite with whichever body of American abolitionists they thought was best, but the British antislavery public should be allowed to judge for itself. The Broad Street Committee, in turn, declined to apologize for its disavowal of Collins and declared that it would engage in no further exchanges on the subject. They did, nonetheless, print all of their correspondence with Collins for the public record.[16]

14. Scoble to Birney, Jan. 2, 1841, Birney Papers. See also M. C. Braithwaite to Birney, Feb. 3, 1841, Birney Papers; G. W. Alexander to James Haughton, Mar. 11, 1840, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 67–69. The letter should be dated 1841.

15. James Marriage to British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Dec. 30, 1849, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

16. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 352, Mar. 5, 1841; R. Allen to J. H. Tredgold, Feb. 4, 20, 1841, C 4/47, C 4/48; Hibernian Anti-Slavery Society to committee of British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society,

British women, on Garrison's side as expected, also defended Collins. Harriet Martineau had read Mrs. Chapman's *Right and Wrong in Massachusetts*, which gave the Garrison version of the split, and she insisted that both sides must be listened to. Miss Martineau left no doubt that in her opinion the British should get into the fight and uphold the old organization, and the letter setting forth her views was published by Mrs. Chapman in the *Liberty Bell*.[17] Elizabeth Pease added her voice to that of Miss Martineau. She produced a letter from James Cannings Fuller, an English Quaker in Skaneateles, New York, defending Collins, which she insisted the Broad Street Committee publish as an antidote to one from Nathaniel Colver circulated by them.[18] Despite these feminine champions, Collins's mission ended in failure, and he had to borrow money to return home.[19]

While the controversy over Collins was ruffling tempers in the British Isles, Joseph Sturge decided to make a trip to the United States. It was not a mission with the motive of smoothing troubled waters, for Sturge was one of the most adamant anti-Garrisonians. Early in 1841 he wrote to Whittier setting forth his aims. He decidedly wished to promote the interests of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, "including *all* who will act upon our principles and not mix up other truths with it. . . ." Another aim was to try to remove the objections of American Quakers to involving themselves in non-Quaker antislavery societies. A third

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Mar. 31, 1841, C 4/50; and J. H. Tredgold to committee of Hibernian society, Apr. 16, 1841, C 4/57, all in Rhodes House Antislavery Papers. The circular containing the correspondence with Collins is also in that collection.

17. Harriet Martineau to Elizabeth Pease, Feb. 27, 1841, in *Liberty Bell*, 1845. Evidently Harriet Martineau had not been impressed by what Whittier had once said to her of Garrison: "I know him thoroughly and know that he is a despot . . . Garrison identifies the movement absolutely with himself. He is a Robespierre with the same perfect incapacity of tolerating those who differ from himself." See typescript from an article by Thomas Wentworth Higginson in *Books News Monthly*, Whittier Centenary Number, Dec., 1907, 259, Whittier-Taylor Mss.

18. Elizabeth Pease to J. H. Tredgold, Mar. 25, 1841, C 9/70, and British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Elizabeth Pease, Apr. 25, 1841, C 9/42, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 377, Apr. 16, 1841.

19. Thomas, *Garrison*, 312. Collins had, however, sent money home from time to time while he was in England.

purpose was to ascertain opinion on the desirability of another world convention. Although Sturge told Whittier that he was coming as a private individual representing no organization, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society appointed a subcommittee to make arrangements for his trip and also drafted an address to the president of the United States that Clarkson would sign and Sturge was commissioned to deliver.[20]

Sturge traveled in the United States in company with Whittier during the spring and summer of 1841, conferring mostly with members of the new organization. He tried to present to President Tyler the address with which he had been entrusted, but with no success. To begin with, he could find no member of Congress who was willing to introduce him; then he wrote directly to the president, but Tyler did not deign to answer. Sturge then drew up an open letter to the abolitionists of the United States protesting such discourtesy, copies of which were sent to the members of the House and Senate as well as to the president.[21]

Whittier was much pleased with Sturge, whom he described as a "clear-headed, stout-hearted, practical philanthropist" who was "trying to fan into life the all but expiring embers of abolition" among the Friends.[22] Sturge spoke out unreservedly against the conservatism of the Orthodox Quakers, and he published an open letter declaring it to be their duty to join antislavery societies as British Quakers had done. He also reminded them of the numbers of British Friends who had been delegates to the recent world convention, and how the Grace Street Meetinghouse in

20. Sturge to Whittier, Feb. 9, 1841, Whittier Letters; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 348, Feb. 26, and 355, Mar. 9, 1841; Sturge to Clarkson, Jan. 29, 1841, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

21. Joseph Sturge, *A Visit to the United States in 1841* (London, 1842); Sturge to Birney, Apr. 23, 24, 1841, Birney Papers; Sturge to Clarkson, June 29, 1841; Sturge to Hope H. Slaughter, June 30, 1840; Gerrit Smith to Clarkson, July 19, 1841; and William Ellery Channing to Clarkson, July, 1841, all in Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Whittier and Sturge to Lewis Tappan, June 6, 1841, and A. A. Phelps to Tappan, Apr. 1, 1841, Tappan Papers; Sturge, *Memoirs*, 241–242.

22. Whittier to Moses A. Cortland, Mar. 12, 1841, Whittier Mss.

London had been open for the convention's use.[23] Sarah Grimké, for one, was skeptical about results. "The letters of our dear friend Joseph Sturge did not appear to us calculated to influence the Society of Friends; they [the Quakers] are as stagnant as the dead sea, and it will require some terrible explosion to move them," she wrote to Elizabeth Pease.[24]

Nowhere was Sturge assaulted by hostile mobs as George Thompson had been less than ten years earlier. To some extent this may be accounted for by the differences in the personalities and manners of the two men, but to a greater degree it reflects the change in the country and in the antislavery movement itself. It was no longer so dangerous to be an abolitionist; consequently the attitude of extreme religious zeal and the strategy of agitation seemed much subdued. The movement had settled down to a long, steady campaign. The optimism of the thirties, with its confidence that moral suasion would arouse the conscience of the nation and rout slavery, was shattered. The antislavery politician was taking center stage, and by the very nature of politics he had to face reality and even contemplate actions based on expediency to a degree that the idealistic abolitionists of the 1830s never had to.

Even the antislavery lecturers and travelers from England seem to have reflected this change in tone. The thirties needed a George Thompson, but by the next decade more moderate men such as Sturge and J. J. Gurney were more acceptable—men who, instead of defying mobs, sought interviews with political leaders. Many abolitionists thought that in view of the existing anglophobia, the wisest form of cooperation on the part of the British was to work through publications, pressure on their own diplomats and government officials, and plans for economic pressure, rather than by flooding the United States with lecturers. The fact that lecturers, when they did come, created less of a stir may also be attributed to the success of abolitionist cooperation

23. Joseph Sturge, "To the Members of the Religious Society of Friends in the United States of America," July 17, 1841, Misc. Mss, Friends Historical Library.

24. Grimké to Pease, Feb. 11, 1842, in *Weld-Grimké Letters,* II, 918–922.

rather than to its decline. Certainly in the northern states where such British travelers spoke, abolitionism was on its way to becoming "respectable." Only as the public accepted antislavery as a respectable cause could politically minded men venture to organize such parties as the Liberty and Free Soil. The irony of the situation was that just at the time the British were in a position to devote more attention to American abolitionism, the antislavery cause in the United States was moving in a direction—political—that made it more difficult for British efforts to be influential. It might even be argued that while British involvement in the American antislavery movement increased, it became less effective and in some respects even negative by contributing to the factional dissension within the ranks.

This was particularly apparent in the whole arrangement of the second world antislavery convention, held in 1843. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society decided that only those delegates who were selected and officially invited by their own secretary should be recognized. Garrison's name and those of his active apostles were conspicuously absent from the list, and of course no women were included.[25] Consequently the Glasgow society only reluctantly agreed to cooperate, and the Hibernian society in Dublin boycotted the gathering altogether.[26]

As in 1840, queries were sent to the United States to be filled out in advance. This time they included special questions on the topic of Texas and slavery. Assignments were made for the preparation of papers on the effects of slavery: on agriculture, by Samuel Webb of Philadelphia; on commerce, by Joshua Leavitt, whose specialty was the relationship between free trade and abolition; on literature, by Adam Hodgson of Liverpool and John

25. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 17, Dec. 6, 1842. Those named were William Knibb (in Jamaica), Lewis Tappan, Simeon S. Jocelyn, Gerrit Smith, Samuel Webb, William Goodell, Beriah Green, James G. Birney, Henry B. Stanton, James Cannings Fuller, William Dawes, John Keep, C. P. Grosvenor, William Jay, John Greenleaf Whittier, Abraham L. Pennock, Amos Phelps, Elizur Wright, Joshua Leavitt, Charles Osborn, J. F. Norton, F. Fowler, M. Earle, Nathaniel Colver, Elon Galusha, and D. Brisbane.

26. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 20, Dec. 6, 1842, and 61–62, Mar. 31, 1843; Glasgow Emancipation Society to John Scoble, June 7, 1843, C 21/108, and R. Allen to committee of British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Apr. 24, 1843, C 12/94, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

Greenleaf Whittier; on law, by William Jay; on moral and social habits, by Theodore Weld and Gerrit Smith; on religion, by the Reverend John Angell James; and on missionary endeavors, by the Reverend Dr. Ralph Wardlow of Scotland.[27] But in spite of such well-laid plans, this convention never came off to the degree the first one had, and there seems little doubt that the schism was responsible.

English leadership and participation were pretty much the same as they had been in 1840: Joseph Sturge and John Scoble were, to a large extent, running the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society; G. W. Alexander, Dr. Lushington, William Ball, the Gurneys, and the Forsters were active. Even Thomas Clarkson was still alive as the honorary figurehead, although this time he was unable to attend the sessions, so disciples had to make pilgrimages to his home to pay homage. T. F. Buxton was also too ill to attend. As before, the Sturges, Gurneys, Forsters, Braithwaites, and Opies stood by to entertain the guests, though seemingly on a more modest scale, and Lords Morpeth and Brougham supplied some aristocratic glitter.

The American delegation was completely different from that of 1840. Birney was the titular head of the Liberty party but was really in retirement in Michigan. Henry Stanton had gone back to the practice of law out of financial necessity, and of course Garrison, Remond, Wendell Phillips, and Lucretia Mott were among the uninvited. Joshua Leavitt, Amos Phelps, and Jonathan Blanchard of Cincinnati were given offices at the convention, and the black delegate from Hartford, Connecticut, the Reverend James W. C. Pennington (like Remond, forced to travel steerage), addressed the gathering at length on discrimination against free blacks—a topic that commanded a share of the convention's attention.[28] The veteran Arnold Buffum was also a delegate. But the real leader for the United States was Lewis Tappan. Of all

27. Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 135–136; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 66–67, Apr. 17, 1843.

28. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 79–81, June 3, 1843; John F. Johnson, *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention, Called by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society . . .* (London: John Snow, 1844). A meeting of colored citizens of Troy, N.Y., had designated Pennington as the delegate of all the colored people in the United

the American abolitionists, he now had the most direct connections with such men as Sturge and Scoble, and it was his opinion that counted when decisions were made. This was particularly evident in the discussions and actions of the convention in regard to the Texas question (see Chapter XIII).

Next to Tappan the American who emerged as another leading spokesman was Joshua Leavitt, who had for several years been hammering at the connection between free trade and abolition. The British corn laws, he argued, contributed directly to the prosperity of the southern slave-labor economy and hurt the free-labor economy of the Northwest because they restricted to almost nothing the English importation of American wheat and corn while encouraging cotton.[29] He urged that all good abolitionists should also be free traders. Actually, most of the British abolitionist statesmen were, and the Liberty party in the United States under Birney's leadership inclined in that direction. Just before the convention of 1843 Samuel Webb of Philadelphia had written to the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to remind them that the people of England were the real slaveholders of America because "*you* buy the slaveholder's cotton—you hire him to chain, to whip and to work his slaves to death! *You* stimulate him by your money—by your patronage—by your commerce!" [30] He, too, thought the effective approach was to repeal the corn laws and tax cotton instead.

Actually the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society had not been apathetic about free trade but had concentrated mostly on sugar duties. They had repeatedly sent resolutions and petitions to Parliament asking that all tropical produce grown by free labor should be admitted into Britain on the same terms as those from their own colonies, but Brazilian and Cuban sugar should be excluded. In 1841 they had adopted a resolution that their government should remove the tax from American corn and flour and impose one instead on tobacco, rice, and cotton. They also had a

States. See letter of appointment to Pennington, Apr. 3, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

29. Robert Trendel, "Joshua Leavitt: Lobbyist for Abolition" (M.A. thesis, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, 1969).

30. Webb to British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Mar. 27, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 22/133.

committee studying the operation of the corn laws as they affected slavery.[31] Buxton's expedition up the Niger in 1841 in the interests of stimulating trade in free produce with Africa had been a failure. But on the credit side of the ledger was the recent action by the president and Council of India, which had abolished slavery within the territories of the East India Company.[32] This was hailed by the abolitionists as a great step forward in what would eventually mean the replacement of American cotton by free-labor Indian cotton.

A related question was whether the antislavery societies should support the sending of free workers from Africa to the West Indies as a means of strangling the slave trade. R. R. Madden was of the opinion that it was foolish to consider such a proposal because the problem was one of capital, not of labor. He said that the compensation money had actually gone to the mercantile interests to which the planters were indebted. Those mercantile interests had reinvested the money not in the West Indies but elsewhere where returns were higher. None of it, consequently, was available to pay free labor or to buy machinery to compensate for the loss of labor.[33]

By the end of the convention of 1843 the Garrisonians, watching from afar, felt it was imperative to try to counteract the influence of Tappan and Leavitt and to neutralize the work of the Reverend Hiram Kellogg, an agent of the Illinois Anti-Slavery Society and president of Knox College who remained in England after the convention to do some lecturing. One of their aims was to make sure that the Glasgow society retained its connection with the Garrisonians despite its cooperation, albeit

31. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 203, Apr. 24, 1840; 337, Feb. 5; 356, 362, Mar. 12, 21; 382, 401, May 5, 31; 403–404, June 4; 439, Sept. 3, 1841; and 533, Apr. 29, 1842. On the subject of British abolitionists as free traders, see Elsie I. Pilgrim, "Anti-Slavery Sentiment in Great Britain, 1841–1854; Its Nature and Its Decline, with Special Reference to Its Influence upon British Policy towards the Former Slave Colonies" (Unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, Cambridge University, 1952).

32. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Queen Victoria, Oct. 11, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

33. R. R. Madden, *The Island of Cuba: Its Resources, Progress, and Prospects, Considered in Relation to the Influence of Its Prosperity on the Interests of the British West India Colonies* (London: Charles Gilpin, 1849), viii.

reluctant, with the Broad Street Committee during the convention. Henry C. Wright was entrusted with the mission.[34] He was hardly the man to reduce factional squabbles and certainly not one to win the confidence of the relatively conservative British abolitionists, for he was even more extreme than Garrison in his preaching of Christian anarchy, anti-Sabbatarianism, and nonresistance.

The contentious issue Wright now belabored was whether the American Constitution was an "agreement with death and a covenant with Hell," as the Garrisonians maintained, or an antislavery document, as several new organization people (among them Birney and William Goodell of New York) were beginning to explain it.[35] They held that the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence must be taken together as the fundamental law of the land. Therefore, each part of the Constitution must be interpreted in the context of the philosophy of the Declaration and the Preamble, which were in agreement. To use the forces of government to preserve slavery was no more compatible with the expressed aims of establishing justice, insuring domestic tranquillity, promoting the general welfare, and securing the blessings of liberty than with the majestic words of the Declaration that all men were endowed by their Creator with the inalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Any subsequent part of the Constitution seemingly not in harmony with this philosophy, and used to uphold slavery, was simply being misconstrued or was itself unconstitutional.

British abolitionists, generally confused about American constitutional problems anyway, were further confounded because new and old organization people did not divide consistently on

34. *British Friend,* Aug. 31, 1843.

35. Lewis Tappan to Sturge, June 25, 1846, Tappan Papers; William Goodell, *Views of American Constitutional Law, in Its Bearing upon American Slavery* (Utica, N.Y.: Jackson & Chaplin, 1844). The *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Oct. 15, 1845, carries a letter from Wright setting forth his interpretation of the constitutionality of slavery. William Jay thought that Tappan's worries about Wright's impact on the British were exaggerated. He said the English, though mostly peace men and dissenters, supported a war-making, church-established government on the same grounds that most Americans supported the federal government despite its proslavery Constitution. See Jay to A. A. Phelps, July 3, 1846, Tappan Papers.

the point. For example, Judge William Jay of New York, long considered to be the foremost legal and constitutional authority among the American abolitionists, arrived as a visitor in London in 1843. Although aligned with the political abolitionists, he still held to the Garrisonian view that the Constitution was proslavery. Not wishing to appear in support of Wright, however, he simply did not expound on the subject publicly.[36]

Increased attention to "extraneous issues" by the Garrisonians and the increasing political involvement of the new organization people contributed to the dilemma of the Quakers about which side to espouse, although Whittier, for one, believed that to some extent conservative Friends welcomed excuses for their own inactivity.[37] The issue was joined in 1842 when the "radical" Quakers in Indiana seceded from the regular yearly meeting and looked to Friends in Great Britain to support their case for more active cooperation with non-Quaker abolitionists.[38]

The repercussions in both the United States and Great Britain threatened to rival those of the Hicksite split.[39] Yet Quaker unity was not something to be taken lightly. The Society of Friends was up against much the same problem, within its realm, as the United States was. Which came first, union or antislavery? Could slavery be killed more quickly by disrupting the society or by

36. Jay was on the way to Egypt to study slavery there. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society provided him with 500 copies of an antislavery tract that he distributed in Malta, Syria, and Egypt. It was probably Clarkson's *Cries of Africa to the Inhabitants of Europe,* which had been translated into Arabic for circulation before the Congress of Verona. See Fladeland, "Abolitionist Pressures on the Concert of Europe"; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 129, Nov. 24; 177, Dec. 8, 1843; and 246, Apr. 12, 1844; Jay to Tappan, Nov. 24, 1843, Tappan Papers; Jay to John Beaumont, Mar. 23, 1844, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

37. Whittier to Richard Mott, Nov. 15, 1840, Whittier-Taylor Mss.

38. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 164–165; Walter Edgerton, *A History of the Separation in Indiana Yearly Meeting of Friends, Which Took Place in the Winter of 1842 and 1843, on the Anti-Slavery Question . . .* (Cincinnati: Achilles Pugh, 1856). Edgerton and his wife, Rebecca, were clerks of the new organization in Indiana.

39. On June 12, 1845, John Greenleaf Whittier wrote to Joseph Sturge: "The division is becoming formidable & may reach the proportions of the Hicksite Controversy." See typescript, Whittier-Taylor Mss.

working within it? The answer was not an easy one, and the strategy the London Yearly Meeting ehose was to pressure the Indiana "regulars" to put their house in order on the slavery issue to the extent that the seeeders would be willing to return to the fold.[40] As usual, however, onee the seeession had aetually oecurred, eaeh side insisted on vindication.

Numerous letters pro and eon battled over the issue in the columns of the *British Friend* for more than two years. Editorially the paper took a firm stand in support of the rebels. "Better," its editors wrote, "for the sake of suffering millions, that the separation *has* oeeurred, than that the former state of inaetion should eontinue."[41] British Friends eould not eseape blame; they had been dereliet in not speaking out strongly enough. Throughout 1843 the editors took every opportunity to hit hard at speeifie yearly meetings: the Philadelphia Friends were too blinded by their fear of Hieksitism to see anything in proper perspective; North Carolinians said they were eoneerned, but what had they done besides lend themselves to "eruel eolonization sehemes"? Baltimore was the eapital of a slave-breeding state, but the Maryland yearly epistle didn't mention slavery. Ohio was called up short for referring in its epistle to the colored people as Africans rather than as Amerieans. Even Thomas Clarkson, who was not a Quaker, was drawn into the fight. When the North Carolina Yearly Meeting admonished its members to be law-abiding and to refrain from aiding slaves to escape, he wrote to attaek them for putting the law of man above the law of God.[42]

The London Yearly Meeting bent a little to the aetivist pressure and perhaps was irritated by the tone of letters from the American meetings for sufferings in 1844. The Amerieaη meetings acknowledged reeeipt of the London admonitions, but the whole tenor of reply was that they would do so mueh and no more than was necessary to sustain their reputations as anti-

40. Meeting for Sufferings of Indiana Yearly Meeting to London Meeting for Sufferings, Mar. 6, 7, 1843, and London Yearly Meeting for Sufferings to Indiana Meeting for Sufferings, July 7, 1843, Casual Correspondence, Friends House Library.

41. *British Friend*, Apr. 29, 1843.

42. Clarkson to North Carolina Friends, excerpt in *British Friend*, May 31, 1844.

slavery.[43] The epistle from Philadelphia said there was but "little opening" the past year on the slavery issue. "Little Opening!" shouted Dublin Friends, "whilst Friends there are within half a day's journey of the frontier of the slave states. . . ." If the slaves were white, or relatives, they went on, the Pennsylvanians wouldn't wait for "openings."[44] "The very least we can say," London wrote into its 1844 report, "is, that the spirit of John Woolman, and other worthies, appears greatly to have departed from among them." They questioned whether the Indiana regulars had done anything at all on the slavery issue.[45] Joseph Sturge wrote another special address "To the Members of the Society of Friends in the United States who believe it their duty actively to co-operate in organized public efforts to promote by Christian Means the Abolition of Slavery." He encouraged them to continue to stand, alone if necessary, as Woolman had done before them.[46]

The indignation seemed to make an impression, and the change of attitude looked so promising that the London Yearly Meeting of 1845 decided the time was ripe to send a deputation to America to act as peacemakers: William and Josiah Forster, George Stacey, and John Allen.[47] They sailed on August 23 from Liverpool. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society provided them with antislavery tracts to distribute, two of them purposely prepared for this mission: one on the duty of immediate emancipation and the other on the success of emancipation in the West Indies.[48] But despite their best efforts, no reconciliation was brought about. Separate meetings of "antislavery Friends" or "progressive Friends" persisted, and disappointed activists like Joseph Sturge despaired "that the usefulness of our Society in its

43. Meeting for Sufferings of New England held at Princeton, R.I., to Meeting for Sufferings of London Yearly Meeting, Nov. 9, 1844; from Meeting for Sufferings of Baltimore Yearly Meeting, Oct. 26–31; and Meeting for Sufferings of Indiana Yearly Meeting, June 5, 1845, all in Casual Correspondence, Friends House Library.

44. *British Friend*, May 31, 1845.

45. "London Yearly Meeting, 1844," *British Friend*, May 31, 1844.

46. Enclosure in Sturge to Whittier, Dec. 3, 1844, Whittier Letters.

47. *British Friend*, Apr. 30, May 31, Oct. 31, 1845; Lewis Tappan to Sturge, May 31, 1845, Tappan Papers; Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America*, 168.

48. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 342, Sept. 5, 1845.

corporate capacity in the World at large is very much come to an end."[49] He could only hope that other denominations would rise to leadership.

Thomas Clarkson was aroused not only on the subject of Quaker inactivity but about the apathy of Americans generally on the treatment of black people, and when Lewis Tappan and Joshua Leavitt visited him at the time of the second world convention, they urged him to write an essay on it. In it he stressed the point that slavery constantly tended to demoralize the inhabitants of both North and South insofar as treatment of blacks was concerned. The time would come, he warned, when the whole land would be "overwhelmed with infidelity" to such a degree that America would be blotted off the list of civilized nations. When Clarkson asked several English friends if that was too severe, they urged him not to soften it. Rather, they admonished him that his duty was to "make the Americans sensible of their dangerous situation as to national character." Gerrit Smith prepared an introduction for the piece, and it was published in the New York *Anti-Slavery Reporter*.[50]

Clarkson was without peer as the Dean of Abolitionists. Feeble in health, lame, and practically blind, he never rested if he thought there was strength in him for just one more effort, and his American worshippers wanted to make sure that their appreciation was known to him before he died. Perhaps they should be pardoned for their exaggeration in the glowing reports they sent to this "Grand Old Man" of the cause. Lewis Tappan rejoiced that Clarkson had taken up the cause of the free people of color and assured him that that crusade, as well as the one against slavery, was making steady advances.[51] James Pennington comforted Clarkson with an account of encouraging signs. Pennington had been at the 1843 convention in London and said that since his return home, he had preached in twelve white churches. They were becoming ashamed of their discrimination, he told Clarkson,

49. Sturge to Whittier, May 22, 1851, Whittier Letters.

50. Clarkson to Lewis Tappan, Feb. 20, 1844, Tappan Papers; Gerrit Smith to Clarkson, May 8, 1844, and Whittier to Clarkson, July 10, 1844, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

51. Tappan to Clarkson, Feb. 28, 1844, Tappan Papers.

especially when they heard how he and other Negroes were accepted in England. He was of the opinion that abolition was making headway in the educational institutions too. Pennington had a portrait of Clarkson lithographed for circulation and expressed the hope that the English veteran might find time and energy for a letter of encouragement to the free blacks.[52]

William Jay wrote that he concurred with Clarkson that the American character was "very low & indeed odious both in England and France," and therefore Clarkson need not apologize for his severity of language in the article.[53] Whittier's tribute recalled ". . . the fire kindled by thyself and thy associates more than half a century ago" and wanted Clarkson to be confident that it still burned brightly in the New World. "Tens of thousands of warm hearts are enlisted in the cause, with a determination never to relax their exertions until the last fetter falls from the last slave in America," he assured him.[54]

Clarkson's letter on the situation of the free colored people had been put into the hands of the new organization people in America. Immediately upon its appearance, Maria Weston Chapman entreated him to write something she could publish in the *Liberty Bell,* which came out annually at the beginning of each new year. Aware that it was an old organization periodical, Clarkson carefully checked first with Lewis Tappan to ask his advice on what to do. Would his writing something for the *Liberty Bell* be construed as a sign of approval of the Garrisonians? Tappan thought not. No doubt that group coveted the sanction of Clarkson's name, but he could make it clear in the article that such was not his intention.[55] Sturge suggested that Clarkson could make a contribution to the Boston bazaar sponsored by the anti-Garrison ladies, which would also show, in a silent but public way, that he was not a Garrisonian.[56] So Clarkson accepted Mrs. Chapman's invitation.

52. Pennington to Clarkson, Sept. 24, 1844, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

53. Jay to Clarkson, Mar. 22, 1845, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

54. Whittier to Clarkson, July 10, 1844, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

55. Clarkson to Tappan, July 3, 1844, and Tappan to Clarkson, Sept. 14, 1844, Tappan Papers.

56. Sturge to Clarkson, Apr. 7, 1846, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

The specific topic of this piece may have come to Clarkson as the result of an exchange of letters with Cassius Clay, Kentucky slaveholder-turned-abolitionist. When the news reached England that Clay had emancipated his slaves, both the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and Clarkson individually wrote to congratulate him. In his response to Clarkson, Clay had expressed regret that the southern press refused to print Clarkson's *Letter to the . . . Clergy . . . and Planters.*[57] This may have led Clarkson to the conclusion that it was more practical to address northerners. At any rate, the essay for the *Liberty Bell* was addressed "To the Christians and Well-Disposed Citizens of the Northern States of America." [58]

Again Clarkson dwelt on how slavery had corrupted the whole nation. A slaveholding president, cabinet, and Senate dominated the federal government. This "slave power" made gag laws to prevent the discussion of slavery and was behind the drive to annex Texas. What could northerners do? Speak, write, and *vote* for opponents of slavery. His stress on political action was his disclaimer against the charge of being a Garrisonian. If he had been dismayed by the fact that his letter to the clergy did not circulate in the South, he must now have been pleased to receive Mrs. Chapman's report that his letter to the northerners had reached southerners, for Governor James Hammond of South Carolina had sent the *Liberty Bell* a reply to Clarkson.[59]

Hammond reiterated all of the "positive good" arguments in defense of slavery and all of the claims for southern society being superior to that of the North. He frankly but courteously objected to Clarkson and his countrymen "interfering" with the civil institutions of the United States and counseling the northern states to withdraw from the Union. They would suffer the most if they were so foolish. British abolitionists' attacks, such as the

57. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 211, June 14, 1844; Clay to Clarkson, July 25, 1844, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Tappan to Clarkson, Sept. 14, 1844, Tappan Papers.

58. *Liberty Bell,* 1845, 36–51. See also Maria W. Chapman to Garrison, Oct. 1, 1844, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Tappan to Clarkson, Dec. 31, 1844, Tappan Papers.

59. Maria W. Chapman to Clarkson, Aug. 16, 1845, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

"wanton and furious" one made recently by Macaulay concerning slave breeding, were but "vile and atrocious" falsehoods.[60]

Hammond's reply was never published in the *Liberty Bell*, for before the new year's edition was ready, Clarkson had died. Eulogies, tributes, sermons, and poems flowed from the pens of practically every abolitionist, both British and American, who could wield a pen at all. Anything connected with Clarkson had become sacred. His autograph, electroplated seals of his head prepared by the Bristol Anti-Slavery Society, locks of his hair, dried plants and leaves gathered from his garden—all were preserved as relics to inspire others to go forward.[61]

It was not just Clarkson's letter in the *Liberty Bell* that had provoked Governor Hammond of South Carolina on the subject of British interference. An incident in his state involving slavery, civil rights, and discrimination had received a tremendous amount of publicity and became something of a *cause célèbre* among British abolitionists. John L. Brown, a white native of Maine, was arrested, tried, and sentenced to death in South Carolina for assisting in the escape of a female slave, reputed to be his mistress. Protest meetings were held in London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Lancaster to denounce American "justice." The *British Friend* exhorted all Quakers to bring what pressure they could on the case, the Congregational churches of Lancaster sent a memorial to the churches of South Carolina, ministers in Bath drew up a similar memorial, Lords Brougham and Denman expostulated on the case in the House of Lords, and numerous petitions were sent to Governor Hammond. Clarkson lent his name to the cause and signed one of the petitions. He was joined by ministers, professors, students, and people from all walks of life.

The tremendous outcry must have influenced Hammond's action. He first commuted the sentence from death to thirty-nine

60. [James Hammond], *Governor Hammond's Letters on Southern Slavery: Addressed to Thomas Clarkson, the English Abolitionist* (Charleston, S.C.: Walker & Burke, [1845]).

61. See, for example, Whittier to William J. Allinson, Oct. 11, 1846, typescript, Whittier-Taylor Mss; Caspar Wistar to Whittier, Jan. 28, 1843, Whittier Letters; George Armstrong to Catherine Clarkson, Sept. 5, 1846, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

lashes, and in the end Brown was released without even the whipping.[62] This time when the British abolitionists claimed a victory, they could not refrain from a good bit of criticism of their American friends. Here was an example of what organized public pressure could do—why were the Americans such laggards? The only answer seemed to be that Clarkson was right: slavery had demoralized the North as well as the South. Northerners, too, had become inured to, or as Tappan said, "numbed" by, the very multiplicity of slavery's evils and atrocities, which rendered them commonplace.[63]

Another fight into which the British abolitionists were drawn was over the lack of a strong antislavery stance within the evangelical churches. In 1844 a very heated controversy broke out when the new Free Church of Scotland sent a deputation to the United States to solicit funds for its support. A great furor arose in the abolitionist camp over the fact that donations were accepted from the slaveholders of the South—"blood money," according to their view. A protest signed by Gerrit Smith, Henry Grew, Abraham Pennock, Daniel Neall, and Samuel Hastings was published, as well as a remonstrance from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.[64] Ministers and laymen on both sides of the Atlantic became involved in the argument. Students at Princeton Theological Seminary defended the acceptance of such money in a running debate with Scottish Free Church Seminary students who denounced it.[65] The Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society's annual meeting in 1845 reprimanded the Scottish delegation not only for acccepting southern money but for failing to take the oppor-

62. *British Friend,* Mar. 30, Apr. 30, 1844; *Anti-Slavery Advocate* (London), Dec., 1853; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 170, Mar. 16, 1844; Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, *Thirteenth Annual Report . . .* (Boston: Andrews, Prentiss & Studly, 1845), 23–25; A. A. Phelps to Lewis Tappan, Apr. 23, 1844, and Tappan to Clarkson, May 6, 1844, Tappan Papers.

63. Tappan to Sturge, Apr. 30, 1844, Tappan Papers.

64. "Address of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to the Free Church of Scotland on American Slavery," May 15, 1846, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; *Non-Slaveholder,* Nov., 1846; Tappan to Sturge, Nov. 15, 1844, Tappan Papers.

65. Printed letter from theological students of various colleges in Great Britain, Feb. 19, 1841, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

tunity to "rock the land" with a testimony against slavery, since they had access to all of the pulpits of the South.[66] The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society prepared a remonstrance to the moderator of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland that was printed for circulation as well.[67]

The arguments over the acceptance of "blood money" led several missionaries of various denominations to separate from the American Missionary Board, which also solicited funds from slaveholders.[68] According to Professor George Shepperson, schisms in Scottish churches over the slavery issue in the 1840s closely paralleled the splits in American churches. The United Secession church, the Reformed Presbyterian church, Methodists, Quakers, and individual congregations in the Free Church of Scotland passed resolutions condemning fellowship with slaveholders.[69] In 1846, when an international conference of the Evangelical Alliance was to be held in Great Britain, a committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society headed by John Scoble sent a letter to the London division urging that slaveholders or anyone connected with the support of slavery should be refused admission as a delegate. They reminded the alliance that three million fellow creatures in the United States were denied social and civil rights, marriage rights, and an opportunity for moral instruction and that this system was sustained by the American churches.[70]

Although the general Evangelical Alliance failed to take a stand against slaveholders, the Manchester division did, by a vote of 500 to 5, and since membership in the alliance required the concurrence of the several executive sections, Manchester could wield what amounted to a veto and thus exclude slaveholders.[71] The Broad Street Committee hailed this as a decided

66. Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, *Thirteenth Annual Report,* 18–22.

67. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 409, May 15, and 418, June 19, 1846.

68. Tappan to Clarkson, Feb. 29, 1844, Tappan Papers.

69. Shepperson, "The Free Church and American Slavery."

70. Copy of a letter "Addressed by the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to the London Division of the Prov. Comm. of the Proposed Evangelical Alliance," Jenkins Autograph Collection.

71. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 444, Sept. 4; 450, Nov. 27; and 455, Nov. 30, 1846; *British Friend,* Nov. 30, 1846.

victory. Joseph Sturge quickly sent the news to the United States so that antislavery papers could publish it as a warning to any southern ministers who contemplated attending the English convention.[72] Since the impact of the 1844–1845 splits in the American churches was still fresh, this support from abroad was most welcome to the antislavery side.

The controversy over the Scottish Free Church warranted, in the American mind, at least, the sending over of a delegation to "set them straight." Perhaps there was a bit of nationalistic psychology involved. For so long American abolitionists had been forced to listen to denunciations of their own churches. While it is true that they often led the chorus, there is always a difference between the exercise of the right to criticize one's own country and institutions and the reaction when a foreigner does so. Now the Americans could indulge in a bit of counter-criticism of the British, who sometimes seemed altogether too self-righteous.

Garrison, who wanted to make another trip to England anyway, was delighted by an invitation from the Glasgow Emancipation Society to come over to help in the fight against the Free Church. Henry C. Wright, Frederick Douglass, and James N. Buffum, who were already over there, very likely had a hand in arranging his invitation.[73] Once there, Garrison again teamed up with his friend George Thompson, and true to their sensational style, they aroused the Britishers as they had the Americans ten years earlier. "Send back the money" became the cry. It was used as a headline in the papers, done up in placards to be posted, and chalked on walls. Frederick Douglass and "two fair Quakeresses" were stopped by policemen while in the process of carving the slogan in the turf.[74] The Reverend Thomas Chalmers,

72. Sturge to Elihu Burritt, Apr. 3, 1846, Jenkins Autograph Collection.

73. Thomas, *Garrison,* 338–341; Johnson, *William Lloyd Garrison and His Times,* 351.

74. Frederick Douglass to "My Dear Friend," July 31, 1846, Frederick Douglass Papers, microfilm, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University, originals in Howard University Library, Washington, D.C.; Shepperson, "The Free Church and American Slavery." I am indebted to this excellent article for the material that follows on the interweaving of the slavery issue with the institutional and class issues. Shepperson's conclusion is that most of the antislavery support came from the "respectable" elements of the working classes rather than from the militant Chartists.

head of the Free Church, bore the brunt of their attack. He was accused of having betrayed the antislavery cause by lending himself to the interests of the South and slavery. Chalmers denied the charges and refused to return the money or to agree that the church must break fellowship with slaveholders.

Some people who were really against the Free Church for religious reasons—theological or institutional—now saw the abolitionists as valuable allies and joined the antislavery ranks. The *Scottish Guardian* noted that "High Tories" and "establishment people" were suddenly being converted to abolitionism. The Free Church, in turn, tried to arouse the conservatives' fears by emphasizing the radicalism—social and political as well as religious —of the American abolitionists. Their argument was reinforced on this point when some of the Chartists joined the Thompson-Garrison forces.

To Garrison one of the most important results of this trip to Great Britain was the organization of a new Anti-Slavery League, which he envisioned as a British auxiliary to the American Anti-Slavery Society to balance the support the Broad Street Committee gave the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. The league's debut was a protest meeting against the London convention of the Evangelical Alliance, which had failed to vote against slaveholders.[75] Led by George Thompson, its purpose was to perpetuate the Garrisonian brand of abolitionism. Its inevitable result, of course, was to perpetuate the split between the two camps of abolitionists.

Garrison's final triumph while in England was a reconciliation with Thomas Clarkson shortly before the latter's death.[76] Since Garrison was the last of the American abolitionists to converse with Clarkson, he could claim to have the final blessing—a kind of anointing that had the same effect as having been in England at the time of Wilberforce's death. In the ascension of each of these saints of the antislavery movement, Garrison had stood nearest to catch a ray of glory as the heavens opened. Clarkson had given him one of his last pieces, "Hints to the American Peo-

75. Philip S. Foner, *Frederick Douglass* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 70.

76. Garrison to Clarkson, Aug. 19, 26, 1846, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 211n.

ple in the Event of a Dissolution of the Union," which was published by the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in their annual report and by Mrs. Chapman in the *Liberty Bell* under the heading "Last Thoughts of Thomas Clarkson." In it Clarkson seemed to support Garrison's disunionist views. He argued that the United States must have a new Constitution, and the only way that could be brought about would be through a breakup of the Union.[77]

In Garrison's mind this trip to England had restored him to his old place of leadership in the antislavery movement; the rebuffs of 1840 and 1843 no longer counted, and he felt vindicated. It is true that he had helped to inject some new spirit into the movement in Great Britain and had thereby gained some new adherents for the cause, but Professor Shepperson points out that, on the other hand, his sensationalism alienated many of the middle class who "would think twice before committing themselves to the standard of the North and Lincoln during the Civil War." [78]

For another thing, he helped to undo the healing effects that had been apparent in Frederick Douglass's British lecture tour, which overlapped Garrison's. Naturally all groups in Great Britain were eager to sponsor this famous former slave who had sought refuge in their country for fear that publication of his autobiography would enable his former master to identify him and send agents to reclaim him.[79] Even the Broad Street Committee was eager to support him, "provided it were understood that he confined himself simply to the antislavery question without reference to the points of difference existing among abolitionists in the United States." [80] They had been among the first to send a protest to the Cunard Line over Douglass's disgraceful segregation on the voyage over.[81]

77. *Liberty Bell*, 1847, 300–303.

78. Shepperson, "The Free Church and American Slavery."

79. *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* . . . (Hartford, Conn.: Park Publishing Co., 1882), 289.

80. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 400, Apr. 24, 1846.

81. *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, ch. VI; Foner, *Frederick Douglass*, 62–75; Douglass to Thurlow Weed, Dec. 1, 1845, Simon Gratz Autograph Collection, Historical Society of Pennsylvania; *British Friend*, Dec. 31, 1845, Apr. 30,

Douglass had nearly a year of lecturing to large audiences in England, Ireland, and Scotland before Garrison arrived to join him. During that time he upheld the multi-reform, nonpolitical approach, speaking often at temperance as well as antislavery meetings but always working the subject of slavery into every discussion. When he returned to the United States in the spring of 1847, he went as a free man, thanks to antislavery friends in Britain; organized by Mrs. Ellen Richardson, a Quaker, they had raised the sum necessary to purchase his freedom. Shortly thereafter additional donations from British friends helped him to launch his own newspaper, the *North Star,* in Rochester, New York. In 1859 Douglass was once again to seek a safe haven in England when he was implicated in the John Brown plot and was in danger of arrest.[82]

Douglass's presence in Great Britain definitely had a healing effect, and it seems possible that had Garrison not arrived, he might have been the agent to unify the squabbling factions. But Garrison's mission revived the old antipathies.

On the surface, the Anglo-American antislavery movement of the 1840s looks chaotic and schismatic: colonizationists versus abolitionists, Garrisonians versus Tappanites, Hicksites versus Orthodox Quakers, splits within these groups against each other, disagreements over their antislavery stance in the evangelical churches, and men versus women. All of these controversies had their impact on the Anglo-American alliance, but instead of driving the British away in disgust, their effect was to involve the British deeper and deeper in the American antislavery movement.

1847. Other American passengers aboard the *Cambria* threatened to throw Douglass overboard if he continued to discuss slavery, as he had been doing at the request of British passengers. The captain had to interfere to protect him from "a real American, republican, democratic Christian mob." See Douglass to Garrison, Sept. 1, 1845, Douglass Papers.

82. Douglass says £150 was collected for him. See *Life and Times,* 315. Foner puts the sum at the exact amount of $710.96. A letter from Douglass dated Nov. 1, 1847, in the *British Friend,* Dec. 31, 1847, acknowledges receipt of £445 17s. 6d.—presumably for his paper. The bill of sale for Douglass so that he could be set free, and the deed of manumission, are in the Douglass Papers.

Slavery in Anglo-American Diplomacy, 1830-1860

XIII

Although the antislavery people seem often to have wasted their energies squabbling with one another over means, as seems characteristic of most reformers, they did not lose sight of the ultimate goal of abolition. Even during the 1830s, when their emphasis was largely on a moral crusade to convince the nation of the sinfulness of slavery, they did not shirk the responsibility of fighting on the political front when circumstances demanded, especially if it seemed probable that combined pressures exerted from both Britain and the United States could have an impact on government policy. The Texas question demanded such attention, beginning with her declaration of independence from Mexico in 1836 and carrying through to annexation by the United States in 1845, for abolitionists quickly saw the connection between annexation and the perpetuation and extension of slavery.

Benjamin Lundy, who had worked for several years on a scheme to colonize free blacks in Mexico or Texas and who had garnered first-hand evidence of the "slave power conspiracy" in that area, published *The Origin and True Causes of the Texas Revolution Commenced in the Year 1835*, which became the basis for abolitionist anti-Texas arguments.[1] To them annexation

1. Dillon, *Lundy*, 228–231. See Dillon's ch. XIII for a succinct account of the Texas question.

represented the desire of slaveholders to extend slave territory and power, but even Texan independence was dangerous because an independent republic might serve as a base for the reopening of the legal slave trade. The abolitionist Texas strategy, therefore, was twofold: (1) a petition campaign in America against annexation; and (2) pressure on the British government for diplomatic maneuvering with Texas herself. The petition campaign would convince Congress that abolitionists had not altogether abandoned the use of political tactics and that their increasing numbers could be translated into voting power. The recent success of this method in Great Britain was, of course, a fresh and stimulating example.

The Americans had two advantages over the British in their petition campaign. First, unlike Parliament, Congress did not divide petitions into the categories of public and private. Parliament did, and all those requesting some public reform were submitted to a select committee that classified them and reported from time to time on a whole grouping. In Congress each petition had to be individually presented, so the more there were, the longer the issue could be kept before the lawmakers and the general public. Second, Parliament had a rule against accepting lithographed or printed petitions, while Congress did not. In the United States petitions could be mass-produced by the American Anti-Slavery Society and sent around to local organizations that might otherwise not take the initiative in drawing them up.[2]

It was in connection with presenting these petitions in the face of southern opposition that John Quincy Adams finally emerged publicly as allied with the abolitionists. The more Congress attempted to stifle discussion of slavery by gag rules, the more Americans (especially northerners) and Britishers reacted to champion the "sacred" Anglo-Saxon heritage of freedom of speech and petition. By the time the two groups met in the world convention of 1840, this had become one of their rallying cries and served to emphasize that their common tradition gave them a common cause.

The second aspect of abolitionist strategy was aimed at trying to persuade the British government to recognize Texas as in-

2. Barnes, *Antislavery Impulse*, 116–117, 255, note 19.

dependent and give her assistance, but only on condition that she abolish slavery. The other side of the coin was to convince Texas that Great Britain would not sit quietly by and allow her legally to re-establish slavery (which had been technically but not actually abolished under Mexican law) and even, possibly, the slave trade.[3] When George Thompson was in the United States, he was thoroughly indoctrinated with the American abolitionist point of view on Texas; when he returned to Great Britain, one of his main lecture subjects was the Texas danger. Thompson's parent antislavery society in Glasgow passed a resolution against Texan independence as being motivated by the desire to hold slaves rather than to achieve civil and religious liberty.[4]

Dr. Stephen Lushington, Barlow Hoy, and Henry G. Ward raised the issue in Parliament, demanding that the Palmerston ministry do something to forestall annexation. But the prime minister took the position that it was premature to act until Texan independence was *de facto*, and then only if the republic tried to reopen the slave trade.[5] Sam Houston's message to the Texan Congress in 1837 revealed that he was aware that British recognition, accompanied by a treaty of commerce, might well hinge on the point of abolition.

This was also the opinion of Stephen Pearl Andrews, who in 1839, at the suggestion of Lewis Tappan, became a sort of unofficial spy in Texas for the abolitionists. Andrews, born in Massachusetts, had studied law in New Orleans and then moved to Texas to practice. He became a member of the Houston bar and was outspoken against slavery. Several years later, in 1843, his house was assailed by an anti-abolitionist mob, but with his wife and infant son he managed to escape at night by driving twenty miles through a flood. Andrews thought England could "buy"

3. *Liberator*, Sept. 3, 1836, quoting *London Patriot*, July 6, 1836.

4. *Third Annual Report of the Glasgow Emancipation Society;* Mary Lee Spence, "British Interests and Attitudes Regarding the Republic of Texas and Its Annexation by the United States" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Minnesota, 1957), 5–6. This dissertation, kindly lent to me by the author, is hereinafter cited as "British Interests and Attitudes."

5. Spence, "British Interests and Attitudes," 4; *Liberator*, Sept. 3, 17, 1836, quoting from *Times* (London); *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd ser., XXXIV, 1107, XXXV, 928–942.

Texas, that is, make it to her interest to abolish slavery in return for recognition, loans, and a commercial treaty. This, he said, would also be the biggest blow the English could strike at the slave trade.[6] American abolitionists took hope from the fact that the British consul in Tampico was sent to Texas and seemed to be on intimate terms with Houston.[7]

When Harriet Martineau was in the United States, it was suggested to her that England might work through her emigration policy. If Texas abolished slavery, free labor could be encouraged to go there; if not, the emigration tide could be rechanneled. Whether or not it was Miss Martineau who passed the suggestion along to the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society is uncertain, but in 1839 they agreed to insert a warning in the newspapers for emigrants about to leave for Texas.[8]

Captain H. G. Martin, an Englishman who had been in the Mexican service, and Daniel O'Connell both supported the idea of settling a colony of free blacks in the border area between Texas and Mexico, under the protection of Mexico. Martin approached the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society for aid, but although they commended his "benevolent and laudable object," they decided they could not extend financial assistance.[9] This idea, which had been Lundy's pet project, was also taken up by James G. Birney. On the eve of his departure for the world antislavery convention in London, he wrote to the Mexican legation in Washington proposing such a plan, which he delivered in person to the Mexican vice-consul in New York. But Vice-Consul Granja was realistic enough to see that the Mexican situation was too confused at the moment to offer any hope of acceptance.[10]

Before the London convention of 1840 petitions on Texas had

6. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 90, Aug. 30, 1839; Lewis Tappan to Joseph Sturge, Oct. 19, 1839, Tappan Papers; Spence, "British Interests and Attitudes," 24; *Dictionary of American Biography,* I, 298.

7. *Liberator,* June 23, July 7, 1837.

8. *Ibid.,* July 21, 1837, extract from Harriet Martineau's *Society in America;* British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 103, Oct. 25, 1839.

9. Spence, "British Interests and Attitudes," 14–15; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 125, Nov. 29, 1839.

10. See Dillon, *Lundy,* ch. X, for a complete account of Lundy's colonization endeavors; Fladeland, *Birney,* 190–191.

been sent to Parliament by the Glasgow and Darlington antislavery societies as well as by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. In November, 1839, a deputation of the society met with Lord Palmerston to present a memorial and also a pamphlet composed of letters on Texas compiled by John Scoble. One thousand of the pamphlets were printed, and copies were sent to all of the leading London papers. One copy was forwarded to the antislavery society in Paris with the request that its substance be conveyed to the French government to influence it against recognizing Texas without any antislavery concessions.[11]

When the world convention met, Palmerston was still maintaining his "wait and see" policy; to encourage him, the convention passed resolutions voicing their stand that were introduced by Birney. They were sent to Palmerston along with a letter from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society that approved his policy thus far.[12] In September, while Birney was still in England, his long letter on "The Republic of Texas" was published in the *Times*. Birney argued that British recognition would neutralize the effects of her West Indian emancipation. Britain's antislavery policy, the result of a half-century of consideration, should not be lightly relinquished. He appealed to British morality, humanity, and honor and to her economic interests on the grounds that a Texas settled by free labor would be a much better market.[13]

Abolitionist hopes were not to be fulfilled. In November, 1840, Lord Palmerston concluded a treaty with the Texan envoy, General James Hamilton, without demanding the concession of abolition. Palmerston's defense of his action was that the commercial treaty did not encourage slavery, and perhaps intercourse with the British would have a mitigating effect on it. Of course the antislavery people protested. Their denunciation of the treaty—as an outrage to the national honor and a "fearful impulse" to slavery and the slave trade—was sent to the ministry and also

11. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 98, Sept. 28, and 120–121, 126, Nov. 29, 1839; memorial on Texas, Nov. 9, 1839, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Spence, "British Interests and Attitudes," 23.

12. W. H. Clark to Birney, June 22, 1840, Birney Papers; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 271, July 31, 1840.

13. *Times* (London), Sept. 8, 1840.

published in the *Times,* the *Morning Chronicle,* and the *Globe.*[14] What the abolitionists did not know yet was that Palmerston had secretly obtained an agreement in principle that Texas would prohibit the slave trade, based on allowing Britain the right of search, and that Palmerston had made this a *sine qua non* for the ratification of the other treaties on trade and finance.

In concluding the treaty, Hamilton pointed out to his home government that Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, and even France to some extent had conceded the right of search in conventions with the British: ". . . the abhorrence of the whole civilized world of the African Slave Trade, is becoming so universal that no new government at least, can stand out in any, even a silent toleration of this traffic, by declining to concur in those measures for its suppression which seem to be adopted by very general accord by almost all nations." [15]

The exchange of letters between Palmerston and Hamilton took place in October, 1840, and the treaty was concluded in November, with the understanding that ratification should be completed within nine months. Because the messenger carrying the treaty was delayed and reached Texas when its Congress was no longer in session, the ratification time had to be extended to June, 1842.[16] Long before then it was evident that Texas was stalling on ratification, and although Palmerston held off on the other treaties, the agreement on the slave trade was not ratified by Texas until the last minute.

According to Hamilton, excitement in the United States in 1841 over the search and detention of an American vessel on the African coast was a contributing factor.[17] Texas was waiting to see

14. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 296, Nov. 27, and 306–309, Dec. 2, 1840; Sturge to Birney, Dec. 3, 1840, Birney Papers.

15. Hamilton to Lipscomb [Judge Abner S., secretary of state for Texas], Jan. 4, 1841, in George P. Garrison, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence of the Republic of Texas,* American Historical Association, *Annual Report* (1908), II, pt. II, 921–926.

16. The exchange of letters between Palmerston and Hamilton dated Oct. 18 and 20, 1840, was not published in the *Times* until Oct. 12, 1841. See draft protocol of conference at Foreign Office, May 19, 1841, between plenipotentiaries of Great Britain and Texas, F.O. 75/2, PRO. This file also contains an unsigned draft labeled "Texas" that says the treaty is, for the present, to be kept secret.

17. Hamilton to Lord Aberdeen, Sept. 11, 13, 1841, F.O. 75/2; "Memo on projet of new commercial convention with England," F.O. 75/2; and William

what the United States would do. Hamilton was probably referring to the capture of the *Octavia* of Baltimore, sailing under the Spanish flag, which was taken by a British man-of-war in the summer of 1841. All of the Negroes were taken to Sierra Leone and released.[18] Evidently the British were more patient with Texas's delaying tactics than they otherwise would have been because they especially wanted to succeed in this slave-trade treaty to compensate for their failure to persuade France to ratify the Quintuple Treaty—partly, at least, because of American influence.[19]

As the election year of 1844 approached in the United States and it was obvious that the annexation of Texas would be a campaign issue, abolitionists renewed their opposition and their attempts to persuade the British government to interpose its influence. As early as March, 1843, Lewis Tappan wrote John Scoble, "The desperate slaveholders are now looking with intense interest to the hope of having Texas annexed to this Union. If Texas can be annexed slavery, they think, will live one more generation but if she can not they almost despair of its outliving the present one."[20] He believed that the issue of Texas would probably decide the presidential race. The pressing importance of the question assured it a place of priority on the agenda of the world antislavery convention of that summer.

It was mainly with Texas in mind that Lewis Tappan journeyed to London to see what could be accomplished. Before the convention information had been gathered by means of "Queries" relating specifically to slavery and Texas.[21] The old idea of encouraging emigration or establishing a colony of free settlers there was also revived, not only by the abolitionists but by Charles Elliott, the British *chargé d'affaires* in Texas. Two com-

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Kennedy to Earl of Aberdeen, Oct. 12, Nov. 6, 1841, F.O. 75/2, all in PRO; Ephraim D. Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas, 1838–1846* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1910), 75–76, 85–87.

18. *Friend*, XII, no. 41 (July 13, 1839).

19. Ashbel Smith to Anson Jones, June 3, 1842, in Garrison, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence*, II, pt. II, 959–961.

20. Tappan to Scoble, Mar. 1, 1843, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 113–121.

21. The "Queries" are listed in *ibid.*, 135–137.

panies were formed, one in Germany and one in England, to undertake such an enterprise.[22] Duff Green, who was in London in the summer of 1843 on a mission for President Tyler but who was also closely connected with the Texan annexation movement, accused the British *chargé* with offering money in return for abolition and warned the Americans to be wary of British colonial enterprises.

It was probably Duff Green who suggested to Secretary of State Abel Upshur that American fears of Britain should be played upon as a means of securing the success of annexation. Isaac Van Zandt, Texan *chargé d'affaires* in Washington, wrote home to Anson Jones, secretary of state for Texas, that it was a "darling project" of Great Britain to see established in Texas a free state peopled by Anglo-Americans. If she should succeed in this enterprise, "the history of the Southern States would soon be written." [23] The American minister, Edward Everett, on the other hand, tried to convince Upshur that Lord Aberdeen (who had succeeded Palmerston) had no intention of joining an abolitionist crusade against Texas, even though he was interested in an independent Texas.[24]

Ashbel Smith, Texan *chargé d'affaires* in London, was seriously and genuinely worried that Texans would underestimate the antislavery forces in England. He placed the blame for anti-Texas feeling squarely on the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society and on the influence of Stephen Pearl Andrews, who was "devising with the Quakers and others" the means of obtaining abolition. Smith even attended the antislavery convention, and after hearing Texas described as "the hiding place of dishonesty, as the refuge of unprincipled villains, swindlers and criminals escaped from the hands of justice in other countries," he felt sure the antislavery people would "spare no efforts" to attain their end. He heard them propose various plans: a loan that would enable

22. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 94, July 28, 1843; Spence, "British Interests and Attitudes," 41–42; Leavitt to Soule, Jan. 12, 1844, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 166–169; Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas*, 140.

23. Van Zandt to Jones, Mar. 13, 1843, in Garrison, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence*, II, pt. II, 132–138.

24. Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas*, 141, 143–144.

Texas to purchase all the slaves and emancipate them; raising a sum of money to buy large quantities of land on the same condition, abolition of slavery; or flooding Texas with free immigrants who would vote down slavery.

Smith was told frankly, by "several intelligent gentlemen, themselves abolitionists," that Texas ought not to be deceived into thinking settlers would flock there even if slavery were abolished, because they would fear the troubles to ensue between Texas and the United States over fugitive slaves who would surge across the border. A "considerable party" of abolitionists, on the other hand, wanted Texas free precisely so that it would provide a haven for fugitives. Some saw the possibility of dividing Texas into two parts, one slave and one free; others saw its potential as a black republic such as Haiti, a possibility that had been suggested by Daniel O'Connell as early as 1839.

In addition to motives of philanthropy, Smith believed that Britain's economic interests lay in a free Texas in order to reduce the competition from slave-produced cotton and sugar. His discovery that Mexican stocks recently and secretly issued on the London market had been bought primarily by "violent *antislavery men*" heightened his alarm, for "their hostility to Texas as a *slaveholding country* is extreme," he reported, "and while it continues such, they would spare no money to subjugate the country, as they believe it would be doing God service." [25]

The antislavery convention of 1843 adopted resolutions on Texas which were embodied in a memorial to Lord Aberdeen, signed by Thomas Clarkson, and delivered by a deputation from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, including Lewis Tappan as a guest. Tappan's idea, which he had discussed with John Quincy Adams before leaving home, was that a British loan could be raised to enable Texas to maintain her independence; in return, she must agree to abolish slavery. Texan land could be pledged as security. Before presenting the idea to Lord Aberdeen, Tappan had tried it out on Samuel Gurney, the banker.

25. Spence, "British Interests and Attitudes," 35; Smith to Van Zandt, Jan. 25, 1843, and n.d. (probably Jan., 1843); Smith to Daingerfield, June 28, 1843; and Smith to Jones, July 2, 1843, all in Garrison, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence,* II, pt. II, 1107–8, 1098–1103.

Gurney was dubious; he was quite sure that the government would decline for diplomatic reasons, and private bankers would then also be afraid to venture the money. Nonetheless, Tappan put the question to Aberdeen—and received the answer Gurney had predicted. The most Aberdeen would promise was to try to influence Mexico to let Texas remain independent in return for abolishing slavery, and to use "all legitimate and honorable means" to persuade Texas to do so. Presumably this might include encouragement to colonization by free settlers or loans in return for abolition.[26]

Ashbel Smith tried to counteract this move by a visit of his own to Aberdeen. His major point was that Stephen Pearl Andrews did not speak for any considerable body of Texas citizens, that he was acting individually and misrepresenting the sentiment there. He candidly asked Aberdeen if it was the British government's intention to "buy" abolition by offering a loan to compensate slaveholders. Although Aberdeen refused to commit himself, except to say that his government would not "interfere improperly," what Smith kept in mind was that Britain had paid cold cash to both Spain and Portugal to get them to outlaw the slave trade. Aberdeen also informed him that dispatches had been sent to the British *chargé d'affaires* in Mexico instructing him to renew the offer of good services to mediate between Mexico and Texas. The instruction had declared that abolition would be a "*great moral triumph*" for Mexico.[27]

After Smith learned that Andrews, George Stacey, and Joshua Leavitt had had interviews with Lords Brougham and Morpeth as well as with Aberdeen, he decided to talk directly to Andrews himself. Andrews exuded confidence that the abolitionists could count on British support because Brougham, too, had assured them that Aberdeen would do all that could be done. By this time, however, Smith seems to have made up his mind that

26. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 88, June 30, and 94, July 28, 1843; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Aberdeen, July 7, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Tappan to Scoble, Apr. 24, 1850, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 239–244; Lewis Tappan, "Voyage to England," Tappan Papers; Adams, *Memoirs*, XI, 379–380.

27. Ashbel Smith to Anson Jones, July 31, 1843, in Garrison, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence*, II, pt. II, 1116–19.

Andrews was overconfident and that his schemes would prove illusory. His conclusion was that the answer to obtaining immigration to Texas lay not in abolition but in avoiding war with Mexico.[28]

In August Lord Brougham again raised the issue in Parliament, suggesting that influence might be brought to bear on Mexico to let Texas go, on condition that slavery be abolished. This, in turn, would weaken slavery in the United States because there would not be the demand for slave breeding. Again Lord Aberdeen's reply was that "he need hardly say that every effort on the part of Her Majesty's Government would lead to that result which was contemplated by his noble friend." Her ministers would "press the matter." [29] When statements such as that were put together with British Minister Richard Pakenham's statements to Secretary of State Upshur, they naturally alarmed American annexationists. Pakenham said that while his country had an open and avowed interest in abolition, it would not interfere "unduly" or with an "improper assumption of authority." Britain would counsel both Texas and Mexico but would "not seek to compel, or unduly control, either party." [30] Just how the British might interpret "unduly" and "improper" was open for speculation. According to John C. Calhoun, who became Secretary of State after Upshur's death, "unduly" meant any interference with slavery outside Britain's own territory.[31]

After the 1843 convention the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society addressed letters to the presidents of both Mexico and Texas. To Santa Anna they expressed the "sympathy of the world" because Mexico had outlawed slavery while the United States maintained it, and they urged him that in any negotiations regarding Texas he should insist on abolition—presumably as the price

28. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 103–104, Aug. 21, 1843; copy of part of Tappan to Lord Brougham, June 29, 1843, Tappan Papers.

29. Adams, *British Interests and Activities in Texas*, 142–143; *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd ser., LXXI, 915–918; Richard K. Crallé, ed., *Reports and Public Letters of John C. Calhoun*, 6 vols. (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1856), V, 315–317 (hereinafter cited as Calhoun, *Letters*).

30. Aberdeen to Pakenham, enclosed in Pakenham to Upshur, Feb. 26, 1844, in Calhoun, *Letters*, V, 330–333.

31. Calhoun to Pakenham, Apr. 18, 1844, in Calhoun, *Letters*, V, 333–339.

of independence.[32] To Sam Houston they used the argument that Texas would prosper much more without slavery because that institution would dissuade all potential free immigrants who could really develop the country.[33] The letters were drafted by George Stacey and John Scoble, with Stephen Andrews sitting on the committee to give them the benefit of his first-hand knowledge. The society's Publications Committee was instructed to be on the lookout for any articles on Texas that could be inserted into the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter.*[34]

In the United States the Liberty party, with James G. Birney as its candidate for the second time, concentrated on an anti-Texas campaign. But the aim of the abolitionists was to convince the voters that Clay, too, was for annexation, although he tried to avoid taking a stand. Both of the major parties were really ready to act in the interests of the "slave power," and all good northerners must therefore vote the Liberty ticket to save their interests.

With the British interest in Texas so obvious, it was not surprising that Birney should be attacked as a tool of the British and as having been hand-picked by the British abolitionist leader Joseph Sturge, who visited the United States in 1842. Senator Henry A. Wise of Virginia labeled Birney the candidate of the "British Abolitionist-dissolutionist Party." Wise made the charge in the Senate in 1842 and also published a letter in the *Madisonian,* a Tyler administration mouthpiece, warning England not to intrude on what was really a family affair between the United States and Texas.[35]

Anti-British feeling was frankly appealed to in order to win votes for annexation. The Texan *chargé d'affaires* in Washington reported home that the feeling in the capital was that if annexa-

32. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, Oct. 6, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

33. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Sam Houston, Oct. 6, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

34. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 110, Aug. 25, and 119, Oct. 6, 1843.

35. Fladeland, *Birney,* 239–240; *Congressional Globe,* 27 Cong., 2 sess., 173–176; Leavitt to [Scoble], Oct. 16, 1843, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 144–147.

tion failed, Texas was bound to become a dependency of Great Britain in one form or another. This fear, he believed, was a great influence on many free-state senators; otherwise he would despair of achieving annexation.[36]

Lewis Tappan informed Sturge that the rumor of Texas becoming a British colony was the topic of the day.[37] Even after the election was over and it was certain Polk would proceed with annexation if the lame-duck Whigs did not beat him to it, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society sent a resolution against annexation to Tappan to be published and circulated in the United States.[38] They also drew up another address to the people of the United States on Texas and slavery, really an answer to a letter John C. Calhoun had written on the subject to William R. King in France. In addition to commending the French for not joining England to prevent the annexation of Texas, Calhoun went on to deliver a long dissertation on British economic motives and then to argue that abolition in the northern United States, the British West Indies, and Santo Domingo had left the blacks worse off than they had been as slaves. The antislavery rebuttal was published in the *Boston Chronicle*, edited by Elizur Wright, with the idea that other abolitionist papers would copy it.[39] In the House of Representatives John P. Hale of Vermont made a last futile proposal that Texas be divided into two parts with slavery prohibited in the area south and west of the division line—an idea discussed in London at the antislavery convention.[40]

Even after Congress had acted in favor of annexation, diehards and such eternal optimists as Thomas Clarkson hoped some way could be found to "thwart" its consummation. But the British government was not to be caught in the cross-fire between the

36. Van Zandt to Jones, Jan. 20, 1844, in Garrison, ed., *Diplomatic Correspondence*, II, pt. II, 239–243.

37. Tappan to Sturge, Nov. 30, 1843, Tappan Papers.

38. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 270, Jan. 3, 1845.

39. *Ibid.*, 281, Jan. 27, and 287, Feb. 21, 1845; Tappan to Sturge, Feb. 26, 1845, Tappan Papers; Calhoun to King, Aug. 12, 1844, in Calhoun, *Letters*, V, 379–392.

40. Adams, *Memoirs*, XII, 144.

United States and Mexico, so all the British antislavery society could do was record its solemn protest.[41]

While the question of Texas was troubling abolitionists, another distressing problem arose which also involved Anglo-American diplomacy. By Article X of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842, Great Britain and the United States agreed to the extradition of persons charged with murder, intent to murder, assault, piracy, arson, robbery, and forgery.[42] What the antislavery people feared was that the clause might be used as a basis for demanding the return of fugitive slaves who had escaped into Canada, since many of them were guilty of at least one such offense—robbery—while in the act of escaping.

For several years there had been complaints about slaveholders attempting to recapture former slaves who were living as free men on Canadian soil. At the time the Webster-Ashburton Treaty was signed, the abolitionists were especially aware of the problem because of the case of Nelson Hackett in 1841. Hackett had escaped from a master in Arkansas and was accused of having stolen a horse, a watch, and other small items. Since he was apprehended with both horse and watch in his possession, the governor of Canada agreed to deliver him up as a criminal. But when he was returned to Arkansas, he was restored to his former owner as a slave and was not tried for his offenses.[43]

Abolitionists were divided in their stand on the problem. Some agreed with Gerrit Smith, who in the *Address of the Peterboro State Convention to the Slaves* argued that a slave was justified in taking anything he needed to facilitate his escape.[44] In the

41. Clarkson to Tappan, May 3, 1845, Tappan Papers; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 338, Aug. 1, 1845.

42. *British and Foreign State Papers,* XXX, 360–367.

43. Memorial to Palmerston, "On the Condition of the Coloured Population of Upper Canada: On British Subjects held in Slavery in Foreign Colonies: On Liberated Africans in Cuba, Brazil and Surinam, and on the Rights of Slaves illicitly introduced into those Countries," Mar. 2, 1841, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Tappan to Scoble, July 23, 1842, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 99–100, 108.

44. New York State Anti-Slavery Society, *Address of the Peterboro State Convention to the Slaves and Its Vindication* (Cazenovia, 1842).

Creole case the judge had held that even murder was justifiable if necessary in the fight for one's freedom. Even those abolitionists who disagreed with that point of view, and thought that Nelson Hackett ought to be punished for theft, did not agree that he should be returned to slavery. Moreover, they knew that trumped-up charges and falsified warrants could be used against those fugitives who were innocent of everything except running away.

At the very time that Webster and Ashburton were negotiating, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was reviewing the case of Nelson Hackett.[45] It was natural, therefore, that when they learned of Article X, they should worry about its possible misuse in the handling of fugitive-slave cases. Hackett's extradition furnished an unfortunate precedent at a crucial moment. Charles Stuart immediately wrote to the society to sound an alarm, and John Scoble and John Beaumont met with Dr. Lushington to see what action ought to be taken. Lushington was confident that only by "the most forced and 'treasonable construction'" could Article X be applied to fugitive slaves in British territory, but nevertheless he advised that just to be on the safe side it might be well to send a memorial to the government on the matter and seek an interview with Ashburton himself. Both recommendations were followed.[46]

The memorial to Lord Aberdeen stressed the inequality in the punishment of slaves and free whites for the same offenses, and therefore the inhumanity and cruelty of delivering up fugitives even though they might be guilty. Aberdeen agreed to watch the operation of the treaty carefully, and if "an evil use be made of it," he would recommend its abandonment under the option written into Article XI. To Clarkson he wrote that English magistrates would never consider escaping from slavery a crime nor even the taking of clothes and necessary provisions from the master.[47] Just to let the government know they intended to re-

45. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 543, June 9, and 555–556, July 1, 1842.

46. *Ibid.*, II, 4, Nov. 25; 11, Dec. 30, 1842; 26, Jan. 27; 32, Feb. 6; and 40–42, Feb. 13, 1843. Copies of the correspondence with Ashburton are in the Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

47. Memorial on the extradition clause of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, Feb. 13, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Ashburton to Clarkson, Feb. 21,

main vigilant, the abolition societies in Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Sheffield, York, Hull, Scarborough, Bradford, Halifax, Kendal, Carlisle, Bath, and Plymouth were circularized to send petitions to add to that of the London society to be presented to the House of Commons.[48]

In the United States the Executive Committee of the American Anti-Slavery Society sent a deputation to interview Ashburton, and they, too, were encouraged by assurances that the article would not be applied to fugitives in Canada.[49] Before the American delegates left for London for the world convention of 1843, they were assigned to try to find out what the official American interpretation of Article X might be, since they were well aware of Webster's political ambitions and feared he might be reluctant to take a firm stand in opposition to southern demands.

Lewis Tappan discovered that systematic measures had been adopted to recover fugitives by charging them with felonies. In the Senate Thomas Hart Benton had opposed Article X because it did not clearly include fugitive slaves. A member of President Fillmore's cabinet assailed the treaty as having been made in collusion with the abolitionists. If the United States gave in to Great Britain on this article, he warned, "she [Britain] will unfurl the banner of abolition still more conspicuously before the eyes of your slaves; she will accustom them to consider her as their benefactor, the champion of their rights, the avenger of their wrongs. And when the war does come, as come it will, she may then hope to realize her threat of being welcomed by them as their deliverer, and her flag, when it appears, becoming the signal of a servile insurrection." [50]

While in London Lewis Tappan was a member of the deputation calling on Ashburton, and Joshua Leavitt went with George

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1843, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 46, Feb. 24, 1843.

48. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 50, Feb. 27, and 52, Mar. 13, 1843.

49. Wilson, *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power,* I, 402–403.

50. *Ibid.,* 403; Tappan to Scoble, Dec. 27, 1842, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 108–110; *Congressional Globe,* 27 Cong., 3 sess., Appendix, 23ff.; [Thomas Hart Benton], *Thirty Years' View . . . ,* 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1856), II, 446–447.

Stacey to interview Members of Parliament on the question. Thomas Clarkson wrote directly to the governor general of Canada.[51] They were all reassured to a large degree when Canadian officials, at Aberdeen's suggestion, began the practice of sending all such claims back to the home government in Great Britain for judgment, as this reduced the chances that clerks or other petty officials might make mistakes from failure to give each case serious consideration.[52] The antislavery people were also encouraged when, in the fall of 1843, British officials in Nassau refused to deliver up seven slaves who had escaped from Florida in a stolen sloop, although claim for their extradition was made by American Secretary of State Upshur under Article X.[53]

In the United States the British were accused of deliberate treachery in regard to the article, and there was loud talk of abrogation. John C. Calhoun demanded an "explicit statement" of the British interpretation, at the same time saying that he was sure they could always find some loophole to save the fugitives. John Quincy Adams not only defended the British interpretation publicly but privately told Pakenham that he and many other Americans would side with the British in any move that would help to free the Negro race. Pakenham was realistic enough to know, however, that even among the abolitionists anti-English feelings were sometimes stronger than antislavery ideals.[54]

The abolitionists had failed to save Texas from slavery, but they felt they had been effective on Article X of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty. By alerting the British authorities to the dan-

51. Clarkson to Sir Charles Metcalfe Bart, Sept. 6, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Leavitt to Clarkson, Nov. 15, 1843, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

52. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Aberdeen, Oct. 11, 1843, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

53. Fox to Aberdeen, Nov. 20, 1843, F.O. 84/484, PRO; Leavitt to Clarkson, Nov. 15, 1843, Jan. 12, 1844, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library.

54. Pakenham to Aberdeen, Mar. 14, Aug. 13, 1844, F.O. 84/538, PRO. Before having any proof of British interpretation, John Quincy Adams had been, as usual, very distrustful of their motives. In Aug., 1843, he told Lewis Tappan that he believed the policy of the British government was "to cherish, sustain, and protect the institution of slavery in our Southern States and Texas, and their task is to do it by humbugging the abolitionists in England into the belief that they intend directly the reverse." See Adams, *Memoirs*, XI, 406.

ger of American misuse of the article, and by their firm stand for a "correct" interpretation by the British, they had assured the fact that Canada and other British territories would continue to provide a haven for American fugitive slaves.

Still another slavery issue that was revived in the 1840s and 1850s to roil Anglo-American diplomatic waters was that of black seamen being imprisoned in southern ports. Just at the end of December, 1842, a petition signed by citizens of Boston was presented to Congress, and abolitionists were hopeful that it would force a debate on the whole ground of Negro citizenship. The committee to which the bill was referred adopted a favorable report, but two members, Kenneth Rayner of North Carolina and John P. Kennedy of Maryland, issued a minority report that was also ordered to be printed.[55]

While the debate continued, another incident occurred involving Great Britain. A British sailor not only was imprisoned in Charleston but allegedly was mistreated by the jailor. Since there were no white witnesses, no action could be taken in South Carolina. When the South Carolina Senate rejected a bill to amend the state law, Lord Aberdeen instructed Pakenham to make a "friendly remonstrance" to the federal government, but both realized it was a futile gesture.[56]

South Carolina's response to both Massachusetts and British protests was to reinforce her law by making the writ of habeas corpus inapplicable to blacks. They also passed a new law to punish anyone who disturbed the peace in matters concerning slaves or free colored people. At first this applied only to persons from other states, but a clause was added specifying "or from any Foreign Power." It was a direct slap at the British consul, William Ogilby, who had been trying his best to protect British seamen. John C. Calhoun's assurances that Ogilby was free to act within the limits of his consular authority seemed rather hollow, particularly because an extralegal body known as the South Carolina

55. Theodore Weld to Angelina Weld, Jan. 1, 22, 1843, in *Weld-Grimké Letters*, II, 952–954, 955–956, 953n.

56. Aberdeen to Pakenham, Jan. 24, 1844, F.O. 84/538, and William Ogilby to Aberdeen, Feb. 5, 1844, F.O. 84/539, PRO.

Association was carefully watching Ogilby. According to him, they exercised an "absolute power" in matters regarding blacks and would surely expel him from the state if he persisted.[57]

The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society sent a protest to Aberdeen in 1846 and another to Palmerston in 1850, but the policy of the British government as well as the American federal government had settled into one of not irritating the South.[58] As early as 1844 Pakenham had written home from Washington to recommend that his dispatches involving slavery not be published in the Slave Trade Papers, periodically laid before Parliament, because no subject offended southerners more. He carefully labeled all dispatches having the "slightest connexion" with slavery so that their publication could be avoided. Aberdeen also took steps to put a brake on any impulsive actions by Ogilby.[59]

In the 1850s George Mathew, who had succeeded Ogilby and who was even more indignant and impetuous, advised that suits be instituted over two cases that arose, but the home government ordered them to be dropped. Mathew was transferred to Philadelphia and replaced by Robert Bunch, who would be more "tactful." [60]

This "betrayal" by the government again aroused abolitionist indignation and protests, and in 1853–1854 they proceeded to make a *cause célèbre* of the John Glasgow case, which was reported to them by John Brown, who had escaped from a Georgia plantation to Canada and thence to England. Glasgow was a free black from Demerara who went to sea, sailed to Liverpool, and while in England married an English girl with whom he had two children. On a subsequent voyage he was imprisoned at Savannah under the Georgia Seamen's Act, but his ship stayed in port so long that his captain could not pay the jail fee, and Glasgow was

57. Ogilby to Aberdeen, Jan. 4, May 1, 1845, F.O. 84/597, and to Pakenham, Feb. 6, 1845, F.O. 84/596, PRO.

58. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 387, Feb. 27, 1846; John Scoble for British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Lord Palmerston, Dec. 20, 1850, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

59. Pakenham to Bandinal, Dec. 28, 1844, F.O. 84/538, and Aberdeen to Ogilby, Mar. 14, 1845, F.O. 84/597, PRO.

60. Philip M. Hamer, "British Consuls and the Negro Seaman Acts, 1850–1860," *Journal of Southern History*, I (1935), 138–168.

sold as a slave. According to Brown, who had been a fellow slave on the same plantation, Glasgow made repeated attempts to escape, but without success. His punishments had left him a pitiful cripple.

Brown's deposition containing the facts of the case was sworn before a notary public, the narrative was circulated by the abolitionist societies, and much publicity was given to it in antislavery publications. The Reverend Samuel R. Ward of Canada, who was in England in 1854, made the issue of colored seamen one of his main lecture topics, and the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society authorized a tract to expose and publicize the laws relating to colored seamen.[61]

Despite such efforts, abolitionist agitation had no visible effect on government policy, but in 1856, to their surprise, South Carolina modified her law to provide that if colored seamen stayed aboard their ships, they would not be arrested. This may have been the result of Bunch's conciliatory attitude rather than because of antislavery agitation. In 1855 even the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society decided that the "delicate state" of political relations between their country and the United States made it desirable to "await a more suitable opportunity" for pressing the subject.[62] Hence the basic legal and diplomatic questions involved remained unsettled between the two countries right down to the American Civil War.

61. *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Aug., Nov., 1853; "Deposition of John Brown before Notary Public on Case of John Glasgow," May 29, 1854, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Wilson Armistead to Louis Chamerovzow, June 20, 1854, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, July 19, 1854. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society tried to find John Glasgow's wife, but I found no record of success.

62. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Nov. 2, 1855.

The Slave Trade in Anglo-American Diplomacy, 1830-1860

XIV

In the 1830s, when Great Britain revived her efforts for an agreement with the United States on the slave trade, the old accusations of economic motivation were also resurrected. By then the implication was that emancipation in the West Indies further dissociated the British from the profits of the slave trade, and she was therefore jealous of other nations so benefiting. As a matter of fact, there had really been no slackening in British zeal against the trade since 1808. What seemed like a relapse in the 1820s was due not so much to the British as to the disinterestedness of both the United States and France, and there was little England could do until a new opening presented itself.

The first prospect of success came with the revolutionary upheaval in France in 1830 and the subsequent willingness of the government to sign a convention with the British in 1831 that provided for mutual search, with the stipulation that vessels detained should be sent to the courts of their own country.[1] But overtures to the United States to join in the pact were rejected.[2]

1. Granville to Palmerston, Sept. 30, 1831, F.O. 84/123, PRO; Milne, "The Slave Trade and Anglo-American Relations," 63–64.

2. Palmerston to Charles R. Vaughan, May 31, June 14, 1833, F.O. 84/143, PRO.

As in 1824, the timing was bad. That convention had come in the wake of the excitement over Missouri and the Denmark Vesey plot, in the midst of a presidential election, and just as English abolitionists were openly announcing a new, all-out attack on slavery in the West Indies. This offer came just after the passage of the West Indian Emancipation Act, the Nat Turner rebellion, the Jamaican insurrection, and the organization of the American Anti-Slavery Society. Secretary of State Louis McLane informed the British and French ministers to the United States that in view of the degree of southern apprehension, President Jackson was convinced that any negotiations on the subject would set off a "violent and intemperate" explosion both in the Senate, where John Forsyth of Georgia would block action by the Foreign Relations Committee, and in the southern states generally.[3]

The British minister, Charles Vaughan, reported accurately to Palmerston the alarm and exasperation felt by the slaveholders over West Indian emancipation, the "extraordinary excitement" and "jealous watching" of every appearance of developments that might affect their own slave property.[4] In 1835, when the Irish abolitionist R. R. Madden dined in the White House with President Jackson, he proposed that Jackson should follow the British example of emancipation. Bursting into laughter, Jackson told his secretary to put a poker into the fire, bring in a barrel of gunpowder, place him (Jackson) on the barrel, give the red-hot poker to Madden, "and he will make me famous in the twinkling of an eye." [5]

Even the British offer to omit in the treaty any stipulation for search along the American coast (the concession on which they had balked in 1824) was met with a firm negative. By the time the official answer was made, John Forsyth had moved from the Senate to succeed McLane as Secretary of State, a transfer boding only ill for slave-trade negotiations and for abolitionist hopes

3. Vaughan to Palmerston, Sept. 4, 1833, F.O. 84/143, PRO.

4. Vaughan to Palmerston, Sept. 20, Dec. 12, 28, 1833; Palmerston to Vaughan, Oct. 11, 1833, F.O. 84/143; Palmerston to Vaughan, July 7, 1834; and Vaughan to Palmerston, Oct. 4, 1834, F.O. 84/157, all in PRO.

5. R. R. Madden, *Memoirs . . .* , ed. Thomas More Madden (London: Ward and Downey, 1891), 95–97.

generally.[6] With southerners and slaveholders occupying the State Department as well as the White House, and with anti-abolition mobs making the news both North and South, the British realized there was no chance of gaining their point. By 1835 they had shifted their pressure to Spain, the Latin American countries, and the smaller maritime nations of northern Europe, where they did make some headway.[7]

Two particular cases involving international law and the slave trade absorbed abolitionist attention and aroused southern fears as the decade of the 1840s began: that of the *Amistad,* which began in 1839, and that of the *Creole* in 1842.

The *Amistad* was a schooner from Havana with over fifty Africans aboard sailing for another Cuban port, Guanja, near Puerto Principe. Encouraged by their leader, Cinque, who was the son of an African village headman, the Mendians (from Mendi in Africa) revolted, seized control of the ship, and forced her to sail eastward—back to Africa, they hoped. During the nights, however, the navigator veered the course to northwestward, and as a result of this strange zig-zagging the ship ended up in the vicinity of Long Island, where it was taken into custody by Captain Thomas Gedney of the surveying brig *Washington.*[8] The two Spanish slave dealers, Jose Ruiz and Pedro Montez, were released on bail, but Ruiz elected to remain in jail. According to the American abolitionist version, his intention was "to excite sympathy & to embroil this government with Spain in consequence of one of the liege subjects of Her Catholic Majesty being incarcerated in prison merely for stealing half a hundred men and women!" [9]

6. Forsyth to Vaughan, Oct. 4, 1834, F.O. 84/157, PRO.

7. Foreign Office to Richard Pakenham, Nov. 13, 1835, F.O. 84/157, and Palmerston to Henry Fox, Oct. 29, 1835, F.O. 84/181, PRO. F.O. 84/181 is filled with correspondence on this subject with other European powers.

8. For the facts of the *Amistad* case and the accompanying correspondence between the Spanish minister and the United States, see *House Documents,* no. 185, 26 Cong., 1 sess.

9. Lewis Tappan to John Scoble, Dec. 10, 1839, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 60–63.

The Mendians were charged with murder on the high seas and were held for trial in Hartford, Connecticut, despite the demand of the Spanish minister in Washington, Don Angel Calderon de la Barca, that they be handed over to the Spanish authorities in Cuba as the property of Ruiz and Montez. The two latter claimed that they had violated no international agreement because they were simply transferring slaves from one port of Cuba to another. But Dr. R. R. Madden, who had served as a British judge on the Mixed Court of Commission in Havana since 1836, knew the Africans to have been recently, and therefore illegally, brought to Cuba.[10] This aspect of the case involved British interests because, if true, it meant that Spain was violating her anti–slave trade treaty with Great Britain.

American and British abolitionists both, therefore, set to work to try to obtain the release of the *Amistad* "captives," as they were now labeled. In the United States Lewis Tappan took personal charge. Committees were appointed to obtain counsel—Roger S. Baldwin, Seth P. Staples, and Judge Theodore Sedgewick were chosen—and to collect needed funds.[11] Little could be expected from American authorities because of their proslavery sympathies, from Secretary of State Forsyth down to Captain Gedney of the *Washington*.[12]

On January 6, 1840, Forsyth informed William Holabird, U.S. attorney for the District of Connecticut, that on the advice of the Attorney General, who did not think the United States had jurisdiction, President Van Buren had ordered a vessel to lie in readiness to take the Mendians back to Cuba. Assuming this would be the decision of the court, the *Amistad* and her goods should be turned over to whatever persons the Spanish minister might designate. A few days later, in a communication marked "confidential," Holabird was instructed to execute immediately the president's order "unless an appeal shall actually have been interposed." He was not to take it for granted that an appeal

10. Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 58–61nn.

11. See, for example, Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Minutes, II, 362–363, entries for Sept. 11, 1839, June 25, Dec. 31, 1840.

12. Tappan to Sturge, Dec. 14, 1839, Tappan Papers.

would be entered. In other words, haste might get the Mendians off to Cuba before anything could be done.[13] The U.S. attorney for the Southern District of New York was told to put himself at the disposal of Ruiz and Montez to aid them in any way he could. John Quincy Adams labeled such executive action an "abominable conspiracy, Executive and Judicial, of this government, against the lives of those wretched men." [14]

Since the abolitionists could expect little from the American government, any diplomatic pressure had to come from the British side, so the British abolitionists swung into action with memorials and petitions. A deputation from the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society called on Palmerston to request that he interpose on behalf of the captives to obtain not only their freedom but also indemnification for their sufferings and injuries. They asked that definite instructions be sent to the British consul in Cuba and to the Mixed Court of Commission there, in case the Africans were extradited by the U.S. court—a development they fully expected.[15]

Palmerston responded favorably. The British minister in Washington, Henry L. Fox, was told to tender his good offices on behalf of the Mendians. The *chargé d'affaires* in Madrid was dispatched to call upon the Spanish government to send strict orders to Cuba that if the Africans should be returned, they must be put at liberty.[16] To add to the psychological and moral pressure, Palmerston sent Fox a copy of a brief issued by the pope enjoining all Catholics to abstain from the slave trade. Fox was to transmit a copy to the American government and, more important perhaps, release it for insertion in the principal American newspapers.[17]

Voluntary actions of individual Englishmen were also im-

13. *House Documents,* no. 185. I am indebted to Filler, *Crusade against Slavery,* 168, for alerting me on this point.

14. Adams, *Memoirs,* X, 373.

15. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 103, Oct. 25, 1839; "Case of the Amistad," memorial to Lord Palmerston, Nov. 9, 1839, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

16. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 131–132, Dec. 27, 1839; Foreign Office to Fox, Dec. 21, 1839, F.O. 84/296, PRO.

17. Palmerston to Fox, Dec. 31, 1839, F.O. 84/296, PRO.

portant. Lieutenant Fitzgerald of the brig *Buzzard,* which happened to be in New York harbor, won the gratitude of the abolitionists by sending two members of his crew to act as interpreters for the *Amistad* captives, even though it meant a three months' delay for him and his ship. Dr. R. R. Madden's services in the case were invaluable, since he could testify with authority on the illegal importation into Cuba.[18] Madden reported not only on the illegality but on the cruel treatment the captives had undergone. They had been kept in chains and fetters with scant supplies of food and water. A single banana was sometimes their only food for a day or two, and their water ration was one cup per day. The cook aboard the ship had told them that when they arrived in Principe they would have their throats cut, be chopped into pieces, and be salted down as meat. As they were released to go on deck one day, Cinque found a nail which he hid under his arm. He used it to free himself from his chains and then freed the others.[19]

Madden postponed his return to England in order to go from Cuba to the United States to be present at the trial in Hartford; he then left his deposition in Washington, D.C., for use in case of appeal. His testimony was probably a big factor in the decision rendered by Judge Andrew J. Judson that the *Amistad* captives could not legally be claimed as slaves; they should be delivered to the president of the United States and returned to their homeland.[20] The decision was a surprise to the abolitionists, who had misjudged Andrew Judson. He had recently given the verdict against Prudence Crandall's attempt to establish a school for black girls in Connecticut, and they assumed he would take the same position in this case as the proslavery federal officials in Washington.

As Madden had foreseen, the decision was appealed, first to the circuit court and then to the Supreme Court.[21] In both cases the Africans and the abolitionists backing them were

18. American Anti-Slavery Society, Executive Committee Minutes, Nov. 6, 1839; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 132–133, 142, Dec. 27, 1839; Tappan to Sturge, Nov. 23, Dec. 14, 1839, Tappan Papers.

19. Madden, *The Island of Cuba,* Appendix XIV, 230–231.

20. Tappan to Madden, Feb. 3, 1840, Tappan Papers; 15 *Peters,* 519.

21. *House Documents,* no. 185; 15 *Peters,* 518, 597.

fortunate in the judges assigned. The associate justice on the circuit court was Smith Thompson, who as Secretary of the Navy in Monroe's cabinet had been one of the first to favor a slave-trade treaty based on mutual search; he had also favored a liberal interpretation of right of search in the case of *La Jeune Eugénie.* The Supreme Court decision was delivered by Justice Joseph Story; he had given the decision on *La Jeune Eugénie,* which agreed with Thompson's views and which had revealed Story's own hatred of the slave trade.[22]

John Quincy Adams, at the time of the case of *La Jeune Eugénie,* had been opposed to the Thompson-Story interpretation. Now, in an interesting turn of events, the abolitionists had persuaded him first to introduce a resolution in Congress against the detention of the *Amistad* captives and then to plead their case before the Supreme Court—in which role he was on the same side as Thompson and Story, his old antagonists. Adams made a strong arraignment of the actions of the federal government in degrading the country, not sparing President Van Buren, Secretary of State Forsyth, or Attorney General Felix Grundy.[23] The *Amistad* captives were freed.

While the case was before the Supreme Court, the British had exerted another bit of pressure. British Minister Fox appealed directly to John Quincy Adams and wrote to Secretary Forsyth pleading for executive action to free the Mendians. Forsyth's response was precisely what the British knew it would be: that the executive could do nothing now that the case was in the hands of the American tribunals, and in the event of an adverse decision Britain's recourse was to raise her treaty agreements with Spain.[24] The note had, however, reminded the American government that its actions were being carefully watched.

Fighting the case had taken not only time but a great deal of money, and again the American abolitionists appealed to their British colleagues for help in getting the Mendians back to their

22. See Chapter VI, pp. 130–131.

23. Adams, *Memoirs,* X, 296, 358; Wilson, *Rise and Fall of the Slave Power,* I, 462–463.

24. Fox to Forsyth, Jan. 20, 1841, and Forsyth to Fox, Jan. 20, 1841, F.O. 84/376, PRO.

own country. Bolstered by memorials from local antislavery societies, at the suggestion of Lewis Tappan, a deputation of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society called upon Lord Aberdeen, who had succeeded Palmerston, to ask what the British government might be willing to do. It was suggested that a vessel be furnished to transport Cinque and his companions to Sierra Leone, from where they could find their own way home to Mendi country. Possibly the Africans might even be naturalized as British citizens as an additional protection. Aberdeen agreed to the first but not to the second.[25]

John Quincy Adams, meanwhile, consulted with Daniel Webster on the possibility of the American government sending the Mendians on a ship that would go to Africa to cruise against the slave trade. He thought it could be justified on the ground that the American courts had declared them to be free—not slaves, pirates, or robbers—yet had taken from them the vessel in their possession. Webster was startled at the idea that the ship *Amistad* should be considered the property of the mutineers, but he promised to see what the Navy Department could do. Adams approached President Tyler also in a follow-up interview after an abolitionist committee composed of Lewis Tappan and Simeon Jocelyn had sent him a memorial asking that a public vessel be made available. Tyler had "no recollection" of having received such a petition.[26]

Before any arrangements could be made through either of the two governments, funds had been raised in New York, and a ship with the Mendians and several abolitionist missionaries sailed for Africa. They carried letters to the Sierra Leone officials furnished by the British minister in Washington and the British consul in New York.[27]

The *Creole* case was in some respects similar to the *Amistad* case, but it involved the British directly rather than tangentially.

25. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 466–469, Oct. 27, Nov. 26, 1841; "To His Excellency, Sir John Jeremie, Gov. of Sierra Leone," Mar. 25, 1841, Tappan Papers; Scoble to Tappan, n.d., Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Fox to Forsyth, Jan. 20, 1841, enclosed in Fox to Palmerston, Mar. 9, 1841, F.O. 84/376, and Aberdeen to Fox, Dec. 3, 1841, F.O. 84/376, PRO.

26. Adams, *Memoirs*, X, 446–447; XI, 23–24.

27. Scoble to Aberdeen, Dec. 10, 20, 1841, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

In this instance the slave uprising occurred on a ship bound from Hampton Roads, Virginia, to New Orleans, operating in the coastwise trade, which was considered to be "internal" and therefore legal. Taking possession of the ship after subduing the captain and crew, the 135 slaves forced the crew to sail to Nassau in the Bahamas. There the governor, on request of the American consul, sent a guard of soldiers aboard to prevent the slaves from escaping until the murder of one of the passengers could be investigated. Almost immediately, however, he informed the consul that as soon as the investigation should be concluded, all persons not implicated would be released. Knowing that the slaves would be free on British soil, the crew resisted landing, and another fight broke out, but the *Creole* was quickly surrounded by native Bahamians in their small boats armed with bludgeons to free the Negroes if they were not let go. To avoid bloodshed, the American consul, John F. Bacon, was forced to agree to let them land.[28]

Of course the American government held the blacks to be American property and demanded their return to the United States. Edward Everett, American minister to England, began negotiations with Lord Aberdeen, and U.S. Secretary of State Daniel Webster enunciated the American position to both Fox and Lord Ashburton, who was in the country as a special envoy to conclude a treaty on several long-standing Anglo-American problems. Ashburton was not empowered to act in the *Creole* case, but he did offer "suggestions" to Webster emphasizing that Britain could not admit any principle except that a slave was free once he set foot on British soil.[29]

Again the abolitionists in both countries rallied to do what they could. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society appointed

28. Edward Everett to Aberdeen, Mar. 1, 1842, F.O. 84/423, PRO; *House Miscellaneous Documents,* no. 212, 53 Cong., 2 sess.; *Senate Documents,* no. 51, 27 Cong., 2 sess.

29. Fox to Aberdeen, Dec. 28, 1841, Feb. 25, 1842, F.O. 84/376, 84/423; enclosures in Ashburton to Aberdeen, June 29, 1842, F.O. 5/379; and Ashburton to Webster, Aug. 7, 1842, F.O. 5/380, all in PRO; Webster to Ashburton, Aug. 1, 1842, in *British and Foreign State Papers,* XXX, 181–189; *Senate Documents,* no. 137, 27 Cong., 2 sess.

John Scoble and John Beaumont to confer with Dr. Lushington and Lord Brougham in the two houses of Parliament. They agreed that British officials had no authority to extradite the Negroes either as slaves or as felons and advised that a writ of habeas corpus in their behalf be sued out in the Bahamas. They took the position that the killing of the one passenger had been justifiable homicide rather than murder because the man, John Hewell, was the owner of some of the slaves. A memorial to Aberdeen was then composed and delivered by a special deputation.[30]

In the United States James G. Birney, one of the ablest of the abolitionist lawyers on issues involving international law, prepared an article that was published in the *New York American.* It also furnished the basis for a series of resolutions introduced in the House of Representatives by Joshua Giddings, abolitionist from Ohio who had achieved national fame through his firm stand at the side of John Quincy Adams against the southern gag laws.

Birney's argument was that jurisdiction over slavery had been reserved for the states rather than ceded to the federal government, thus meeting southern opposition on its own ground. It followed that slavery could exist only when called into being and supported by the force of positive state or municipal law. When a ship left a port and entered the high seas, the persons aboard it ceased to be subject to state or local law; hence the persons aboard the *Creole* were no longer subject to Virginia law. Upon the high seas they were under the laws of the United States, but as soon as they were in Nassau, the local law of the Bahamas was in effect, i.e., British law. Giddings's resolutions were received with such a storm of protest that southern members of the House initiated and succeeded in passing a resolution censuring him. Knowing that his constituents in the Western Reserve

30. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 480, Jan. 7; 496–498, Feb. 7; and 507, Feb. 25, 1842; memorial to Aberdeen, Feb. 12, 1842, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers. The memorial to Aberdeen and Brougham's speech in Parliament on the *Creole* case are in the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Feb. 9, 1842.

district of Ohio were strongly antislavery, Giddings resigned his seat. He was then re-elected, thus making his triumph only the greater.[31]

One of the points Birney made in his letter to the *New York American* was that it was the southern states themselves who insisted on the supremacy of state laws on slavery. On that basis they imprisoned free colored British seamen who came into their ports only temporarily. This argument, which hit the South in a weak spot, was taken up by Aberdeen and was set forth in the official communication to Everett notifying him that the *Creole* Africans would not be given up to the United States. The decision of the judge in Nassau was that he had no power either to try them or to detain them as criminals; they were free men. Moreover, in his opinion a slave was justified in murdering to gain his liberty.[32]

Abolitionists acclaimed the *Amistad* and *Creole* cases as two major victories. They were well aware, however, that the excitement engendered by them seriously handicapped the success they hoped for in the current negotiations between Webster and Ashburton, one of whose topics was a slave-trade treaty. They were very much conscious of Webster's fawning attitude toward the South in the *Creole* case, and they were already suspicious that he would go to almost any length to retain southern political backing for his presidential aspirations—a suspicion that was to become a conviction in the debates over the Compromise of 1850.

In view of the anglophobia aroused by the *Creole* debate, it is surprising that Ashburton and Webster were able to conclude a treaty at all in 1842, let alone one that touched on the question of slavery. It was the British who again approached the subject of the slave trade, since their consuls in Havana had been re-

31. As a law student in the office of Alexander J. Dallas in Philadelphia just at the end of the War of 1812, Birney had worked on many cases of international law arising out of the war. See Fladeland, *Birney*, 12, 221–222. Birney's letter is in the *New York American*, Feb. 18, 1842, and the Giddings resolutions in the issue of Mar. 23, 1842.

32. Aberdeen to Everett, Apr. 18, 1842, F.O. 84/423, and Ashburton to Aberdeen, May 12, 1842, F.O. 5/379, PRO.

porting that there had been a decided increase in the trade because of American capital investments in new sugar plantations and a renewed demand for slave labor. As in the period before the piracy law of 1820, American ships resorted to carrying sets of fraudulent papers and a skeleton Spanish crew to foil arrest. Since no American captain had been given the death penalty as provided by law, the slave traders rightly concluded that the law was a dead letter and they had little to fear except possible monetary loss.

Again, too, there were complaints that American consuls in Havana either looked the other way or actually connived in the illegal activities by signing blank forms that the ship masters could later fill in. There were reports as well of the increased use of the American flag by ships of other nations wishing to evade seizure by the British, and of British functionaries who worked in slaveholding countries and availed themselves of slave labor.[33] In 1840 Lord Brougham admitted that there were still "millions" in British capital invested in the slave trade.[34]

With the antislavery feeling as prevalent as it was in Great Britain, there were bound to be some abolitionists among the government appointees who voluntarily served as the reporters of such activities. Dr. R. R. Madden and David Turnbull in Havana were two of them. The Spanish government went so far as to protest Turnbull's appointment as consul because of his known abolitionism, but Palmerston refused to remove him.[35] Madden was one of the magistrates who furnished accusations against the American consul Nicholas Trist. In 1839 Madden wrote a letter for publication, addressed to William Ellery Channing, in which he stated openly that in Cuba Trist "flagrantly connived" at violations. He accused Trist of signing documents stating that slaves were indentured laborers, but they had been taken to Texas for sale. Madden also quoted Trist

33. Foreign Office to Fox, Feb. 23, Mar. 22, Aug. 3, 1839, and Fox to John Backhouse, June 11, 1839, F.O. 84/296, PRO. Foreign Office files for the late 1830s are full of letters with repeated complaints containing particulars of specific ships with the evidence against them.

34. George Stephen to T. F. Buxton, Oct. 29, 1842, Gurney Mss.

35. *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Sept. 7, 1842.

as saying that the slave trade was a positive good to its "supposed" victims.[36]

After completing a three-year term on the Mixed Court of Commission in Havana, Madden was sent to West Africa on a special investigation of British settlements there. He found English business houses furnishing supplies to the slave factories and Englishmen holding slaves in the Gold Coast and Gambia.[37] Madden saw to it that not only his government but also the antislavery societies were quickly apprised of such cases, and protests in the form of petitions followed.[38] The world antislavery convention of 1840 sent a protest to Palmerston against British officials in Cuba and Brazil who were holding slaves. It resulted in a circular from the Foreign Office to all of its appointees forbidding the practice.[39]

In 1839 Palmerston decided to make a last appeal to the United States before risking stopping her ships on the high seas, although with Forsyth as Secretary of State there seemed little grounds for hope that any decisive action would be forthcoming. Two gestures were made: an investigation of charges against Consul Trist was ordered, and two cruisers instead of the customary one were sent to the West African coast. The investigation of Trist was a whitewash, but the commanders of the two American ships actually went further than the strict letter of their orders in cooperating with British ships.[40] In fact, in March, 1840, the

36. R. R. Madden, *A Letter to W. E. Channing, D.D., on the Subject of the Abuse of the Flag of the United States in the Island of Cuba, and the Advantage Taken of Its Protection in Promoting the Slave Trade* (Boston: William D. Ticknor, 1839), 3–9. Copies of documents with Trist's signature are to be found on pp. 30–32. *Senate Documents,* no. 125, 26 Cong., 2 sess., contains the charges against Trist.

37. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 439, Sept. 3, 1841; *Dictionary of National Biography,* XII, 739–740.

38. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 84, Aug. 14, 1839; Captain Richardson of Royal Navy to Birney, June, 1840, Birney Papers.

39. Antislavery convention to Palmerston, June 20, 1840, and Foreign Office to Fox, May 11, 1841, F.O. 84/376, PRO.

40. Milne, "The Slave Trade and Anglo-American Relations," 67–76. Warren S. Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law, 1837–1862* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1963), 33–36, has both sides of the question on Trist.

American commander, Lieutenant John Paine, entered into an agreement with the British captain, Tucker, that allowed for mutual detention of ships—an agreement repudiated by the U.S. government when it was acted upon by the British.[41]

The *Creole* contretemps revived American antagonism to any kind of British "interference." John Greenleaf Whittier reported to Joseph Sturge that "the New York *Herald* and other prints charge the whole of the abolition movement to the machinations of England," and that since Sturge had just been in the United States, his name was "pretty freely used" in the debates in Congress.[42] In January, 1842, John Quincy Adams presented an abolitionist petition calling for a dissolution of the Union, and for this presentation he was censured by his colleagues in the House of Representatives. In his speech in self-defense Adams charged that the American minister in London, Andrew Stevenson, was making false claims in international law that would get us into war with England to protect the slave trade. Thereupon Henry A. Wise of Virginia insisted that the proposal to dissolve the Union was really British-inspired. Great Britain had trained a black army in Jamaica, would next move to Cuba, and by skillfully opening commercial lines with the United States, would pave the way for a military landing "which at the first sound of the tocsin would pour in armies of trained free blacks upon the whole South."[43] Even at the moment, Wise continued, an abolitionist agent was in the gallery taking notes (Theodore Weld), and a "British monarchist" (Sturge) was trying to advise the United States on what it should do. The latter reference was equally applicable to Lord Morpeth, who also visited the United States in 1842, but Sturge was more suspect because he was a leader of the Complete Suffrage Movement in England, and his

41. Aberdeen to Everett, Dec. 20, 1841, F.O. 84/376, PRO.

42. Whittier to Sturge, [Jan. 21, 1842], typescript, Whittier-Taylor Mss. The dating was done by a former owner of the letter and may not be accurate. Internal evidence suggests that it was written late in 1842, after the conclusion of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, because he says, "The news of the late treaty in the slave trade has fallen like a thunder-bolt amidst the slavery party: they scarcely know what to try to do in reference to it."

43. *Congressional Globe*, 27 Cong., 2 sess., 169–171.

committee had sent an address to the Democratic party reproving their subservience to the slave power.[44]

Lord Morpeth happened to visit the House of Representatives on the day John Quincy Adams insisted on presenting a petition from Georgia asking for his removal from the chairmanship of the House Foreign Affairs Committee because of his abolitionism. Although the southerners had tried to stop him from any discussion of slavery, Adams insisted on the right to defend himself. So, according to Weld's report, "the Old Nestor lifted up his voice like a trumpet; till slaveholding, slave trading and slave breeding absolutely quailed and howled under his dissecting knife." Lord Morpeth listened, "beaming with delight as the old man breasted the storm and dealt his blows upon the head of the monster." [45] Later he described Adams as "a fine old gamecock." [46]

No wonder Lord Ashburton was afraid his whole treaty would be wrecked. He told Aberdeen he thought it would be advisable not to publicize the arguments demolishing Webster's stand in the *Creole* case because exciting the South more than necessary would only prejudice his own negotiations the more. In fact, Ashburton wished the judge in Nassau had refused to relinquish the *Creole* Africans without deeming it necessary to add the dictum that in this case murder was justified. Such statements, he told Aberdeen, were "precisely of a description to inflame one half the population of this continent." [47] To Webster, Ashburton explained that while British soil made free men, his country had no wish to interfere with the laws of other nations. He further tried to mollify the Secretary of State by promising that instructions would be sent to the British governors in the West Indies to refrain from any preventable provocations.[48]

To avoid the objections aroused by renewed negotiations in-

44. Sturge, *Memoirs*, 343.

45. Weld to Angelina Weld and Sarah Crimké, Jan. [23], 1842, in *Weld-Grimké Letters*, II, 897–901.

46. Earl of Carlisle [George William Frederick Howard, formerly Lord Morpeth], *Two Lectures, on the Poetry of Pope, and on His Own Travels in America* (Leeds: Edward Baines & Sons, 1850), 32.

47. Ashburton to Aberdeen, May 12, 1842, F.O. 5/379, PRO.

48. "Lord Ashburton's Suggestions to Mr. Webster on the Creole Case," enclosed in Ashburton to Aberdeen, May 12, 1842, F.O. 5/379, PRO.

volving search, Webster and the Tyler administration decided to substitute a joint cruising scheme. This was written into the Webster-Ashburton Treaty, signed in August, 1842. Each nation was to maintain on the coast of Africa a "sufficient and adequate" squadron of not less than eighty guns. Commanders would be instructed to act "in concert and cooperation" as exigencies arose. It was general enough to allow the modus vivendi under which Paine and Tucker had previously operated: ships of each country could cruise in pairs. Any ship stopped as a suspect could then be boarded by naval officers of its own nation. If the search revealed nothing to indicate the illegal trade, there would be no need to send her all the way home to be searched and tried.[49] The emphasis in the American interpretation as expressed by President Tyler was that this system would effectively bring to an end the repeated provocations over British seizures, visits, and searches, and it was this interpretation that made the clause acceptable to the American public.[50]

The African squadron did not prove effective. Indeed, to some extent it actually fostered a revival of the slave trade because it afforded a refuge from British search to non-American ships using the American flag illegally. Of course the British charged the Americans with lack of sincerity in their intentions, and abolitionists in both countries saw new evidence of the strength of the "slave power conspiracy."

When the British act of 1846 abolished sugar duties, the British market was thrown open to slave-grown sugar from Cuba and Brazil, thereby causing a rise in the demand for slaves in those countries and a subsequent impetus to the slave trade. The act produced repeated protests, both before and after passage,

49. *British and Foreign State Papers,* XXX, 360–367; *Writings and Speeches of Daniel Webster,* 18 vols. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1903), XII, 37.

50. *Congressional Globe,* 27 Cong., 3 sess., 331–336; Fox to Aberdeen, Jan. 24, 1843, F.O. 84/484, PRO. Instead of letting the sleeping dog lie, Robert Peel made a speech in Parliament asserting that the British had conceded nothing on the right to visit ships on the African coast. This aroused Thomas Hart Benton so much that he tried to get the Senate to cut out all appropriations for the African squadron from the naval bill. To silence Benton, Webster wrote an article for the *National Intelligencer* reminding the public that Benton had voted for the convention of 1824, which went much further on search.

from the abolitionists, who pointed out the foolish paradox of spending huge sums on naval operations against the slave trade while at the same time adopting a fiscal policy that promoted the trade.[51] On the question of the abolition of the sugar duties, most of the British abolitionists plainly put their antislavery principles ahead of their free-trade principles, for in this case free trade meant an increase in the slave trade.[52] In Parliament the abolitionist position was strongly supported by Sir Robert Inglis in Commons and by Lords Denman, Brougham, and Ashburton as well as Bishop Samuel Wilberforce in the House of Lords. All of them based their arguments on the "soulless materialism" of the case.[53] When it became known that British manufacturers of mining equipment in Brazil and the British-owned Imperial Brazilian Mining Company were conniving in the slave trade, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society sent repeated protests to Parliament. They also passed a solemn resolution that as abolitionists they could not accept money or become trustees of money obtained from shares in Brazilian mines.[54]

After 1850 the slave trade to Brazil ceased to be a great problem, owing partly to British exertions and partly to a change in Brazilian policy. But the Cuban trade continued to be a point of diplomatic dispute between the United States and Britain and continued to involve the antislavery people. American abolitionists looked with hope to the British rather than to their own government. "The world expects in this matter that England will do her duty," Lewis Tappan wrote, and he urged that the only

51. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 174–175, Apr. 12, 1844; 288, Feb. 21; 326, July 4, 1845; and 393, Mar. 27, 1846; *Non-Slaveholder,* Apr., 1846; John Scoble to Lord George Bentinet, M.P., June 13, 1846, Gurney Mss; memorial from British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society to Earl of Derby, First Lord of Treasury, Aug. 10, 1852, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, reprinted in *Christian Times,* Oct. 22, 1852.

52. C. Duncan Rice, "The Anti-Slavery Interest and the Sugar Duties, 1841–1853," in *The Transatlantic Slave Trade from West Africa* (Edinburgh: Center of African Studies, University of Edinburgh, 1965), privately distributed in duplicated form.

53. Pilgrim, "Anti-Slavery Sentiment in Great Britain, 1841–1854," 188.

54. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book I, 430–431, Aug. 13, 1841; II, 233, Aug. 31, 1844.

way the Cuban trade could be controlled was if Britain rigidly enforced her slave-trade treaty with Spain.[55]

As in Texas, though to a lesser degree, the problem was complicated by American investment and actual settlement in Cuba, thus increasing British suspicions of a concerted plan of control leading to annexation.[56] The Ostend Manifesto of 1854 seemed to corroborate this analysis. Americans, on the other hand, suspected that the British were "plotting" with the Spanish to free the slaves in Cuba. Presumably this would make the freedmen grateful and therefore loyal to Spain; since they would be a majority, an "Africanized" Cuba would resist falling into American hands.[57] Actually, this was exactly what the British abolitionists tried to bring about. They pressed their government to convince Spain that only through abolition could her control of the island be retained. In November, 1855, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society drafted a memorial to that effect and arranged an interview with the Spanish ambassador on the subject. In 1857 they persuaded Charles Buxton to bring the question of Cuban slavery before the House of Commons, and that body agreed to send an address to the queen concerning it.[58]

But as the British became involved in the Crimean War, they gradually withdrew their ships from the Caribbean, and the Americans actually became more conscientious against the slave trade. Although the British had long requested this of the United States, the action now was looked upon as a policy with an ulterior motive: to indict Spain and thus provide a justification for the seizure of Cuba. The way Lord Napier figured it out, the American scheme was to cut off the slave trade, thus cutting Cuba's labor supply. Since there were many fewer female than male slaves, natural increase would not suffice. This would lead to agitation and discontent among the planters, who would then

55. Tappan to [*British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter*], Jan. 8, 1853, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 308–313.

56. William L. Mathieson, *Great Britain and the Slave Trade, 1839–1865* (New York: Octagon Books, 1967), 126.

57. Crampton to Earl of Clarendon, Mar. 6, 1854, F.O. 84/948, PRO.

58. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Oct. 12, 1849, Nov. 2, 1855, Mar. 6, June 5, Aug. 6, 1857.

clamor for annexation. Annexation would open the slave markets of Virginia and Maryland to the Cubans, thus profiting the United States as well.[59]

Still another fear was that the African slave trade directly to the United States might be revived. After 1856 reports of British ministers in Washington and British consuls in the major American cities were filled with information about proposals openly voiced in many of the southern states and in their newspapers that the African trade ought to be reopened. Addresses attempting to expose the existing trade, such as that drawn up by the Philadelphia Quakers in 1857, seemed to have little if any impact. When the British voiced their fears and criticisms, the Americans' counterattack was that the importation of Chinese coolies into the British West Indies was virtually a reopening of the slave trade.[60]

In 1857 and 1858 the reappearance of British patrols in the Caribbean and an abrupt series of visitations of American ships, particularly in the Gulf of Mexico and in Cuban waters, brought the two nations dangerously close to serious trouble. The *New York Herald* called for war, and the Senate debates became contests to see who could use the most abusive language against the British.[61] Even such abolitionist congressmen as William H. Seward, John Hale, and Henry Wilson were caught up in the anti-British clamor. Only when the British Foreign Secretary decided it would be unwise to try to justify the British visits did the war spirit abate. The visits were blamed on the youth and inexperience of naval officers who had interpreted their orders

59. Lord Napier to Malmesbury, Jan. 24, 1859, F.O. 84/1084, PRO; Harral E. Landry, "Slavery and the Slave Trade in Atlantic Diplomacy, 1850–1861," *Journal of Southern History*, XXVII (1961), 184–207.

60. Thomas Evans for Society of Friends in Philadelphia, Aug. 7, Dec. 5, 1857, enclosed in Napier to Clarendon, Dec. 8, 1857, F.O. 84/1026; J. Saville Lumley to Clarendon, Oct. 14, Nov. 27, 30, 1856, F.O. 84/999; Napier to Clarendon, Oct. 22, 1857, F.O. 84/1026; Robert Bunch to Clarendon, Dec. 28, 1858, F.O. 84/948; and Bunch to Malmesbury, Jan. 20, 1859, F.O. 84/1086, all in PRO.

61. Napier to Malmesbury, May 31, 1858 (three letters of that date), F.O. 5/692, PRO; Richard W. Van Alstyne, "The British Right of Search and the African Slave Trade," *Journal of Modern History*, II (1930), 37–47. See Soulsby, *The Right of Search and the Slave Trade in Anglo-American Relations*, 106–117, on the role of Lewis Cass and French-English negotiations on search.

too liberally. In July, 1858, the British government finally and officially conceded that it did not have the right of search.[62]

The following year the British, French, and Americans reached an informal agreement to issue similar instructions to their ships' commanders covering the procedure to be used in boarding to ascertain another ship's identity. Now that the British had relinquished the right of search, the antislavery faction in Congress could finally press for energetic action without being accused of being British puppets, and Seward took the lead in calling for such steps. The Buchanan administration did restore, and even increase, the African squadron. But although arrests were made, it was virtually impossible to get juries, especially southern ones, to convict, knowing that the death penalty was mandatory. The British consul in Charleston asserted that the people were actually amused and pleased at the idea of embarrassing the federal government and annoying the British. But he predicted that they would wake up with a start when they realized their actions were breaking up the Democratic party and assuring a victory for the Republicans: "When this shall happen, the days of slavery are numbered." [63]

His words proved to be prophetic. On April 6, 1862, Lincoln's government signed a mutual search treaty that set up a system of mixed courts. Shortly before, also in 1862, the first American had been given the death penalty upon conviction of slave trading.[64]

62. Van Alstyne, "The British Right of Search and the African Slave Trade"; Landry, "Slavery and the Slave Trade in Atlantic Diplomacy"; Napier to Malmesbury, May 31, June 7, 1858, F.O. 5/692, PRO; *Congressional Globe*, 35 Cong., 1 sess., 2529–31, 2731–48.

63. Napier to Malmesbury, Jan. 8, 9, 18, 1859, F.O. 84/1084, PRO; Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law*, 59; Robert Bunch to Malmesbury, Jan. 12, 1859, F.O. 84/1086, PRO.

64. Lyons to Lord Russell, Apr. 7, 1862, and "Treaty between Her Majesty and the United States of America, for the Suppression of the African Slave Trade," F.O. 84/1171, PRO; Howard, *American Slavers and the Federal Law*, 201–202.

Sustaining the Cause: The 1850s

XV

The last decade before the Civil War saw little that was new in antislavery theory, argument, strategy, or tactics. It was largely a period in which the abolitionists continued to "fight the good fight" along lines laid down previously, but the major action was in arenas where the Anglo-American connection was of minor importance. The more such young Republican politicians as Chase, Seward, and Sumner came to symbolize antislavery political leadership, the more the old Liberty party abolitionists were thrust into the background and the less influence could be exerted, even indirectly, by the British antislavery groups. They watched with interest and dread the fight over slavery in the territories culminating in the civil war in Kansas, the Dred Scott decision, and the abortive raid at Harpers Ferry. But for the most part they felt themselves to be spectators rather than actors in these intense tragedies. Their voices were raised in both admonition and protest, but there was little they could do that was actually effective.

In the nonpolitical sphere the effectiveness of the Anglo-American connection was handicapped by the decentralization of the antislavery movement that accompanied the disintegration of the national antislavery organizations. In the United States Lewis Tappan and William Lloyd Garrison continued to head

two factions, but many of the earlier leaders had died or were no longer active. John Scoble, G. W. Alexander, and Louis Chamerovzow were largely responsible for managing the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, while George Thompson continued to represent the British Garrisonians along with John B. Estlin of Bristol and the Webbs of Dublin. But a great deal of energy was dissipated in fighting one another rather than in a common attack on slavery.

Yet despite the handicaps of not having strong organizations to work through, and of not being able to control the political trend within the United States, the Anglo-American connection flourished as far as individual personal contacts were concerned. It plodded along in many of the old avenues—exchanges of publications and lecturers, economic boycotts of slave-produced goods, and pressures on the churches. Antislavery "missions" from America to England to insure both monetary and moral support seemed to increase, if anything, and Harriet Beecher Stowe's visit alone stirred up a flurry of emotion on the slavery question the like of which had not been aroused by any previous American traveler or writer. As noted in the two previous chapters, British abolitionists did believe their contribution to be significant in providing a haven for fugitive slaves and in their sustained assault on the slave trade.

The decade opened with the fugitive-slave issue uppermost in antislavery thinking as the result of the passage of the new law as part of the Compromise of 1850. Emotion over the danger to free blacks and fugitive slaves was heightened by the recent rash of arrests of abolitionists who had tried to help fugitives.[1] Charles Torrey died in a Baltimore jail in 1846 because he steadfastly refused to promise that he would abstain from further aid to fugitives if released. Jonathan Walker was branded with the initials "S.S." when arrested for slave stealing. Alanson Work, George Thompson, and James E. Burr were confined to a Missouri prison for their aid to runaways, and in 1850 W. L.

1. Fred Landon, "The Negro Migration to Canada after the Passing of the Fugitive Slave Act," *Journal of Negro History*, V (Oct., 1920), 22–36; Landon, "The Anti-Slavery Society of Canada," *ibid.*, IV (Jan., 1919), 33–40; *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass*, 347–348.

Chaplin was arrested in Maryland. All of these cases were well known in England; the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society passed resolutions of sympathy to be circulated to stimulate contributions to fight their cases in court. After Torrey's death money was sent to help succor his widow and children.[2] A Mr. E. T. Quant of Braintree Academy in Essex, who had, according to his account, spent many a night in the woods with fugitives, embarked on an illustrated lecture tour to persuade Englishmen to sign memorials to send to America.[3]

Monetary contributions were sent to the settlements in Canada for refugees: Wilberforce, for which Nathaniel Paul had collected funds while in Great Britain in the 1830s, and Dawn, which grew up around the British-American Institute, a manual labor school established by Hiram Wilson, Josiah Henson, and James Cannings Fuller. Fuller and Henson both went to Great Britain to raise part of their money.[4] When the Dawn enterprise continued to suffer financial difficulties, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society agreed to send John Scoble on a trip of investigation in 1851, and hearings were conducted on the expenditures of money that had been donated. The upshot was that Scoble was made the manager in 1852, a move that involved the Canadian settlements in the old Garrison-Tappan factional feuds. Despite continued bickering and constant indebtedness, Scoble remained at Dawn until after the American Civil War, when the British-American Institute was abandoned.[5]

Stories portraying the tragedies and agonies of fugitives were

2. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 251, Nov. 1, 1844; 279, Jan. 17; 287, Feb. 21, 1845; 413, May 29; and 420, June 19, 1846; Lewis Tappan to G. W. Alexander, Feb. 23, 1847, Tappan Papers. See the *London Patriot* as well as the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter* throughout the early 1850s for continuing coverage of fugitive cases.

3. Quant to Mr. Bolton, Sept. 24, Dec. 15, 1852, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

4. Pease, *Black Utopia,* 60, 63–64; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Jan. 3, 1851.

5. Pease, *Black Utopia,* 76–81; Tappan to Scoble, June 19, 1857, and to Sturge, Jan. 14, 1848, Tappan Papers. Tappan was of the opinion that while both Henson and Wilson were good men, neither of them had good business judgment. This view is supported by Robin W. Winks in his introduction to *An Autobiography of the Reverend Josiah Henson* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1969), xiii.

always a standard part of antislavery literature, and in the summer of 1850 an exhibit in Leicester Square in London included a series of views showing slaves en route to Canada and a recaptured slave in irons.[6] An address to the British people on American slavery was prepared for the Great Exhibition of Industry and Art in 1851, 10,000 copies of which were distributed by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society.[7] Josiah Henson set up a display of beautifully planed and polished black walnut lumber to show the skills developed by the settlers at Dawn, and his presence to explain the exhibit was a pointed reminder that British Canadian soil was the land of hope to American slaves.[8] James G. Birney penned a bitter piece for publication in which he suggested that America send to the London exhibition samples of blacks, mulattoes, quadroons, and slaves of various shades of color, in order to demonstrate the nation's "industry, genius and skill in the process of bleaching."[9]

Great Britain remained a haven for escaped slaves, who were effective antislavery workers and drew large audiences as lecturers. A few, of whom Frederick Douglass was the most outstanding, had visited Britain in the 1830s and 1840s. The arrival of several more just at the time of the passage of the fugitive-slave law of 1850 awakened sympathies anew. Two of these were William Wells Brown and Henry Highland Garnet. Brown, after making his own escape, had worked for years on a steamer on the Great Lakes, in which job he helped numerous fugitives reach Canada.[10] His writings, his lectures, his intelligence, dramatized again the viciousness of a system in which men could be claimed as chattels. One can understand his delight in recounting how an American, who on the ship over with him had held forth on the

6. *British Friend,* July 1, 1850; *Liberty Bell,* 1848; *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Nov. 30, 1842. Dickens wrote of "those owners, breeders, users, buyers and sellers of slaves, who will, until the bloody chapter has a bloody end, own, breed, use, buy, and sell them at all hazards. . . ." See Charles Dickens, *Pictures from Italy. And American Notes for General Circulation* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1862), 413.

7. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Apr. 4, 1851. The address was prepared by Samuel Bowley of Gloucester.

8. *Autobiography of Josiah Henson,* 100–101.

9. Fladeland, *Birney,* 282–283.

10. Dumond, *Antislavery,* 334.

inferiority of "niggers," suddenly became quite cordial at the Peace Congress in Paris when he saw Brown conversing with Victor Hugo and Richard Cobden. While Brown was in England, the *Anti-Slavery Advocate* published serially his *Narrative of American Slavery*, later incorporated into the book *Three Years in* Europe. Before he left in 1854 he had traveled over 20,000 miles and given over 1,000 lectures. Money, meanwhile, had been raised to ransom him, and he was able to return to America a free man.[11]

Henry Garnet had escaped with his family from slavery in 1824 while still a child, managed to get an excellent education that included study with Beriah Green at Oneida Institute, and became pastor of a Presbyterian church in Troy, New York. Of all the black abolitionist leaders, Garnet was among the most militant. At a convention in Buffalo in 1843 he had called for a slave revolt. "If you must bleed," he cried, "let it all come at once—rather *die freemen than live to be slaves.*" [12] While in England he was successful in raising money to help free others still in slavery.[13]

Two more recent fugitives than Brown and Garnet were William and Ellen Craft, who had escaped from Georgia. Being an octoroon, Mrs. Craft dressed as a man and posed as the white master of her husband, who drove her off in a carriage to catch a train to freedom. They stayed in Boston until the 1850 Fugitive Slave Act was passed, and when officers were sent from Georgia to seize them, they decided to put an ocean between themselves and such danger. In England they went to Ockham School and did so well that they were offered the positions of superintendent and matron of the industrial department. But they elected instead to open a lodging house where William could also continue his trade as a cabinet maker. In 1852 they rejoiced that their first child was born on free soil.[14]

11. Brown to Garrison, Oct. 12, 1849, Aug. 29, 1854, in *Journal of Negro History*, X (July, 1925), 539–543, 546–547; *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Nov., Dec., 1852, Feb., 1853.

12. Quoted in Dumond, *Antislavery*, 331–333.

13. *Non-Conformist* (London), Nov. 17, 1852.

14. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Jan., 1854; letters from William and Ellen Craft in *Journal of Negro History*, X (July, 1925), 446–448.

Still another fugitive in England at the time of the passage of the 1850 act, and who was afraid to go home, was James W. C. Pennington. His case was used as a basis of protest at a Congregational Union meeting in 1852 at which resolutions were adopted against the American law and in support of those who refused to obey it. Lewis Tappan wrote Scoble to inquire what the possibilities were of Pennington's taking an oath to the British government. If he did, and then on his return to the United States was seized as a slave, would the British claim and protect him? Not being sure such a plan would work, and afraid to risk the gamble, they decided instead to raise the money to purchase Pennington's freedom.[15]

In 1853 the Ladies' Society to Aid Fugitives was organized in London to help destitute refugees from American slavery who arrived on British shores.[16] Although there is no record of how many recipients there were, the fact that such an organization was deemed necessary indicates that there were probably more than the ones we can name.

John Candler and G. W. Alexander of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society were on their way home from an investigation trip to the West Indies when the Compromise of 1850 was being debated in Congress. They attended sessions regularly to hear the debates and there made contact with the antislavery Senators Salmon P. Chase and John P. Hale and Representatives Joshua Giddings, William Slade, and Horace Mann. Representative Walter Underhill of Pennsylvania escorted them to the White House to meet President Taylor, and they used the occasion to try to impress him with their report on the good results of emancipation in the West Indies. William H. Seward was among those who entertained the British travelers, and Gamaliel Bailey held a "soirée" in their honor.[17] Bailey had recently been called from Cincinnati to Washington to edit the *National Era*, which was set up as an organ of political abolitionism. Donations and subscrip-

15. *Christian Times* (London), Oct. 29, 1852; Tappan to Scoble, Apr. 3, 1851, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 258–260; Dumond, *Antislavery*, 334.

16. *Ladies' Society to Aid Fugitives from Slavery* (London: R. Barrett, 1855).

17. John Candler, "West Indies Journal, 1849–1850," Mss vol. S.22, Friends House Library.

tions from the British had been important in its establishment. A generous gift from Joseph Sturge, for example, had made it possible for John Greenleaf Whittier to buy a small farm and to be hired to write for the *National Era* at $500 a year.[18]

Once Candler and Alexander were back in England, a large public meeting was called to welcome them and to make an occasion for expressing indignation over passage of the Fugitive Slave Act. Resolutions of protest were drawn up by the Broad Street Committee, were published in the English papers, and copies were sent to Lewis Tappan to use in the United States at his discretion.[19] In December, 1850, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society wrote to Lord Palmerston reiterating its stand on the imprisonment of colored British seamen in southern ports and pointing out the danger of "unprincipled men from the South" trying to reclaim fugitives in Canada. They asked that he send such instructions to Canada "as shall effectively protect the fugitive slaves, who may seek an asylum under the British Crown." [20]

With the passage of the odious new law, both American and British abolitionists once more revived discussions of the "higher law" doctrine. They insisted that God's law, which embodied the principle of the golden rule and the philosophy of aiding one's suffering brother, should have precedence over man-made laws, which were fallible. It quickly became as dangerous for southern agents to go into the North to recapture runaways as it was for abolitionists to go into the South to aid them to escape. In the northern states a rash of "personal liberty laws" forbade state officials to aid federal agents in recaptures.

This new climate of opinion in the North is evidenced by the welcome given George Thompson, who decided to make a second trip from England. For the most part he was cordially, or at least quietly, received, although in Springfield, Massachusetts,

18. Tappan to Sturge, Oct. 31, 1846, Jan. 30, Apr. 30, 1847, Sept. 17, 1849, Tappan Papers. British money also helped establish the *Louisville Examiner* to print antislavery materials. See Tappan to G. W. Alexander, Jan. 14, 1848, Tappan Papers.

19. Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 253–254nn; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Oct. 4, Nov. 1, 1850.

20. Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 266–267nn.

there was some stirring of the old antagonism. There effigies of Thompson and of John Bull were hanged in the Court Square, and the meeting place had to be changed because of noisy demonstrators who threw eggs and mud. But in other places he was greeted by large, enthusiastic crowds, and a meeting in his honor was held in Faneuil Hall, a reception in marked contrast to that of 1835, when he had literally been stoned out of the country by hostile mobs.[21] The new Fugitive Slave Act probably awakened more sympathy for the antislavery movement than anything the abolitionists themselves could have said or done, and they capitalized on it by dramatizing every case that arose.

An antislavery visitor in 1849–1850 who greatly disappointed American abolitionists was Father Theobald Mathew of Ireland, the "Apostle of Temperance." He had won the friendship of several of the American leaders at the world antislavery conventions of the 1840s and had joined Daniel O'Connell in an address to the American Irish urging them to unite with the abolitionists. Now he chose to speak only for the cause of temperance, despite overtures made by both Tappan and Garrison. Even the U.S. Congress presumed he would openly attack slavery, and quite a debate waged over whether or not he should be allowed to "sit within the bar of the Senate." Jefferson Davis, speaking against granting the favor, reminded his colleagues of the earlier address Mathew had signed as part of the seed of "domestic contention and dissension . . . sown by British emissaries." Jefferson Davis lost the argument with Seward and Hale but may have helped to scare Father Mathew into maintaining his silent role.[22]

A big stir arose in 1851 over another prominent visitor, Louis Kossuth, whom British abolitionists had tried to convince to speak out as forcibly for the rights of the oppressed slaves as he had for his oppressed Hungarian countrymen. Since they had been generous with donations to him, they felt justified in applying

21. *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Feb., 1854; Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society, *Twentieth Annual Report . . . January 28, 1852* (Boston: Prentiss & Sawyer, 1852).

22. *Congressional Globe,* 31 Cong., 1 sess., XXII, pt. I, 51–59; Tappan to Father Theobald Mathew, Nov. 4, 1847, Tappan Papers; *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Jan., 1854; Mary S. Wood to [?], July 22, 1850, Wood Collection.

such pressure. Richard Webb, a leading Dublin abolitionist, wrote to the mayor of Southampton to recommend that Kossuth be briefed on the slavery controversy so that "he should not withhold his indignant protest against the oppression practiced in the United States." James Haughton, another Dubliner, begged Kossuth not to go to the United States so long as slavery was perpetuated there. The Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society addressed Kossuth directly as a champion of liberty, "humbly entreating" him to use his advantageous position to plead the cause of the slave. Similar letters were written from both the Glasgow Emancipation Society and the Glasgow Female Anti-Slavery Society. The *British Friend* called on him to give faithful testimony and not to copy Father Mathew, who had betrayed the cause.[23]

The abolitionists attacked Kossuth by contrasting his failure to take a stand with Daniel O'Connell's vociferous one. In 1833 O'Connell had declared that he would never pollute his foot by treading on American soil so long as it was tarnished by slavery. In 1835 he had called for a black O'Connell who would "AGITATE AGITATE" until his fellow sufferers learned their strength. And in 1838 he had recommended that no slaveholder who visited Europe should be received socially. Thomas Clarkson was also quoted as saying that Lafayette had told him he would never have drawn his sword in the American Revolution had he thought he was helping to found a nation of slavery.[24] Despite such attacks, Kossuth refused to "meddle" in the domestic concerns of the United States. From the abolitionist point of view he had "bowed before the slave power of America." [25]

Two years after the passage of the new Fugitive Slave Act Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* burst upon the antislavery scene with an electrifying effect. Its sentimental, overly romantic style and its pious overtones were in exactly

23. *British Friend,* Dec. 1, 1851; Richard Webb to Richard Andrews, Nov. 17, 1851, and Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society to Kossuth, Nov. 18, 1851, in American Anti-Slavery Society, *Letter to Louis Kossuth Concerning Freedom and Slavery in the United States* (Boston: R. F. Walcut, 1852).

24. American Anti-Slavery Society, *Letter to Louis Kossuth.*

25. *British Friend,* Feb. 1, 1852.

the right combination to appeal to the general public of the time. Its dramatic scenes of Eliza with her child escaping across the Ohio River, and other fugitives fleeing by night on the Underground Railway, imbued the Fugitive Slave Act with flesh and blood and a sense of terrifying reality. Overnight it was a best seller in the United States, even in the South where it was denounced and banned, and in England its circulation passed the million mark within eight months. It was made into stage plays, illustrated in pictures and wood carvings for sale, and set to music of various types.[26] Poems appeared by the dozen. One of them, "Thoughts on 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,'" written by Anna Croom of Edinburgh especially for the Boston antislavery bazaar, was typical:

> O! who can read with tearless eye
> These annals of the slave?
> And stand unmoved by Eva's couch,
> Or Uncle Tom's lone grave?
> In vain we clear the misty sight
> And quell the choking sob with might,
> And bid our hearts be brave.[27]

Another, called "Topsy, or the Slave Girl's Appeal," sent to the same bazaar, went on in a similar vein for twenty-seven stanzas.[28]

Quakers, who ordinarily frowned on the reading of novels, found ways to bypass their own strictures by arguing that this one was built on fact and was therefore to be considered in a different light.[29] Lord Palmerston admitted that although he had not read a novel in thirty years, he read Mrs. Stowe's through three times.[30] The reviewer for the *Christian Times* of London confessed that he approached the book with skepticism, believing it must be overrated, especially since its author was a woman, and then found himself carried away with emotion. He

26. Frank J. Klingberg, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Social Reform in England," *American Historical Review*, XLIII (1937–1938), 542–552.

27. *British Friend*, Nov. 1, 1852.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*, Apr. 1, 1853.

30. Forrest Wilson, *Crusader in Crinoline: The Life of Harriet Beecher Stowe* (Philadelphia: J. Lippincott, 1941), 328.

praised not only its antislavery message but its Christian content in presenting the faith and martyrdom of its characters. Everyone, he concluded, was reading it—from the boy in the London streets to country villagers. The London *Times,* although anti-abolitionist as usual, admitted it was to be seen in every railway station and in the hands of every third traveler.[31] Lord Morpeth, now the earl of Carlisle, wrote a preface for one of the London editions reminding British readers that they must be careful about throwing stones at Americans since Englishmen had established slavery in the colonies. At the same time, by aid to American abolitionists, they must let the United States know how the country appeared in the eyes of the rest of the world.[32]

One way to let Americans know was suggested by Lord Shaftesbury at a meeting at Stafford House, the London home of the duchess of Sutherland, long-time patroness of the antislavery cause. His idea was that the ladies of Great Britain—high and low—should send an "affectionate and Christian address" to their sisters in America. He composed it, it was signed by an initial group of ladies prominent in the social world, and then it was circulated by agents in all parts of the realm for additional signatures. When it was received by Mrs. Stowe, it bore 562,448 names and was proudly displayed at the Boston antislavery bazaar as well as printed widely in abolitionist journals.

The address definitely reflected concern over the fugitive-slave law and approved the "higher law" doctrine: ". . . we cannot be silent on those laws of your country which, in direct contravention of God's own law, 'instituted in the time of man's innocency,' deny in effect to the slave the sanctity of marriage . . . rights and obligations. . . ." It acknowledged that Britain shared in the guilt of establishing slavery in America, and "it is because we so deeply feel and unfeignedly avow our own complicity,

31. *Christian Times,* Oct. 22, 1852; *Times* (London), Sept. 3, 1852.

32. Unidentified clipping, Lieber Papers. In 1843, when Maria Weston Chapman tried to elicit a contribution for the *Liberty Bell* from Lord Morpeth, he had declined her invitation on the grounds that it might only aggravate the difficulties of the cause: "If a foreign chime should be detected in the peal of the *Liberty Bell,* I know not what startling echoes it might not awaken." Actually, Morpeth, like Clarkson, was reluctant to give anyone grounds for thinking he was in the Garrison camp. See *Liberty Bell,* 1843; *British Friend,* Jan. 31, 1843.

that we now venture to implore your aid to wipe away our common crime and our common dishonour." [33] Only a few of the "old abolitionist" ladies objected to the address because one statement admitted the difficulties and dangers of immediate emancipation. They feared this left a loophole for America.[34]

In Glasgow the New Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society and the New Association for the Abolition of Slavery cooperated in inviting Mrs. Stowe to visit Great Britain at their expense. Even in this matter, however, the factional schism within the antislavery movement had its repercussions. Before Mrs. Stowe could accept their invitation, Garrison hastened to warn her: these "new" Glasgow societies were secessionist groups that had split away from the old society on "narrow and bigoted grounds." The old society, of course, was Garrisonian. He sent her pamphlets to enlighten her on the subject, and he begged her to give them careful attention lest she be made the "catspaw" of the Glasgow societies.

Although Mrs. Stowe had not been actively associated with either of the abolitionist factions in America, she seems to have inclined toward the Garrisonians. At least she decided to decline the offer of free passage to Glasgow and instead sailed for Liverpool. Before leaving the United States, she visited Garrison and was, presumably, given his version of the factional squabble.

While in the British Isles she was careful to steer a neutral course, and she should be given some credit for bringing about at least a show of unity between the groups while she was there. Eagerness to capitalize on her popularity carried over to the considerable number of American abolitionists who were in Great Britain at the same time.[35] William Wells Brown, Henry Highland Garnet, and the Crafts were still there. Other black abolitionist leaders included the Reverend Samuel R. Ward of

33. Wilson, *Crusader in Crinoline*, 341–342; *British Friend*, Mar. 1, 1853; *Non-Conformist*, Dec. 1, 1853; Annie Fields, ed., *Life and Letters of Harriet Beecher Stowe* (Boston: Riverside Press, 1898), 148.

34. *British Friend*, Mar. 1, 1853; Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book, Dec. 17, 1852, Estlin Papers, microfilm, Morris Library, Southern Illinois University, originals in Dr. Williams Library, London.

35. Sarah Pugh to Mary Estlin, Mar. 7, 1853, Estlin Papers, 2206/3; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, June 3, 1853.

Canada and Professor William G. Allen of Central College in McGrawsville, New York, who had escaped to England after an attempt to lynch him for marrying a white woman.[36] Mrs. Follen, the widow of the Reverend Charles Follen, who had been one of the earlier workers in the organized antislavery movement, was traveling with her daughter and two other young ladies, Susan Cabot and Sarah Pugh. J. Miller McKim, James Freeman Clarke, and Elihu Burritt were also on hand.[37] Since the Stowes had not been considered "real" abolitionists at home but were now being lionized as abolition personified, their compatriots could not always refrain from needling. At a great meeting in Exeter Hall the Reverend Samuel Ward made the Reverend Calvin Stowe squirm by centering his speech very pointedly on the hypocritical stance of American churches and ministers.[38]

Highlighting all of the entertaining was a dinner given by the duchess of Sutherland at which Mrs. Stowe was presented with a gold bracelet made in the form of a slave shackle with the inscription "We trust it is a memorial of a chain that is soon to be broken." On two of the links were the dates of the abolition of the slave trade and of slavery in the British territories. Years later she added the date of the 13th Amendment to the American Constitution. Even Queen Victoria wanted to receive Mrs. Stowe, and probably would have, had not the American minister interposed with a warning that such a reception would

36. William G. Allen, *The American Prejudice against Color: An Authentic Narrative, Showing How Easily the Nation Got into an Uproar* (London: W. F. & G. Cash, 1853); Samuel R. Ward, *Autobiography of a Fugitive Negro: His Anti-Slavery Labours in the United States, Canada, and England* (London: John Snow, 1855).

37. *Weld-Grimké Letters*, II, 811–812nn; *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Jan., Feb., 1853; William G. Allen to Garrison, June 20, 1853, in *Journal of Negro History*, X (July, 1925), 468–471; Wilson, *Crusader in Crinoline*, 367; *London Morning Chronicle*, May 24, 1853.

38. William Wells Brown to Garrison, May 17, 1853, in *Journal of Negro History*, X (July, 1925), 544–545. Mrs. Stowe's supporters made much of her using her influence to help an American Negro girl, a former slave named Elizabeth Greenfield, to launch a career as a concert singer in London. See *London Morning Chronicle*, May 24, 1853.

be interpreted in the United States as official British sanction of the abolitionist movement.[39]

Of course there were criticisms leveled at Mrs. Stowe and at the adulation bestowed on her. An inevitable point of contention in both the United States and Great Britain was that the English should pay more attention to the problems of their own poor working classes and less to those of the American slave. The London *Times* called the Stafford House address an "unblushing piece of international busybodying." To it Mrs. Stowe was just "one of a family of agitators." [40] In the United States Mrs. Tyler, wife of the former president, answered the address by retorting with ill-concealed temper that the duchess of Sutherland should mind the poor in her own country.[41] Mrs. Stowe was advised to investigate how the duchess of Sutherland and the other aristocrats with whom she hobnobbed treated their servants and tenants. One of the bitterest critics was Donald McLeod, who claimed he had been persecuted for championing the cause of tenants evicted from the Sutherland estates. When Mrs. Stowe wrote *Sunny Memories of Foreign Lands* after her return home, in which she praised the duchess of Sutherland for benevolent use of her wealth, McLeod replied with the charge that if *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was based on the same kind of evidence, it could not be believed. In his poem "The Hireling and the Slave" the southern poet William J. Grayson named the duchess of Sutherland specifically while mocking the hypocrisy of British abolitionists generally.[42]

39. I have relied on Wilson, Fields, and Shepperson for the facts of Mrs. Stowe's visit. See George Shepperson, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Scotland," *Scottish Historical Review*, XXXII, no. 113 (Apr., 1953), 40–46. The *Morning Chronicle* for Apr. 18, 1853, gives a detailed account of the "grand soirée" in Glasgow.

40. *Times* (London), Sept. 3, 1852; Wilson, *Crusader in Crinoline*, 342.

41. *Christian Times*, Feb. 25, 1853; *London Patriot*, Jan. 20, 1853; Klingberg, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Social Reform in England"; *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Mar., 1853. The *Courier and New York Inquirer* published what was purportedly a reply by American women in a similar vein to Mrs. Tyler's acrimonious reaction. The *Times* printed it as authentic, but the *Patriot* denounced it as concocted because there were no signatures through which it could be traced.

42. Klingberg, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Social Reform in England"; Shepperson, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Scotland"; *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Feb., Oct.,

When Mrs. Stowe had a dress made in London, she was accused of contributing to white slave labor because the sewing was "pieced out" to sewers in the slums.[43] Calvin Stowe's attack on a Scottish weaver who compared slave conditions favorably with the conditions in Scottish factories was thought to have contributed to the poor turnout at a soirée in Glasgow, supposed to be given in the Stowes' honor by working people.[44] Professor Klingberg has concluded that in the long run, however, Mrs. Stowe and the antislavery crusade helped the British workers become conscious of the value of American propaganda and counterpropaganda which could be used in their own cause. By aligning and channeling British sympathy for the slave into sympathy for the workers at home, they built up more support for themselves.[45]

Another criticism of Mrs. Stowe concerned the handling of the money collected and given to her for the abolition cause. In addition to lump-sum gifts at big meetings in London, Edinburgh, and Dublin, and £2,000 raised by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, the "Uncle Tom Penny Offering" brought in thousands of dollars. This fund originated out of a suggestion that since Mrs. Stowe would not collect royalties on the English publications of her novel, each reader should contribute one penny to a fund to help the slaves. Response was overwhelming. In one meeting in Edinburgh alone they collected over £1,000; in Birmingham a central committee of trustees was set up composed of the earl of Carlisle, Sir E. N. Buxton, Samuel Gurney, and Joseph Sturge. When Mrs. Stowe left for America, she carried with her almost £20,000 in gifts.[46] Actually, Mrs. Stowe's publishers were so overwhelmed with her best seller that they did

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1853; William J. Grayson, "The Hireling and the Slave," in Eric L. McKitrick, ed., *Slavery Defended: The Views of the Old South* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 57–68.

43. Fields, ed., *Life and Letters of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, 199.

44. Shepperson, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Scotland."

45. Klingberg, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Social Reform in England."

46. Nassau W. Senior, *American Slavery: A Reprint of an Article on "Uncle Tom's Cabin" . . . and of Mr. Sumner's Speech on the 19th and 20th of May, 1856 . . .* (London: T. Fellowes, [1862]); Wilson, *Crusader in Crinoline*, 371; *British Friend*, Dec. 1, 1852.

respond to her request to contribute to a project she had in mind for establishing teacher training schools for blacks in the United States and Canada.[47]

While the money was being collected in England, the editors of the *Anti-Slavery Advocate* expressed their opinion that the penny fund should go to the antislavery associations already in existence rather than to Mrs. Stowe personally, who, until the success of her novel, had taken no part in the abolition movement.[48] Mrs. Stowe responded that the antislavery cause was too divided; since she could not please everybody, she would retain the option to exercise her own judgment as to where and how the money should be used. But in a letter to Joseph Sturge she spelled out the priorities she had in mind: first, to distribute antislavery literature in the South "to hasten to maturity the movements set in motion" by her own writings; and second, to aid the efforts of colored people to help themselves in the way of schools, newspapers, and other agencies of education. She hoped to draw out contributions in America to match those of the British "penny offering."[49]

Although in later years Mrs. Stowe said she had used the money to educate former slaves, no detailed record or itemized account was ever published, and doubts persisted as to whether or not the fund had contributed to anything more than the author's own profit. Julia Griffiths, who came from England to the United States to help Frederick Douglass edit the *North Star*, wrote in 1857 that "untold wealth had been poured into the lap of Mrs. Stowe"; she noted that there were inquiries about how it had been spent.[50] Moses Sheppard, a peppery colonizationist of Baltimore, wrote his young physician-protégé, Samuel McGill, in Liberia that "Garrison has made a living, and Mrs. Stowe a fortune out of the cause of the colored race." In a later letter in 1855 he reported that Mrs. Stowe's book was hardly mentioned

47. Fields, ed., *Life and Letters of Harriet Beecher Stowe*, 176–177; *British Friend*, Nov. 1, 1852.

48. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Jan., 1853.

49. Harriet Beecher Stowe to Joseph Sturge and Mrs. Sturge, Nov. 9, n.y., Misc. Mss, Friends Historical Library.

50. Wilson, *Crusader in Crinoline*, 371; Julia Griffiths to Lewis Tappan, Aug. 4, 1857, Tappan Papers.

"except an occasional paragraph in which her colored friends grumble at her not giving them the money."[51] While colonizationists generally had been pleased that Mrs. Stowe sent her fictional fugitive slaves to Liberia, they bemoaned the fact that British aid, stirred up over enthusiasm for the book, was not donated to their cause. Elliott Cresson thought that England was "besotted" with Mrs. Stowe and would listen to no one else.[52] His own rejection in Great Britain probably still rankled.

Mrs. Stowe's visit particularly stimulated renewed activity on the part of the women's societies, and this new zeal found an avenue of expression in the preparation of articles to be sent to the antislavery bazaars held annually by American women. The Boston ladies in particular built up these annual fairs to the point where they became a real success financially as well as in giving publicity to the cause. For example, the twenty-third national antislavery bazaar of 1856–1857 made $5,250. The Boston bazaar regularly made enough to become the chief sustainer of the *National Anti-Slavery Standard,* edited by Mrs. Child.[53] Rivalry between the Garrisonians and the Tappanites found them vying for British articles to sell at their fairs, and each group made sure the identities were publicized lest unwitting donors help the wrong faction.[54]

Mrs. Stowe returned to Great Britain in 1856 and again in 1859, but the triumphal success of her 1853 visit was never repeated. While it is impossible to measure her contribution to Anglo-American antislavery cooperation, there is no doubt that she inspired renewed zeal and dedication and thereby helped to sustain it up to the American Civil War.

During the 1850s the rate of antislavery publications was well sustained. The *National Era,* representing the political abolitionists in the United States, had a circulation of close to 30,000 and

51. Sheppard to McGill, Dec. 15, 1853, Jan. 28, 1854, Apr. 10, 1855, Moses Sheppard Collection, Friends Historical Library.

52. Cresson to Hodgkin, May 19, Dec. 26, 1853, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

53. *Report of the Twenty-third National Anti-Slavery Bazaar* (Boston: B. Yerrington & Sons, 1857); *British Friend,* Oct. 1, 1857.

54. Tappan to Lydia Sturge, n.d., Misc. Mss, Friends Historical Library.

was supplemented by Douglass's *North Star*, which also now spoke for that group. The *National Anti-Slavery Standard* and the *Liberator* were the two most important voices of the Garrison wing in the East, and in Ohio there was the *Anti-Slavery Bugle.* In 1846 the *Non-Slaveholder* had been established to support the cause of the free-labor produce movement. It was edited by Abraham L. Pennock, Samuel Rhoads, and George Taylor and was published in Philadelphia, largely with the backing of Friends there.[55]

In Great Britain Dr. John B. Estlin of Bristol financed a monthly journal that was published in London by William Tweedie as the organ of the Anglo-American Anti-Slavery Association. Called the *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, it carried the activities of both political and nonpolitical abolitionists in America and reviewed publications of both groups.[56] Its editorial policy, however, was distinctly Garrisonian, and Sarah Pugh of that group wrote to Estlin of her joy at the establishment of an antislavery newspaper in London "not overshadowed by the horrid Broad St. Committee."[57] Estlin seems to have been genuinely trying to promote a restoration of cooperation between the rival factions, and in his own book, *A Brief Notice of American Slavery, and the Abolition Movement*, he publicized the works of both sides.[58] After Estlin's death in 1855 the *Advocate* was moved to Dublin, where Richard and Hannah Webb took over its editorship.

Events such as the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott decision, and John Brown's raid at Harpers Ferry received a great deal of space and attention in the *Anti-Slavery Advocate.* In one of the earliest issues, in 1852, the editors noted that intercourse between the Old World and the New was increasing so rapidly that "the Atlantic may be said to be crossed by a bridge of boats."[59] It was becoming increasingly impossible for the British to stay aloof from the American antislavery problem.

55. *Non-Slaveholder*, I–V (1846–1850); n.s., I (1853).

56. *British Friend*, Nov. 1, 1852; *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Oct., 1852.

57. Sarah Pugh to Mr. and Miss Estlin, June 14, 1852, Estlin Papers.

58. John B. Estlin, *A Brief Notice of American Slavery, and the Abolition Movement* (Bristol, 1840).

59. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Nov., 1852.

The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society continued to express its view through the *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* while the *Friend* (Philadelphia) and the *British Friend* (London) reflected Quaker opinion.[60] On the other hand, a little paper that folded in the 1850s because its American sources of material "dried up" was the *Slave,* a modest publication put out by Henry Richardson and his wife in Newcastle upon Tyne. It had emphasized the free-produce movement.[61] Both the *Anti-Slavery Advocate* and the *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* reorganized as a monthly, were born out of the excitement stirred by Mrs. Stowe's visit, and both reflected the trend toward reconciliation of the British factions. Just as the *Advocate* reported political abolitionist activities while supporting the nonpolitical Garrisonian approach editorially, the new *Reporter* announced that it would contain a "faithful and impartial record" of all activities in the United States. To show their good faith, the editors began by reporting on the Garrisonians then lecturing in England. "How strange it seems," exclaimed Sarah Pugh, "to come into friendly relationships with anyone connected with the *Reporter.*" Its editors had begun speaking kindly even of George Thompson and of Garrison himself.[62]

In appreciation of the new brotherly spirit, the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society adopted a resolution in April, 1853, applauding this enlarged and liberal policy and announced that "this committee desires to record the pleasure it experiences at again coming into sympathy with the important Society with which it once had a more formal connection."[63] At the same time

60. Evidently the *Reporter* reached some readers in the South despite the bans on "incendiary" material. In 1850 Governor James Hammond of South Carolina wrote to Lewis Tappan that he had dropped all antislavery papers but wished to continue the *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter.* In a letter to Louis Chamerovzow Tappan gave instructions to send Hammond's bill to him if it had not been paid. Both letters are in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 255–256, 362–363.

61. Henry Richardson to Chamerovzow, Sept. 5, 1854, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

62. Sarah Pugh to Mary Estlin, n.d. (but evidently 1853), Estlin Papers.

63. "Minute and Resolution of the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society, adopted unanimously at a Committee Meeting held Thursday, April 21, 1853," Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

John Estlin, a leading Garrisonian, joined the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, subscribed to its *Reporter*, and made an additional donation of £5.[64] Even George Thompson made friendly overtures by writing to the society to report on his lectures, which he said were aimed at a "revival of a Sound Anti-slavery feeling, through which your Society may work for the accomplishment of its great ends." His letter was filled with expressions of cooperation and hopes for common success.[65] In Manchester a new Anti-Slavery Union was organized, and it set up another periodical, the *Anti-Slavery Watchman*, which was to be "a journal of English and American Abolitionism" under the editorship of F. W. Chesson and was to be distributed chiefly in Lancashire and Yorkshire. Whether or not it would indeed have been an organ of reunification, had it lasted, is a moot point, for in at least one letter Chesson maintained privately that it would be "thoroughly Garrisonian." [66]

Unfortunately for the advocates of unity, the "honeymoon" lasted only about a year before another split developed over the appointment of the Reverend Frederick Hemming as an agent of the Anti-Slavery Union. Hemming was a native of England, then lived several years in the United States, where he supported the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. As a Wesleyan minister he had also worked for the American Missionary Association, of which Lewis Tappan was a director. Before Hemming left for England in 1853, he approached Tappan about being appointed an agent to collect money for the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. But Tappan vetoed the idea, confusing the issue to some degree by saying that while Hemming should not solicit funds, if anyone wanted to make a donation, he could receive and transmit the money.

Giving Tappan's words a liberal interpretation, Hemming presented himself to the Broad Street Committee, but unfortunately for his success in England, Sturge suggested that the London

64. Estlin to Chamerovzow, Apr. 20, 1853, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

65. Thompson to [British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society], Nov. 30, 1853, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

66. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Dec., 1853; F. W. Chesson to [Miss Estlin], to be sent to J. Miller McKim, Sept. 18, 1853, Anti-Slavery Papers, Cornell University.

abolitionists should check with Tappan before giving Hemming official recognition or support. While under the shadow of doubt, Hemming managed to get himself appointed an agent of the Manchester Union, only to have the charge brought that while connected with the Tappan group, he had called Garrison an infidel. Upon hearing this, the loyal Old Garrisonians in the group objected to his appointment and seceded. With the seceders went F. W. Chesson, editor of the *Watchman,* and so the paper collapsed. Hemming had fallen between two stools and in the process reopened the old factional antagonisms.[67]

In June, 1854, there was an attempt to organize a new Edinburgh Anti-Slavery Society, but the reawakened rivalries and jealousies prevented its accomplishment. According to the editors of the *Advocate,* the delegates consciously avoided mentioning either Garrison or Tappan or their respective societies, but it was impossible to gloss over the old bitterness.[68] Another attempt was made in the fall of 1854. The Broad Street Committee sent out invitations to a London conference in November and had favorable responses from both the Irish and the Scottish societies. The committee for the Glasgow Emancipation Society unanimously approved the suggestion for a conference and expressed the hope that sectarian feelings and jealousies would be eschewed so that they could have united, efficient, and persevering effort against American slavery. George Thompson was appointed as their delegate.[69] Although James Haughton and Richard Webb both wrote from Ireland that they could not attend personally, both also made strong pleas for a new unity that would forget sect and party differences. Yet in doing so, each harped on old strings of dissonance: Haughton brought up the question of women delegates, and Webb wanted a specific recog-

67. *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Feb., 1854; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Aug. 19, 1853, Jan. 6, 1854; Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 334n, 337, 339. I am indebted to Professor Bertram Wyatt-Brown of Case Western Reserve University for lending me his notes on letters of Frederick Hemming to Lewis Tappan, Simeon Jocelyn, George Whipple, Luther Lee, and C. Matlack, Jan. 4, 1854, from the Fisk University Archives.

68. *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Aug., 1854.

69. Enclosure in [William] Smeal to Chamerovzow, Nov. 18, 1854, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

nition of the American Anti-Slavery Society as the only organization in the United States now in operation.[70]

It had long been the contention of the Garrisonians that all that remained of the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society was Tappan, who continued to call conventions and write up annual reports single-handedly. It was true that organized activity, other than political, had devolved upon the New York Vigilance Committee, whose efforts were mostly directed at helping fugitives. Tappan himself in 1855 wrote to Sturge regarding the American and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society that "its mission appears to have ended." [71]

The London conference met on November 29 and 30, 1854, with Samuel Gurney in the chair and J. H. Hinton sounding the keynote of "let bygones be bygones," but the brave attempt could not be sustained. They agreed on the usual resolution against the American churches but foundered on so seemingly an innocent one as approving the American abolitionist movement. Someone wanted to specify both of the national societies, which bumped directly into the philosophy of those who insisted that only one society remained active through meetings, conventions, and sending out lecturers and that the other was defunct. Both George Thompson and Joseph Sturge tried nobly to bypass discussion on the point in the interests of harmony, but Parker Pillsbury, the only registered American delegate and a vocal Garrisonian, refused to let the matter drop. He insisted on speaking about the old injustices toward the American Anti-Slavery Society on the part of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and he denounced John Scoble for trying to "blacken" the character of Garrison. Gurney, as chairman, instructed Pillsbury to "keep to the resolution" in speaking, but the damage was done, and it was impossible to stem the flood of argument that followed. A final

70. James Haughton to British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Nov. 15, 1854, and Richard Webb to Chamerovzow, Nov. 28, 1854, Rhodes House Anti-slavery Papers.

71. Tappan to Sturge, May 12, 1855, Tappan Papers; William Smeal to Chamerovzow, Apr. 16, 1852, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers. In their minute for June 7, 1850, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society noted that the New York Vigilance Committee had helped 151 fugitives and rescued "several" persons illegally held in bondage.

reunification attempt was made at the end of the decade when it was time to celebrate the twenty-fifth anniversary of West Indian emancipation, but it, too, proved to be abortive.[72]

Except for periodic flare-ups over the question of Garrison's "infidelism," the one area in which British abolitionists were still the most united was in their denunciation of the proslavery American churches. The Reverend Edward Mathews of the Free Baptist Mission, who had lived in the United States for seventeen years and then returned to England, wrote two books on the subject: *The Shame and Glory of the American Baptists* and *The Anti-Slavery Struggle,* which was critical of the Methodists.[73] Between 1852 and 1854 the *Anti-Slavery Advocate* published a series of thorough and informative articles on the various denominations. They included the Disciples of Christ, Moravians or United Brethren, Friends, and Unitarians as well as such larger orthodox groups as the Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, and Roman Catholics. Sometimes names were named to identify proslavery ministers who ought to be condemned or to whom fellowship should be denied. Among those criticized were the Reverend Calvin Stowe and the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, who were thought to suppress sympathy for the slave for the sake of the Union. The Reverend Theodore Clapp of New Orleans was cited as an "unblushing" advocate of slavery.[74] An "Address to the Christian Churches," published by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society in 1853, was enthusiastically praised by both abolitionist factions in

72. *British Friend,* Jan. 1, 1855; *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* May, June, 1855; *London Anti-Slavery Conference: Papers Read and Statements Made on the Principal Subjects Submitted to the Anti-Slavery Conference, Held at the London Tavern on the 29th and 30th of November, 1854* (London: British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, [1855]). This report gives no inkling of the disagreements at the meeting, but the minutes of the Bristol and Clifton Ladies' Anti-Slavery Society for Dec. 7, 1854, do, in Rhodes House Antislavery Papers. See also J. B. Estlin to Chamerovzow, May 21, 1855, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers. For the attempt in 1859, see George Thompson to Chamerovzow, July 21, 25, 28, 1859, July 23, 1860, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Brougham Villiers and W. H. Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations, 1861–1865* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1919), 182–183; Samuel J. May to Miss Estlin, Oct. 18, 1859, Estlin Papers.

73. *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Jan., Sept., 1854, Oct., 1857.

74. *Ibid.,* Jan., Sept., 1853, for references to these individuals.

Britain and in the States. In fact, it was one of the bonds that stimulated the British groups to attempt their reconciliation. Extra copies were printed to have on hand for presentation to American clergymen visiting England.[75]

In 1853 the British Quakers made a last attempt to arouse their American brethren to further exertions by sending William and Josiah Forster and William Holmes over with an address from the London Yearly Meeting "To Sovereigns and Those in Authority." John Candler, who had again been in the West Indies and Brazil, joined them to form a deputation to present the address in person to President Fillmore and to the state governors.[76] John Crampton, the British minister to the United States, was counseled by the Foreign Office in London to be of any assistance he could in getting access to officials, but he was not to "participate" in any appeal from British subjects to the government or citizens of the United States on matters connected with slavery.[77]

In most instances, even in the deep South, the deputation was given a respectful hearing, but in Missouri Governor Sterling Price denounced the " 'presumptious liberties which even foreigners themselves feel sometimes disposed to take' " when encouraged by fanatical American abolitionists. He demanded that in the future all such appeals "be directed to the improvement and amelioration of the distress and sufferings of the subjects of the British nation . . . whence had arisen that false philanthropy which has cursed the Negroes of the West Indies and which only tends to injure the condition of the slaves of this Union." [78]

Arguments against ministers speaking out or remaining silent on slavery when traveling abroad persisted throughout the decade. Henry Ward Beecher was recommended to the British and

75. John B. Estlin to Chamerovzow, Apr. 20, 1853, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Tappan to Sturge, June 28, 1852, Tappan Papers; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, May 6, 1853.

76. Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 188; *British Friend,* Feb. 1, 1854; *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* June, 1854.

77. Foreign Office to Crampton, Aug. 9, 1853, F.O. 84/918, PRO.

78. Quoted in Drake, *Quakers and Slavery in America,* 189; Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 339. A sad end to the mission was the death of William Forster while the group was in Tennessee.

Foreign Anti-Slavery Society as one who could "speak for freedom as few men can!" [79] Yet he was severely criticized for not doing so while in England. On the other hand, there were those who, while only lukewarm at home, posed as champions of the cause when they found that position would insure them a warmer welcome. One example was the Reverend J. W. Chickering of Maine, who was "exposed" by Lewis Tappan.[80] As usual, the accusation resulted in charges, countercharges, and long-drawn-out bickering over exaggerations on both sides, which must surely have alienated some of the British public not already converted to the antislavery movement. But to abolitionists the question was a serious one. "Our cotton parsons evidently feel sore at the prospect of losing caste in England," William Jay wrote, though at home they acted as "chaplains to slave catchers" and were the tools of "ungodly proslavery politicians." [81] One American minister who was the exception in escaping censure was the Reverend Charles Grandison Finney. Though he had been closely associated with Theodore Weld, Asa Mahan, and some of the early western abolitionists, I can find no evidence of his speaking on the slavery issue at all when he visited Great Britain in 1849–1850 or again in 1858–1860, nor does there seem to have been any fuss raised about his silence.

Another matter angering the abolitionists was the extent to which British antislavery opinion was expurgated from religious publications reprinted in America. William Jay discovered, for example, that the American publication of the bishop of Oxford's description of the American Episcopal church omitted those portions in which he condemned slavery and might therefore give offense to the South.[82] A check revealed that the same thing was true in the case of Sunday-school materials, tracts, and hymns. Lewis Tappan was so aroused that he advertised in the *National Era* for a competent person to collect and collate the principal

79. William Harned to P. J. Bolton, July 23, 1850, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

80. Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light,* 262, 278–280, 286–290nn.

81. Jay to Tappan, Oct. 27, 1851, Tappan Papers.

82. *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Oct., 1852.

mutilations so they could be published together with a rebuke against publishers who thus catered to the slaveholders.[83] Tappan believed that the American Tract Society and the American Sunday School Union had consciously connived in this.[84] Upon receiving the complaints from Tappan, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society undertook to warn the British Religious Tract Society of how its publications were being tampered with. They suggested that the society should issue some new tracts, specifically antislavery in content. A tract on "Expurgated American Literature" was published in the Leeds Anti-Slavery Society tract series in 1853.[85]

The American Bible Society was guilty of withholding its free Bibles from slaves, although its object was to put a Bible in every home. Tappan and Joshua Leavitt therefore urged British friends to send contributions to the American Missionary Association, which was attempting to supply slaves with Bibles. This was a difficult thing to do in the face of state laws against teaching slaves to read as well as those outlawing the distribution of "incendiary" literature, which included anything containing antislavery doctrine.[86] According to the "positive good" theory, the Bible sanctioned slavery, but slaveholders seem to have been not so convinced of this when it came to a question of allowing slaves to possess Bibles. Again in 1857 the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society sent an address to Christians in the United States and at the same time repeated their admonition to British churches to refuse to receive proslavery clergymen from the

83. "Information Wanted," ad copied from *National Era*, Tappan Papers. I have not located the publication Tappan planned, but there evidently was one, for James Vincent wrote from the Broad Street office in London on Feb. 22, 1854, to order six copies.

84. Tappan to Chamerovzow, Oct. 29, 1854, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 341–350.

85. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Feb. 3, Apr. 7, 1854; Tract 20, Leeds Anti-Slavery Society Series, may be found in [Wilson Armistead, ed.], *Five Hundred Thousand Strokes for Freedom. A Series of Anti-Slavery Tracts. Of Which Half a Million Are Now Fresh Issued by the Friends of the Negro* (London: W. & F. Cash, 1853).

86. Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 341–350; Leavitt to John Scoble, Feb. 27, 1847, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

United States as delegates to conferences or to enjoy communion and open fellowship with them when they visited Great Britain.[87]

In October, 1853, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society decided that the two "most practical points to agitate" were the position of American religious bodies on slavery and the growth of cotton in India and on the west coast of Africa.[88] Besides being considered "practical," both were projects in which abolitionist factions could cooperate. Up to the middle of the 1840s the free-produce movement in Great Britain had concentrated mainly on the sugar question. In the debates over the duties of 1846, this concentration had left them wide open to the attack that they were inconsistent in not being equally concerned about cotton. American abolitionists were critical of their British colleagues on this point as well, and of course the issue of Texas at about the same time had aroused new fears regarding the extension of the cotton kingdom.

Joseph Sturge, particularly, took the criticism to heart, and in the late 1840s he began to use his influence to broaden the base of the British movement. George Thompson was another who became involved and much concerned. After a trip to India in 1843 he returned home to stand successfully for Parliament, and from that position he helped to direct the fight against the remnants of Indian slavery and for the encouragement of cotton produced by free labor. Leaders of both the major abolitionist camps were thus uniting in urging that the East India Company and Parliament take vigorous steps to facilitate the cultivation of both sugar and cotton.[89] Almost simultaneously the Free Produce Association in the United States set up shops in New York and Philadelphia and began to publish the *Non-Slaveholder* for the purpose of encouraging abolitionists to buy only goods pro-

87. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, May 1, 6, June 5, July 3, 1857, May 7, 1858.

88. *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1853.

89. *British Friend*, Sept. 30, 1843; Sturge to Clarkson, Apr. 11, 1845, Clarkson Papers, Huntington Library; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 321, June 13, 1845; *Non-Slaveholder*, Jan., 1848.

duced by free labor.[90] Agents were sent into the South to buy cotton raised by small farmers who did not own or hire slaves.[91]

It was the free-produce movement that brought Elihu Burritt to the fore as a liaison man between British and American anti-slavery forces. Burritt, like Sturge, Tappan, Leavitt, and so many other abolitionists, was involved in a variety of reforms. Pacifism was one of them, and he persuaded his League of Universal Brotherhood to add the free-produce cause to its program. Lewis Tappan wrote to Sturge about Burritt, the two began a correspondence, and in the fall of 1846 Burritt traveled to England at Sturge's expense to help inject new life into the free-produce movement there.[92] Not long afterward Gerrit Smith, another wealthy abolitionist who had abstained from the use of slave-produced goods for many years, financed Henry Bibb's trip to England for a similar purpose. In the early 1850s they were joined by Henry Highland Garnet and J. Miller McKim, who also came as special envoys of free produce.[93]

Before the year 1846 was out, the Executive Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society had voted to recommend to its members the disuse of all slave-produced articles. Early in 1847 they sent out such a notice in a pamphlet addressed "To the Friends of the Anti-Slavery Cause throughout the World." They also drew up a petition to Parliament to oppose the use of slave-grown produce by breweries and distilleries.[94] Sturge circulated a pamphlet by Burritt to his free-trade associates in Manchester, and the Manchester Commercial Association, in turn,

90. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 388, Feb. 27, 1846; Tappan to Sturge, Nov. 26, 1845, Tappan Papers.

91. Tappan to Sturge, Mar. 31, 1846, Tappan Papers; *Non-Slaveholder,* Mar., 1846; *British Friend,* Oct. 30, 1847.

92. Tappan to Sturge, Feb. 29, 1844, and Burritt to Tappan, May 1, 1846, Tappan Papers; Sturge to Burritt, Apr. 3, 1846, Jenkins Autograph Collection; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 455, Nov. 27, 1846; Merle Curti, *The Learned Blacksmith: The Letters and Journals of Elihu Burritt* (New York: Wilson-Erickson, 1937), 118.

93. *British Friend,* Apr. 29, 1848; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, July 5, Aug. 2, 14, 1850.

94. G. W. Alexander to the editor, *Non-Slaveholder,* Jan., 1847; *Non-Slaveholder,* Feb., 1847; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book II, 487, Feb. 26, 1847.

sent a letter to the East India Company urging them to cultivate cotton. A similar letter to the company was sent by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. It was also in 1847 that John Bright began to warn Parliament that cotton culture ought to be encouraged within the empire to avoid a cotton famine should the American supply be cut off. In the spring of 1848 Parliament responded to all of the pressure by appointing a committee to look into the problem of improving East Indian cotton and of facilitating its sale in Great Britain.[95] Meanwhile other interested abolitionists, sometimes missionaries, began to send in reports on the possibilities for raising cotton in Australia, the West Indies, and in various parts of Africa. David Livingstone crossed Africa in 1853–1854, and from 1858 to 1864 he kept the British informed on cotton possibilities in central Africa. Elliott Cresson, seeing a chance for the American Colonization Society to benefit, urged that if the free-produce people would subsidize gins and cane-crushing machines, Liberia could produce both cotton and sugar.[96]

When the Stowes arrived in Great Britain in 1853, Burritt was delighted to discover that they were willing to cooperate with him in emphasizing the free-produce approach as the way to end slavery. Burritt joined the Stowes at Sturge's home in Birmingham, and together they drafted resolutions that could be presented at antislavery gatherings.[97] Calvin Stowe went so far as to predict that without the British market for cotton, American slavery would die in two years.[98] Mrs. Stowe's support gave new zest to the female antislavery societies, since women were generally the clothing purchasers for their families. Special appeals were made to them to "*do something*" and not to let the emotions stirred up by the sufferings of Uncle Tom "evaporate in sighs

95. Sturge to Burritt, Apr. 3, 1846, Jenkins Autograph Collection; *Non-Slaveholder,* Jan., 1847; George M. Trevelyan, *The Life of John Bright* (London: Constable and Co., 1925), 169, 317; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Dec. 10, 1847; *British Friend,* Apr. 29, 1848.

96. *British Friend,* Nov. 30, 1848, July 31, 1849; Cresson to Hodgkin, July 24, 1848, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers; Shepperson, "Harriet Beecher Stowe and Scotland."

97. Burritt to [Anna Mary Southall], May 3, 1853, Elihu Burritt Letters, Friends House Library.

98. Stowe to Chamerovzow, Nov. 28, 1853, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers.

and tears." [99] New free-cotton depots were set up to receive supplies from the Free Labour Warehouse of Josias Browne in Manchester, which had been in operation since 1850.[100]

One of the schemes originated by Burritt was known as the premium system. The idea was to have free-produce people buy shares in a company that would pay bonuses to farmers who raised "free" cotton. Presumably they would prove the old abolitionist contention that free labor was cheaper than slave labor, make money, and enjoy dividends as well as free consciences. Such enterprises could be established either in the various parts of the British empire or in the United States. In conjunction with the premium system, Burritt was interested in experimenting with colonies of German, English, and Scotch-Irish immigrants to be planted in the heart of the American cotton kingdom. For example, he proposed that Gerrit Smith could exchange 500 of his acres in upstate New York for an equivalent acreage in Georgia to be devoted to the experiment.[101] Burritt tried to persuade John Ecroyd, who had urged cotton production in Natal, to go to the United States to manage such a cotton plantation, but Ecroyd declined. He was not convinced that free labor could compete with slave labor, and accounts of the operation of southern lynch law were discouraging to him. Another reason may have been that he agreed with the advice of his brother, who privately cautioned him that although Burritt was a good man, his schemes wre not always the most prudent from a pecuniary standpoint.[102]

99. Juliene M. Flack to Elihu Burritt, Aug. 4, [1854], Burritt Letters; *The Twenty-eighth Report of the Ladies' Negro's Friend Society, for Birmingham, Westbromich, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Their Respective Neighborhoods, Including the Address Presented by the Committee to Mrs. Beecher Stowe, on the Occasion of Her Visit to Birmingham* (Birmingham: B. Hudson & Son, 1853).

100. *British Friend*, July 31, 1848, Feb. 15, 1850; Josias F. Browne & Co., *To the Friends of the Anti-Slavery Movement, Free Labour Cotton Depot*, and *Free Labour Association*, all pamphlets, Ms Box 8.4, Friends House Library.

101. Burritt to Gerrit Smith, Oct. 6, 1856, in Curti, *The Learned Blacksmith*, 118, 125–126, 129–130; Burritt to Anna Mary Southall, Nov. 18, 1854, Feb. 12, Mar. 6, 10, 1855, Burritt Letters.

102. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, July 11, 1853; photostat of Elihu Burritt to John Ecroyd, Jan. 21, 1854; typescript, Ecroyd to Burritt, n.d.; and typescript, Benjamin Ecroyd to John Ecroyd, n.d., all in Ms Box 11.3, Friends House Library.

Although the abolitionists kept issuing optimistic reports about the results of their free-produce efforts, especially the development of cotton in India, by the time the American Civil War broke out, there was very little actually reaching the Lancashire mills. Lack of transportation facilities rather than problems of production was largely responsible. Yet the idea had been firmly planted in people's minds that there were alternatives to American cotton. This in itself may have been a factor in their not rushing in haste to urge the British government to recognize the Confederacy or to break the Union blockade.

As in earlier periods, British travelers to the United States in the 1850s continued to be critical of slavery but morbidly fascinated by it, and such accounts perpetuated British curiosity and moral indignation.[103] But events in the United States in the latter half of the decade tended to focus attention on politics rather than on religion or travel accounts. The passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act in 1854, which repealed the 36°30′ line of the Missouri Compromise, reopened debate over slavery in the territories. In April, 1855, Lewis Tappan, Gerrit Smith, W. E. Whiting, George Whipple, William Goodell, James McCune Smith, Simeon Jocelyn, and Frederick Douglass, who labeled themselves "radical political abolitionists," issued a call for a convention. "Our undertaking," they announced, "is to remove slavery from the national territories by means of our national political power, and to remove it from the states also, by means of the same power, whenever the States shall themselves refuse to remove it."[104] This group had accepted the views of Birney, Lysander Spooner, Goodell, and Alvan Stewart that the Constitution, if correctly interpreted, was an antislavery document. Goodell was the chief spokesman in the 1850s, publishing three books on the subject, which were distributed in Great Britain as well as at home.[105] Britishers needed to have the argument over federal and

103. See, for example, the ads in the *Anti-Slavery Advocate* for 1855–1857. See also Max Berger, "American Slavery as Seen by British Visitors, 1836–1860," *Journal of Negro History*, XXX (Apr., 1945), 181–202, and the bibliography in his book *The British Traveler in America, 1836–1860* (Magnolia, Mass.: Peter Smith, 1964).

104. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, June, 1855.

105. See Dwight L. Dumond, *A Bibliography of Antislavery in America* (Ann

state control of slavery explained, especially as it was renewed by the Kansas conflict. Another reason for distributing Goodell's work was to counteract what the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society thought of as the Garrison "heresy," which called for disunion. As events in the United States moved toward secession and civil war, there was a growing wish on the part of many abolitionists to believe that the federal government did have clear authority, and this made them more receptive to the Goodell interpretation than they had been in the 1840s.

Even Mrs. Stowe, who had taken a Garrisonian nonpolitical approach when she was in England the first time, on her second trip in 1856 responded to the popular demand that she speak about the Free Soil party and the Kansas problem. When she returned to the United States, the Edinburgh Ladies' Emancipation Society sent her £35 for the benefit of "suffering settlers" in Kansas. Harriet Martineau got out her *History of the American Compromises* to explain what had led up to the betrayal of Kansas.[106] The political excitement infected some of the Garrisonians at home too. Lydia Maria Child wrote to a friend that for the sake of suffering Kansas, "I do long to have Fremont elected. Don't you? Let's *vote*." [107]

Charles Sumner became a hero in Britain as well as at home for his stand on Kansas, and the attack on him by Preston Brooks was interpreted as evidence of the growing uneasiness of slaveholders who realized that their institution was doomed. The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society immediately voted a resolution of sympathy for him.[108] Actually Brooks could not have picked a better target than Sumner to capture the attention of political, social, and abolitionist circles in England. Sumner had made an extended trip there in the years 1837–1839 and had been

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Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1961), 6, for a complete list of Goodell's publications.

106. *British Friend*, Nov. 1, 1856, Mar. 2, 1857; Harriet Martineau, *A History of the American Compromises, Reprinted with Additions from the Daily News* (London: John Chapman, 1856).

107. Lydia Maria Child to [Lucy] Osgood, July 20, 1856, Anti-Slavery Papers, Cornell University.

108. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, June 6, July 4, 1856.

lionized as an unusual example of a "cultured" American. He was on familiar terms with most of the celebrities who had acclaimed Mrs. Stowe, and he had continued correspondence with such prominent abolitionists as Lord Morpeth, now the earl of Carlisle, and Nassau Senior. In 1838 Sumner attended Parliament to hear Lord Brougham make his famous last speech on emancipation; he had dined with him in his country home on numerous occasions.[109] All of these British friends had followed Sumner's subsequent career in politics and had praised his speech on the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and Nassau Senior wrote a pamphlet reviewing the speech that had precipitated Brooks's attack.[110] When Sumner returned to England in 1857, he was welcomed as the man of the hour, and it was in Sumner rather than in any other American politician that the British were to put their trust in the early dark days of the Lincoln administration.

The election of Buchanan in 1856 and the Dred Scott decision of 1857 were, of course, victories for the proslavery side, but far from producing a reaction of defeatism, both set off more antislavery activity. In response to the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society's plea for more information on Kansas and Congress, Tappan answered that the effect of the recent proceedings had been a "revival of the anti-slavery spirit" and that tens of thousands of citizens were now aroused. The Fugitive Slave Act and the Kansas-Nebraska Act together, he claimed, "have opened the eyes of the clergy and the laity in the free States, on these subjects, & a vast change has taken place in public sentiment."[111] All of this was adding to a rapid increase in the Republican party, which had succeeded on the foundation of the Free Soil party and now included the political abolitionists who had founded the Liberty party.

The Garrisonian response to political events was the "disunion convention" of 1857, with its motto of liberty before union. Conservative abolitionists as well as most Americans dismissed as vi-

109. Edward L. Pierce, ed., *Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner*, 4 vols. (Boston: Roberts Bros., 1877), I, 197, 300–302, 328–332, 340, 348–355; II, 45.

110. *Ibid.*, III, 311, 504, 527, 613; Senior, *American Slavery*.

111. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book III, Mar. 2, 1857; Tappan to Chamerovzow, Oct. 29, 1854, in Abel and Klingberg, eds., *Side-Light*, 341–350.

sionary radicalism any call for breaking up the Union, and all were equally wary of endorsing the convention's assertion that "slavery must be conquered 'peacefully if we can, forcibly if we must.'" [112] At the other end of the spectrum those who feared disunion and civil war, led by Elihu Burritt and Gerrit Smith, met in a Cleveland convention to revive and discuss the idea of compensated emancipation, which the American Anti-Slavery Society had rejected in the 1830s. Elihu Burritt thought compensated emancipation as feasible for the United States as it had been for Great Britain, or even more so, since it could be financed from the sale of vast western lands rather than by taxation. In 1856 and again in 1857 he made tours that took him as far west as Missouri and Iowa to promote the idea.[113] In Great Britain the discussion centered about the pros and cons of sending a "National Protest" from England to the United States, but it was finally rejected as a step that would stir up resentment without doing any practical good.[114]

John Brown's attack on Harpers Ferry and his execution in 1859 aroused the British almost as much as it did the Americans, and because Frederick Douglass once more sought sanctuary in England, they had a direct source of information about the events. Douglass and Brown were both heroes. "The death of Socrates is paralleled by the Death of John Brown who died in as noble a cause," wrote Richard Webb from Dublin.[115] Sarah Parker Remond, the sister of Charles Remond, and Samuel J. May, who were both giving abolitionist lectures in Great Britain in 1859, helped to keep the image of Brown as a martyred abolitionist before the British public. In addition to lecturing, May contributed many articles and letters to the *Anti-Slavery Advo-*

112. The *Anti-Slavery Advocate* for Oct., 1857, carried a letter from Samuel J. May on plans for the disunion convention, and there was much discussion about it in the paper. For more details on the convention, see Johnson, *William Lloyd Garrison and His Times; Proceedings of the State Disunion Convention, Held at Worcester, Massachusetts, January 25, 1857* (Boston, 1857).

113. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, Nov., 1857; Burritt to Anna Mary Southall, July 28, 1856, Burritt Letters; Curti, *The Learned Blacksmith*, 119–120, 131–132, 136.

114. *Anti-Slavery Advocate*, issues throughout 1858.

115. Webb to J. Miller McKim, Mar. 12, 1860, Anti-Slavery Papers, Cornell University.

cate to explain the events in America.[116] Victor Hugo's famous letter asking mercy for Brown and indicting the whole American people was written to the editor of the *London Star* and was publicized in other newspapers as well. The *London Patriot,* which gave a good deal of coverage to slavery and antislavery issues throughout the 1850s, declared in an editorial that John Brown may have been a fanatic, but woe to the nation that maintained an institution so bad that it led men to act fanatically.[117]

While the rivalry of the factional split in the antislavery movement had stimulated the Anglo-American connection in the 1840s, by the 1850s it had become an albatross around the neck of the abolitionists. Now the excitement over John Brown's raid and execution and the common fears of an impending crisis did tend to bring the British groups together, just as it had a similar effect in the United States, but it was really not until the Civil War actually began that the factions were able to overcome internal bickering and buckle down to present a united front.

Yet it is not surprising that on the eve of the American Civil War British abolitionists were able to maintain a more long-range perspective and therefore a more optimistic attitude than their American allies. Their own long-sustained struggle against the slave trade and slavery had been marked by gradual, peaceful, and steady achievements. As early as the late eighteenth century religious leaders and prominent political leaders had united their efforts, and the antislavery movement won a status of respectability that it continued to enjoy. In Britain abolition affected economic investments and trade, but, unlike the situation in the United States, it had never threatened to overthrow an en-

116. *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass,* 393; *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Mar., Apr., Nov., Dec., 1859; *British Friend* throughout 1860 issues. Since Douglass's first visit to England, he had broken with the Garrisonians, and they now were denouncing him. Mrs. Chapman wrote to Sarah Remond that she must watch to see if Douglass tried to gain the sympathy of George Thompson in order to "use" him. "Whoever in England fraternizes with him helps and sanctions his falsehoods," she warned, ". . . he was kept in the dark by slavery too long *ever* to be able to see things straight. . . ." See Chapman to Remond, Sept. 4, 1859, Estlin Papers.

117. Ann S. Stephens, *Victor Hugo's Letter on John Brown, with Mrs. Ann S. Stephens' Reply* (New York: Irwin P. Beadle, 1860); *London Patriot,* Dec. 1, 1859.

trenched social system and presented no great racial problems. It could, therefore, be considered in a much less emotional context, and abolitionists did not have to labor under the stigma of such labels as fanatics, visionary radicals, or incendiaries as they did in the United States. Repercussions of the social and economic upheavals in the West Indian colonies touched very few Britishers directly or personally. Paradoxically, distance often seems to add clarity to the outlines of justice, and once perceived by a few, the many can be convinced of an abstract ideal, provided its embodiment in law will not drastically change their own lives. West Indian traders and planters were materially affected and had fought a last-ditch stand, but, unlike the American planters, their political strength was overbalanced earlier and more decisively by rising industrial interests and by the consequent changing emphasis in commercial expansion. The abolition movement in Great Britain was not led by men who were the victims of a status revolution.[118] A substantial number of them came from the ranks of the rising middle class and comprised a liberal bourgeois reform element. Although in an initial period British labor cried that too much attention was being paid to the slave and not enough to the poor workers at home, they eventually turned sympathy for the slave into concern for the exploited white worker as well. There was no long-term threat of potential economic rivalry from freed blacks and certainly no emotional fears that racial incompatibility would endanger their social order.

The significance of all this is that abolition in Great Britain had proceeded along peaceful legislative lines, was less divisive, and each success marked a clear step forward without resulting in more polarization and confrontation, as was so clearly the pattern in the United States. By the time immediatism became the cry in antislavery circles, the gradualist approach had already succeeded in eliciting an acknowledgment from the British government that complete emancipation was the ultimate goal. All that remained, therefore, was to rally the public to back an accelerated pace.

Not so in the United States—there immediatism had been, at

118. I do not mean to imply that in the United States a status revolution accounts for abolitionist leadership.

least partially, a response to repeated frustrations and failures on the political front, pushing abolitionists to more aggressive, militant confrontations and demands bound to result in high-pitched emotions and even violence. Southerners not only refused to acknowledge emancipation as a far-off but hoped-for ideal, but they defended slavery as a positive good, and no federal administration or major political party until the Republican dared to suggest even a containment policy, let alone complete emancipation by federal action. Failure to enforce the slave-trade laws, the continuing internal slave trade, gag laws, censorship of the press and mails, the admission of Texas, the new Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and the Dred Scott decision all seemed evidence of retrogression rather than progression. Although antislavery doctrine had become respectable in many areas of the North, and probably a majority of northerners were willing to accept an end to slavery itself, relatively few looked with approval on the twin abolitionist goal of equality for blacks. Northern racism meant that the antislavery movement seemed to be fighting a losing battle in all sections.

By the 1840s, when the great split occurred in the antislavery movement, abolition in the West Indies was an accomplished fact, and the schismatic in-fighting added some spirit and zest to the British movement without seriously impairing its effectiveness. One cannot help but give credence to the traditional view that the schisms within the antislavery ranks weakened the movement in the United States at the time when it most needed unity. In this respect the antislavery movement followed the pattern of most reforms. As they gather strength and numbers, diverse groups, each with its own ideas and idiosyncrasies, inevitably disagree on ways and means. Yet can we be sure that this apparent tugging in several directions is completely detrimental? It seems possible that each group appeals to certain types of individuals; therefore, the wider the appeal, the greater the number who may be enlisted. Certainly some Americans responded to the political approach who were alienated by the Garrisonians; on the other hand, some who were more sympathetic to social revolution could adopt the Garrison brand of antislavery more easily than that of the political activists. Others were drawn in by their reli-

gious convictions and dedication. To contemporaries, however, the lack of unity was disheartening—it had been a burden throughout the 1850s.

The British antislavery perspective benefited from two historical factors absent from the American scene: the long view and the world view. Centuries of national history marked by defeats as well as successes had bred a less visionary, more practical approach. Goals were measured in terms of attainability; expediency and compromise had positive rather than negative connotations. If one could free slaves by compensating their owners, so be it. If Spain and Portugal could be persuaded to prohibit the slave trade in return for cash settlements, was not the end justifiable? Abolitionists could let up on their own crusade during a national emergency such as the Napoleonic wars, knowing they would return to it in the long run having earned more government and public support.

Americans, in their immaturity as a nation, had not developed the patience that comes with experience, and yet, often paradoxically, they accepted with little question a belief in an inevitable destiny. Southerners supported their "peculiar institution" as God-ordained and sanctioned by tradition. Antislavery reformers naïvely expected the universal acceptance of their own "self-evident truths" and equated national progress with national conversion. The entanglement of the antislavery movement with other social reforms and "isms"—all of which seemed to threaten the status quo—merely compounded the difficulties, blurred the focus, and emphasized the consequent frustrations. The rise of political democracy for the white "common man" had no apparent parallel in acceptance of equal rights for blacks, and national expansion seemed to benefit the "slave power" more than to fulfill the ideals of liberty and equality.

Taking the world view, British abolitionists could chalk up several accomplishments by 1861: emancipation in the West Indies, virtual abolition of their own slave trade, and international prohibitory agreements with the Netherlands, Denmark, Spain, Portugal, and France, in addition to formal expressions by the Concert of Europe denouncing slavery and the slave trade in principle. Abolition of serfdom in Russia was balanced against

the continuation of slavery in the United States. Canada and the West Indies, as well as the British Isles, were maintained as havens of refuge for fugitives from slavery and as outposts from which salvos could be discharged in the form of diplomatic pressures. British abolitionists still kept faith in the efficacy of agitation through personal contacts established by lecturers or delegates to church conferences, and they firmly believed that the printed word was a major weapon in the campaign of persuasion.

If slavery should split the American Union, either war or separation might be the expedient means of dealing a death blow to the institution. For years abolitionists had been using the slogan "no union with slaveholders." Their theory was that slavery was maintained by federal power. If the slave states should cut themselves off from such support, the institution would crumble. For one thing, if the South voluntarily separated from the Union, it would have to relinquish all claims to share in the western territories. They believed that if slavery could not expand, it would cease to be economically profitable for either cotton planters or slave breeders. Without the force of a federal law requiring the return of fugitives, thousands of slaves would escape, resulting in constant erosion of the institution. Monetary investment in slaves would be much more of a gamble, and constant fear of more John Browns, guerrilla warfare, and slave insurrections would push individuals and states toward emancipation. Moreover, there would be increased moral pressure from the rest of the world against a nation completely devoted to slavery, as presumably the South would be, once the saving leaven of abolitionist activity was eliminated. Perhaps even economic boycotts could be invoked.

Much as the prospect of fratricidal war was deplored, the British could take a more detached view of it as well. Such a war would stem from action of the slaveholding section; therefore, the federal government would be justified in imposing a final settlement that would include either the confiscation of slave property or forced emancipation with compensation.

Obviously Americans were in no position to face any of these possibilities with equanimity. Each of them represented a regression from the ideal to the expedient, negating their aims of non-

violence and moral suasion. In the Declaration of Sentiments of the American Anti-Slavery Society they had rejected the "use of all carnal weapons for deliverance from bondage" and had deplored the use of violence by the fathers of the American Revolution as a means to liberty. Having held up the banner of "no compromise with slaveholders" for so long, most of them were equally reluctant to give ground by agreeing to compensated emancipation or settling for the Republican party platform, which called only for prohibiting slavery in the new territories.

As the crisis of 1860–1861 hit them, American abolitionists were tormented with the dilemma of what position to take: to let their erring sisters depart in peace or to move to a position of expediency, justifying their support of Union action on the grounds that if force was to be employed, with or without their consent, the best they could do was to capitalize on the opportunity to deal a death blow to slavery. They could even salve their consciences with the thought that it was not they but "expedient politicians" who had forsaken the purity of their ideals, who were responsible for the imminent violent upheaval. Their part would be to salvage from the debacle what they could for the cause of liberty and justice. Lincoln's hesitancy in making emancipation a war aim not only intensified the problem for American abolitionists but baffled the British and, as we shall see, compounded their problem of rallying public support to the side of the North.

British Abolitionists and the American Civil War

XVI

In 1860–1861 British abolitionist camps, still disunited, quite definitely reflected the different attitudes of the American abolitionist factions toward Lincoln's election and secession. At this stage their lack of unity had a decidedly weakening effect on the cause as a whole, for it added to the confusions in British public opinion about whether the South's move for independence should be applauded and encouraged or condemned and opposed.

This can first be noted in the reaction to Lincoln's election. The politically oriented abolitionists in the United States, who had been responsible for broadening the base of the Liberty party to make it the Free Soil party, and who then as Free Soilers had thrown in their lot with the Republican party, tended to be optimistic about Lincoln. They knew full well he could not abolish slavery outright, but he sincerely hated the institution and was pledged against allowing its extension into new territories. It was this group's opinions that were reflected in the British *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, whose pages were filled particularly with speeches of Sumner and Seward. Consequently the adherents of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society never faltered in their support of the Union and in opposition to secession and to British recognition of the Confederacy. As soon as secession began, they declared that no European power would dare to form

an alliance with a federation that rested on slavery and the extension of a slave empire, thus acknowledging from the beginning their conviction that slavery was the basic issue in the disagreement.[1]

Indeed, this set of British abolitionists outdid their American counterparts in their support of the Lincoln administration. Their publications from early 1861 and throughout the war exude a steady confidence that the final outcome was ordained by God: victory for the Union and complete abolition of slavery. The early ascendancy of the South in the war was always seen as temporary, as God's chastening of his children in the North because they had not, as a nation, acted sooner to fulfill his will. Moreover, they were much more tolerant than American abolitionists of Lincoln's initial refusal to make the war a crusade against slavery as well as to save the Union. Numerous articles were written to explain to readers the constitutional handicaps under which he operated and which could be maneuvered around only gradually and with care not to alienate his own northern political support. British abolitionists were more prone to face practical political considerations and the inevitability of compromise (as they had in agreeing to compensated emancipation with the apprenticeship system in 1833). To them half a loaf was definitely better than no loaf at all.

On the other hand, the Garrisonian abolitionists in Great Britain, as in the United States, reflected little faith in the political process, at least to begin with. After the nominating conventions of 1860 the *Anti-Slavery Advocate* opined that there was little difference between the attitudes of Lincoln and Douglas: ". . . both despise the colored man, both advocate the withholding of his equal rights; and while the one would oppress him while here, the other would oppress him while here, and hustle him off to Central America as soon as possible."[2] When the southern states began to secede, again this group reflected the Garrisonian conviction that disunion was to be welcomed, for only by purging the federal government of its proslavery leader-

1. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Jan. 1, 1861.
2. *Anti-Slavery Advocate,* Aug., 1860.

ship was there any hope of salvation.[3] For this group, consequently, it was much more difficult to come around to support of the Union once war had begun, especially since Lincoln would not include emancipation as a war aim.

Lincoln's stand lent credence to the cries of the nonabolitionist, pro-southern opinion in England that for the North it was just another imperialistic war of the industrialists against the agricultural, free-trade South. Considering the fact that some of the antislavery leadership doubted whether the North was worthy of sympathy and moral support, it is easier to understand the confusion of the masses of the English working people. *They* were definitely against slavery, but they could not be sure the Union government was; since their economic well-being rested on supplies of cotton from the South, it made it easier for them to rationalize that abolition was just as likely to result from a dissolution of the Union as from a northern victory. After all, for years the point had been made that if the southern states did separate, they could no longer depend on federal protection for their "peculiar institution." Slaves could then escape more easily without a national fugitive-slave law, and the South, by secession, would have to relinquish its right to spread slavery into the new territories. Containment, the argument ran, meant eventual death, since the cotton kingdom's well-being was predicated on expansion, and the upper South's prosperity from slave breeding depended on the opening of new cotton, slave-labor areas. It was no wonder that George Thompson (who was a politician, although a Garrisonian) in March of 1861 expressed to the Pennsylvania Abolition Society his wish for a "complete and irrevocable" separation of free and slave states.[4]

Another constitutional question, besides the slavery issue, that created confusion in the British mind was the blockade. Technically, by declaring the blockade, Lincoln had himself recognized Confederate belligerency. The friends of the North in the British cabinet, therefore, pushed for a proclamation of neutrality, because only then could the blockade be officially recognized.[5] The

3. *Ibid.*, Feb., 1861.
4. Pennsylvania Abolition Society, Minutes, III, entry for Mar. 25, 1861.
5. *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd ser., CLXV, 1187–97, for William Forster's

niceties of such legal points were completely overlooked by American public opinion, however, and the British declaration of neutrality was interpreted as a distinctly pro-South gesture. As the war went on and the question of breaking the blockade became an issue, these same friends of the North could fall back on British recognition of the blockade as a legal impediment to breaking it, an action which most certainly would result in war with the United States. At that point they were able to consolidate the British people's fear of involvement in war with their basically antislavery attitude.

As long as the United States refused to make slavery an issue in the war, there were many grounds on which the pro-southern factions in the British government, industrial interests, and press could appeal to public sympathy. The South was the minority section, the underdog, standing up valiantly for its rights against the industrial colossus of the North. Their cause for independence was equated with those of the Greeks, the Belgians, and the Poles, all of whom were heroes in British eyes. Economically, there was not only the need for southern cotton, but the South was the section which favored free trade—a cause over which many Britons could become very vociferous. Of perhaps even greater importance was the combination of economic-nationalistic rivalry with the United States. A setback to the power of that quickly growing young nation was considered almost automatically a positive gain for Britain. Unless slowed down, the United States would not be content merely with the land she had taken on her way to the Pacific, but she would turn next to Canada, Mexico, and Central America, including the Caribbean islands. A weaker United States, it was argued, would certainly mean a safer, stronger Canada.

All of these points were hammered home to the British public over and over again in the press. The *Trent* affair in November, 1861, blown up all out of proportion by both sides as a case involving vital national honor, provoked statements and actions indicating that even antislavery people were sometimes patriots

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speech of Mar. 7, 1862, on the blockade, and CLXII, 192–193, for Bright's speech of May 28, 1861, upholding the government position on neutrality; Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations*, 37.

first and abolitionists second. At least they failed to see the antislavery issue clearly through the smoke of nationalistic uproar.

It would be rash to claim that antislavery sentiment pure and simple kept the British in the long run from recognizing the Confederacy or extending more aid to her. There were too many other factors involved: profits from trade with the North, reluctance to risk all-out involvement in war, mistrust of the French, and caution dictated by a fear of ending up on the losing side after all. But it would be equally inaccurate to disregard the antislavery element altogether. It was one of a combination of influences that helped to determine British policy. My purpose is not to judge the relative weight of each of these factors in the government's final decisions. It is, rather, to present evidence of continuing abolitionist endeavors against recognition of southern independence and against forcible intervention to break the blockade. My conclusion is that the importance of these efforts lay not so much in that they deflected government policy from a course it would otherwise have taken but, rather, in that they gave a supporting boost in the direction to which the government was already inclined. In this case, therefore, the government welcomed rather than resented abolitionist agitation.

Before any military clash had occurred between the North and the South, Lords Russell and Lyons both plainly interpreted the secession crisis as one based on slavery. It is also evident from their letters that they were convinced that the English in this case could never ally themselves with the South. ". . . it must ever be repugnant to our feelings to be in intimate relations with a Confederation formed on the avowed principle of perpetuation, if not of extending, slavery," wrote Lyons to Russell in December, 1860. Both believed that the indignation and horror of the British people's reaction might overpower all their material interests—an avowal, surely, of their belief that the antislavery movement in England had been effective and was a potent force to reckon with.[6] In other words, whether or not antislavery conviction actually would overbalance other interests may not be so impor-

6. "Correspondence Relating to the Civil War in the United States of America," *Parliamentary Papers*, 1862, LXII, 5–6. The quotation is from Lyons to Russell, Dec. 18, 1860.

tant as the fact that the government believed it might. If they overestimated the antislavery influence, it is probable they would also overestimate positive reaction to the Emancipation Proclamation when it came, despite the intervening impatience with Lincoln and the North. At the same time they were realistic about the economic question of cotton. A quarrel with the South would give Great Britain no opportunity of helping the slaves (they were convinced the South would not negotiate on the slavery issue for fear of acknowledging guilt) but would bring hardship to British working people. Therefore, the only possible policy was one of neutrality.

The shock to the British was great when Lincoln disavowed slavery as an issue and emancipation as a war aim, and one cannot be surprised that the expression of their adverse reaction was a general condemnation of the North, with a subsequent tendency to look for the good side in the southern position. If the North was pursuing only its nationalistic interests, not its humanitarian ideals, why should not Great Britain do the same? This policy allowed for material aid to the South if it would help bring cotton to the English mills, provided its practice should never be carried to the point of actually involving the nation in the war militarily. Britain had no compunctions about striking a blow at northern power if she could do so without injuring herself.

It seems clear now that at the time of the *Trent* affair, Great Britain did not want to be pushed to the point of war; again, when pressed about the building of ships destined for Confederate hands, she backed off. When the British did seriously consider intervention, it was intervention with the aim of mediation but not with the attitude that if mediation failed, forceful interference would necessarily follow. So even when some elements in the country clamored for action, the government was glad for the expression of contrary opinion (such as that of the antislavery forces) to bolster its own preference for neutrality. Of course the abolitionists could not know this and so were constantly fearful of recognition of the Confederate states, and they persistently agitated against it.

The big job of the abolitionists was to convince the British public that, official statements to the contrary, the real reason for

secession and for the South's willingness to fight a war was to uphold slavery. Therefore, in view of her traditional antislavery stand, recognition of the Confederacy would be a dishonor to the British nation. Indications that the Confederacy's determination was to perpetuate slavery could be found in her constitution and also in the speeches of her leaders. The one of Vice-President Alexander Stephens in which he said that slavery was the cornerstone of the new nation was particularly revealing, and other statements were culled from the speeches of Jefferson Davis, Alexander Toombs, John J. Crittenden, and William Yancey. They also searched for and found articles in southern newspapers from throughout the 1850s advocating the reopening of the slave trade. This evidence was collected and collated and was published in 1862 as a pamphlet, *What the South Is Fighting For.*[7] It was advertised as testimony from the lips of the Confederates themselves, just as Theodore Weld's *American Slavery as It Is* had been. By early 1863 all 10,000 copies of the first edition of the pamphlet had been sold, and the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society approved another edition of 10,000.[8]

As usual, the British abolitionists fell back on their old tactic of inundating Parliament with petitions—this time concentrating on opposition to recognition of the Confederacy. The campaign was launched in the spring of 1861 as soon as it became known that a motion for recognition would be introduced in Commons. After conferring with William E. Forster, abolitionist M.P., the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society decided that their best strategy would be to have Forster offer an amendment to any such motion that would make recognition contingent upon the Confederacy's concession of the right of search and a promise to cooperate against the slave trade. In view of other statements of the abolitionists insisting unconditionally on nonrecognition, it

7. *What the South Is Fighting For* (London, 1863). The *London Daily News* carried a series of letters by John Elliott Cairnes on the South and the reopening of the slave trade. See the issues of Nov. 5 and Dec. 18, 1862. See also the *London Morning Star and Dial,* Jan. 7, 9, 22, 27, 1862. On Aug. 27, 28, 29, and 30 the *Morning Star* carried reprints from the *Charleston Standard* and the *New Orleans Delta* favoring a reopening of the slave trade.

8. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, Feb. 6, 1863.

seems that their motive was to amend for the sake of emasculating and thus defeat the whole motion. As it turned out, it was not necessary for Forster to compromise even that much. His amendment simply expressed the inexpediency of interfering on behalf of those now in insurrection, and that sufficed to persuade Mr. Gregory of Galway to withdraw his recognition motion.[9]

In the summer a deputation of the antislavery society met with Palmerston to impress on him their views. So from the beginning, although a great part of the British press was asking for recognition, the government knew that there was a contrary point of view to be considered, even though it might constitute a minority view. Palmerston's adherence to a policy of abstention was probably influenced to some extent by his long dedication to the fight to end the slave trade and by the willingness of the Lincoln government to negotiate a new treaty based on mutual search. According to Palmerston's biographer, it was no small triumph for him to succeed in this matter, which had been such a persistent diplomatic problem over so many years.[10] It is interesting to note, too, that when Lord Russell received the Confederate agents William Yancey, A. Dudley Mann, and Pierre A. Yost, one of the questions he raised with them was the possibility of a revival of the slave trade by the South.[11] Palmerston acquiesced in Prince Albert's "toning down" of the British message after the *Trent* affair and privately, if not publicly, admitted his embarrassment over the Gladstone speech of October, 1862, which seemed to predict government recognition of the Confederacy.[12]

Although the Garrisonian abolitionists had at first favored letting the erring South depart in peace, once Fort Sumter was fired upon, they, too, for the most part, threw in their lot with the

9. *Ibid.*, Apr. 5, 15, 1861; *Parliamentary Debates*, 3rd ser., CLXIII, 762–763.

10. *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 1, Aug. 1, 1861; Herbert C. F. Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1936), II, 276.

11. Lord Russell to Lord Lyons, May 11, 1861, in "Correspondence Relating to the Civil War," *Parliamentary Papers*, 1862, LXII, 26.

12. Adams to Seward, Oct. 24, 1862, in "Correspondence Relating to the Civil War," *Parliamentary Papers*, 1863, LXXII, 208–209; Bell, *Lord Palmerston*, II, 294–295.

Union. A letter written by Harriet Beecher Stowe to Lord Shaftesbury may have been helpful, since she was idolized by the British abolitionists, especially the Garrisonian faction. She insisted that the war was over slavery and that the new Confederacy rested on it.[13] George Thompson became a most indefatigable lecturer in the effort to keep reminding the British populace, suffering workers especially, that their antislavery convictions must take precedence over their economic needs. And in the crisis of the war, British as well as American abolitionists subordinated their internal differences to the common cause. By the autumn of 1862 George Thompson and Louis Chamerovzow were corresponding with amazing cordiality (considering their recent bitter exchanges) over the need to cooperate to strengthen the hands of friends of the Union in Parliament. They also wanted to neutralize the effects of speeches made by the few antislavery men who were refusing to accept the general abolitionist position that the South's cause was, above all, slavery and that the North's was emancipation.[14]

Among the important men who refused to go along with the general abolitionist position were Lord Brougham and Charles Buxton. Brougham held that unless the federal government defined an antislavery position, the English were entitled to look on the invasion of the South as just as tyrannical as the recent invasions of Italy and Hungary to stop independence movements. Brougham had been in the antislavery movement too long and had played too important a role for his colleagues to denounce him, so sadly they attributed his "signs of decay" to his age and feebleness (he was in his eighties).[15] Buxton, the son of the great leader in the fight for the Emancipation Act of 1833, could not be thus excused on grounds of age. A speech he made in Maidstone in the fall of 1862 was considered by the abolitionists as particularly unfortunate. Buxton had not forsaken his antislavery

13. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Nov. 1, 1861.

14. Thompson to Chamerovzow, Nov. 9, 1862, Rhodes House Antislavery Papers, C 37/9.

15. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 187. W. H. Chesson, one of the authors of this volume, was the son of F. W. Chesson, abolitionist of the Civil War period. Much of the son's material was taken from his father's diary.

principles, but he had turned against the North for doing so. Wilberforce's son Samuel, now the bishop of Oxford, was also among those who argued that abolition was more apt to result from secession than from a maintenance of the Union. Nassau Senior, despite his friendship and correspondence with Charles Sumner, was convinced that slavery was so entrenched in the United States that it could not be overthrown.[16]

During the first two years of the war the abolitionists were sometimes hard put to it to justify and defend the Lincoln administration, but they latched on to every ray of hope they could find. In the autumn of 1861 Henry Highland Garnet, the black abolitionist from New York who had previously been forced to travel to England without a passport, was now issued one. Although this act passed unnoticed except in abolitionist circles, it was actually of major import, for it was the first practical step taken by the U.S. government to nullify the Dred Scott decision. Garnet was warmly welcomed in Great Britain as "the first black citizen of the Dis-United States." [17]

In October, 1861, when Senator Sumner gave a speech in Worcester, Massachusetts, calling for abolition as a war aim, it was interpreted as a signal that the government might be ready to take such a step.[18] Actions taken by the Lincoln administration in 1862 that were accepted as indicating an antislavery policy were the signing of the treaty providing for mutual search, application of the death penalty for conviction of guilt in slave trading, and the diplomatic recognition extended to Liberia and Haiti, the two black republics hitherto denied this American favor. Although most American abolitionists vehemently attacked the president's proposals for compensated emancipation in the border states, to be accompanied by colonization of those freed, British abolitionists reacted more favorably and added this to

16. *Morning Star,* Nov. 7, 1862; *Daily News,* Dec. 5, 1862; Ephraim D. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, 1925), I, 33; Pierce, ed., *Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner,* IV, 150–151. See the *Daily News,* Dec. 27, 1862, for an editorial critical of Buxton for raising the bogey of a servile insurrection.

17. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Oct. 1, 1861.

18. *Ibid.,* Nov. 1, 1861.

their list of signs of Lincoln's sincere wish to do everything that was constitutionally possible.[19] Salmon P. Chase, with a long record of antislavery activity and supposedly a power in Lincoln's cabinet, was already on record as willing to accept emancipation with compensation.[20] The passage of a law abolishing slavery in the District of Columbia was yet another positive accomplishment. Even when Lincoln rescinded the order of General David Hunter that slaves escaping behind Union lines should be considered free, the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* was very lenient and appreciated his constitutional predicament.[21]

Early in 1862, while the resolution of the *Trent* affair was still pending, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society moved to establish contact with the American minister, Charles Francis Adams. In February the society's secretary, Louis Chamerovzow, had an interview with him that led to the preparation of an address presented in April by an imposing deputation including Chamerovzow, Josiah Forster, and three abolitionist M.P.s: Samuel Gurney, John I. Briscoe, and A. Kinnaird. Also among the group was Gerard Ralston, who had been an active colonizationist, had backed Elliott Cresson in the 1830s, and had accepted an honorary office in the American Colonization Society. Evidently the war crisis was helping to heal old wounds between colonizationists and abolitionists as well as those between abolitionist factions.

No doubt the presentation of the address by delegation was done for publicity's sake, and they got it—but not all favorable. The *Times* commented sarcastically that a society that could be "condensed" into one hansom cab could hardly profess to speak for the nation. However, the fact that the *Times* deigned to notice the event at all perhaps indicates some fear that the antislavery forces were not so powerless as the *Times*'s publishers could have wished. Adams, in any case, received the deputation cordially and assured them that the Union's aim was to spread the blessings of liberty as much as possible, consistent with existing obligations.

19. *Ibid.*, Jan. 1, Apr. 1, May 1, June 2, 1862; *Glasgow Sentinel*, May 17, 1862.

20. Chase to John Greenleaf Whittier, Nov. 23, 1860, Whittier Letters.

21. *Daily News*, May 10, 30, 1862.

Since the slave-trade treaty providing for mutual search had just been signed, he could advance it as evidence to back up his words.[22]

Cordial relations between Adams and the antislavery society continued throughout the war. William E. Forster's role was significant, for he and Adams became personal friends, and he entertained the American minister at his home in Yorkshire. Indeed, Adams confided to Seward that he put much faith in Forster's "sound and valuable" advice and judgment on parliamentary matters.[23] Certainly the abolitionists considered themselves lucky to have a man of Adams's persuasion in the American legation.

Another friend to their cause was the American consul in Bristol, Zebina Eastman, who had previously edited an antislavery newspaper in Chicago, had visited England for the antislavery cause in the early 1850s, and who now combined antislavery activities with his official duties.[24] He was the first American holding a government position to give an antislavery lecture in Great Britain. In 1865 Elihu Burritt was made a consular agent in Birmingham, an area in which he was well known because of his earlier activity in connection with the free-produce movement. The presence of these men as appointees of the Lincoln administration seemed in itself an expression of the government's basic soundness on the slavery question.

It was in the autumn of 1862 that the London Emancipation Committee reorganized as the Emancipation Society and set up an office in Fleet Street, just in time to capitalize on the news of the Emancipation Proclamation. They were fortunate to have as influential founding members Samuel Lucas, who was business manager of the *Morning Star,* and P. A. Taylor, M.P. Simultaneously, a new Ladies' Emancipation Society began to meet at the Taylor home in Notting Hill.[25] During the course of the war years this ladies' group put out a series of pamphlets dealing with slavery, the South, and the Negro question. Some were written

22. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* May 1, 1862; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, Feb. 7, Mar. 7, Apr. 4, May 2, 1862.

23. Adams to Seward, Oct. 17, 1860, in "Correspondence Relating to the Civil War," *Parliamentary Papers,* 1863, LXXII, 208–209.

24. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* May 1, 1862.

25. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 182–183.

by the ladies themselves, such as those of Emily Sherriff on *The Chivalry of the South;* one, called *Professor Huxley on the Negro Question,* was compiled by Mrs. Taylor; and the American Sarah Remond contributed *Negroes and Anglo-Americans as Freedmen and Soldiers.*

In addition to the London societies, among the most active during the war was the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester, operating in the heart of Lancashire. There the effects of the blockade were most acutely felt, and there was the most need to combat the pro-southern feeling resulting from the cotton famine. Under the leadership of Thomas Bayley Potter, a businessman and friend of Richard Cobden, in three years the society issued and circulated 400,000 books, pamphlets, and tracts and held nearly 500 official and public meetings.[26]

Contrary to the traditional myth that the cotton-starved workers of Lancashire refused to support the slaveholding South, a recent study presents an overwhelming mass of evidence that a great deal of pro-southern sentiment existed in that area and that there was a direct correlation between southern sympathy and the degree of the workers' suffering. Rochdale, the home of Bright and Cobden, did remain pro-North, but it was atypical rather than typical of Lancashire attitudes. The conclusion of this study by Mary Ellison is not that the Lancashire people became proslavery but that they found ways to rationalize the argument that emancipation was more apt to result from an independent South, since the North was denying all intentions of general emancipation.[27] The *Glasgow Sentinel,* which was often pro-North but also critical of specific federal policies, warned that the cotton weavers entertained some "very Napoleonic notions of the propriety of setting aside the southern blockade."[28] It is evident that the abolitionists realized the need for strong action in the Lancashire area, and their frequent references to, and praise of, the consistent antislavery principles of the workers were designed

26. *Ibid.,* 100–101, 107, 183.

27. Mary Louise Ellison, "The Reaction of Lancashire to the American Civil War" (Unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1968).

28. *Glasgow Sentinel,* Jan. 25, 1862.

to revive and to try to salvage either a badly sagging morale or one that had already succumbed to economic pressures.

Of course the antislavery societies tried to enlist the aid of lecturers and writers whose prestige would carry influence. Harriet Beecher Stowe was at the top of the list. In 1861 her letter to Lord Shaftesbury was published, and in the summer of 1862 so was her letter to the duchess of Argyle, which challenged the "justice" of English sympathy for the South, particularly in such instances as the contretemps between General Benjamin Butler and the ladies of New Orleans. Late in 1862 she penned an address to the women of England that was an answer to the address they had sent through her to America eight years earlier.[29] *Uncle Tom's Cabin* was still fresh in English minds, as were two other novels of the fifties that were similar in sympathy and tone: Richard Hildreth's *The White Slave* and William Wells Brown's *Clotel: Or the President's Daughter,* both published in 1853. In 1862 F. W. Chesson sponsored the launching of another narrative of slavery, by Mrs. Harriet Jacobs, an escaped slave. It was published in England as *The Deeper Wrong* and in the United States as *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl,* edited by Lydia Maria Child. Harriet Martineau wrote numerous articles for the papers, and Tom Hughes, best known as the author of *Tom Brown's School Days,* contributed a tract called *The Cause of Freedom.*[30]

Several university professors wrote books that were widely circulated by the antislavery societies. Notable were *The Revolution in America* by the economist John Elliott Cairnes of Queens College, Galway, and at least half a dozen by the Oxford historian Goldwin Smith. Professor F. W. Newman of the University of London challenged William E. Gladstone's pro-southern position as stated in his Newcastle speech of October, 1862 (in which Gladstone said the South had made a nation), and their exchange of letters was published.[31] Excerpts from the speeches or other

29. Fields, ed., *Life and Letters of Harriet Beecher Stowe,* 263–272; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Mar. 5, 1863.

30. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 179, 185; Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* I, 70.

31. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Jan. 1, 1863.

writings of Richard Cobden, John Bright, and John Stuart Mill were also widely publicized.

John Stuart Mill's most significant piece was his article in *Fraser's Magazine* early in February, 1862, just after the crisis of the *Trent*.[32] He rejoiced that the storm was over, for it would have been shameful for a nation devoted to ending slavery and the slave trade to help establish one devoted to perpetuating them. If England had gone to war, he wrote, in the long run her "just" provocation would be forgotten and only the result remembered, to her disgrace. In the *Trent* affair Lincoln's government had been honest and had retracted; now the offense of the North should be forgotten, since slavery, he insisted, was the real issue. Even if the motives of the North lent themselves to misunderstanding and misinterpretation, surely those of the South did not: independence for freedom was one thing; independence in order to oppress was quite another. He reminded his readers that it was the southern states that had made the United States seem imperialistic—in Texas, for example. And as for the North's new tariff (the Morrill), so much criticized by free traders, it would never have been needed except to meet the cost of fighting secession.

It was in 1862, when southern prospects of victory seemed brightest, that Fanny Kemble decided to publish the journal she had kept in 1839 as the reluctant mistress of a Georgia rice plantation. Miss Kemble had gone to the United States in 1832 with her famous actor-father, Charles Kemble, and while there fell in love with and married Pierce M. Butler, unaware that he was the absentee owner of two plantations and over 600 slaves. In 1838, when the plantations were left without an overseer, Fanny went with her husband to Georgia to help take charge. The whole slave system was repugnant to her, and her journal was a severe indictment of it; but even after her divorce she had refrained from publishing. Now, alarmed by pro-southern public opinion and fearful that her country might recognize the Con-

32. John Stuart Mill, "The Contest in America," *Fraser's Magazine*, LXV (Feb., 1862), 258–268.

federacy, she decided that it was her duty to bring out the book.[33] Abolitionists ascribed much credit to it as helping to influence public opinion.

Just as the British antislavery societies were hitting their stride in publications and lectures to aid the Union, news came to boost their cause and substantiate their claims of the North's sincere desire to end slavery: the Emancipation Proclamation. Of course the pro-South press cried out that it was hypocritical, meant to provoke a slave insurrection, and a political move to conceal federal desperation. The *Times* described the horrors that would ensue from a servile uprising and depicted Lincoln as rubbing his hands together with the satisfaction of sweet revenge. After noting that he was proclaiming freedom for slaves in areas where he had no power but allowing slavery to remain where he did have power, they compared him to a pope who sold indulgences to his own votaries. It was an act, they concluded, prompted by hopelessness and recklessness. The *Glasgow Sentinel* bemoaned the fact that it came at a time when the Confederate Army lay within sight of the capital. It sounded, therefore, like the act of a desperate government exhibiting "petty and abortive spite." They did not doubt that its effect would be to serve the cause of humanity, but it would be absurd to pretend that its motive stemmed from great moral resolve.[34]

The antislavery antagonists hailed such criticism as "outcries of a faction sighting their defeat from afar." They admitted that Lincoln's proclamation stopped short of full achievement of their own hopes and that it was motivated by military necessity, but,

33. John A. Scott, ed., *Journal of a Residence on a Georgia Plantation in 1838–1839 by Frances Anne Kemble* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1961).

34. *Times* (London), Oct. 7, 1862; *Glasgow Sentinel*, Oct. 11, 1862. Miss Ellison's study shows that the Lancashire press interpreted the Emancipation Proclamation as a military maneuver that used the Negro as a pawn, and they remained anti-Lincoln until after his assassination. Russell wrote to Lord Lyons on Jan. 17, 1863, that the Emancipation Proclamation was "a measure of war, and a measure of war of a very questionable kind." Since it contained no *principle* adverse to slavery, he did not think it could "or ought to satisfy the friends of abolition, who look for total and impartial freedom for the slave, and not for vengeance on the slave owner." See "Correspondence Relating to the Civil War," *Parliamentary Papers*, 1863, LXXII, 51–52.

they argued, it came on the wings of victory rather than despair, and the result was the important thing. It would mean freedom for the slaves whatever the administration's motives might have been. They accepted it as an earnest of full emancipation to come. They reminded the British public that Britain's own emancipation act had not been "pure" either. It had included compensation for the slave owners, and its apprenticeship system had postponed full emancipation for the slaves.[35]

Regardless of the negative reaction of the British government, or what importance historians ascribe to the Emancipation Proclamation in influencing British diplomatic policy, contemporary abolitionists did not doubt that it turned the tide in their favor. In December, 1862, the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* believed that even the *Times* was wavering in its sympathies, and they saw in its articles "feelers" in order to know where next to plant the editorial foot, not to try the public pulse; according to the *Reporter,* the *Times* was well aware that "that beats healthily enough."[36] The *Reporter* was probably referring to editorials of November 13 and 15, which came out against England joining France in some scheme of mediation, and to the letter from the *Times*'s American correspondent in the December 18 issue, which praised Lincoln's proposal to Congress that the Constitution should be amended to allow for abolition with compensation to loyal owners. The *Times* admitted that if Lincoln had taken such a stand at the outbreak of the war, the sympathies of the British should have been on his side.

On December 6, 1862, John Bright wrote to Charles Sumner that British antislavery sentiment was being called forth anew by the Emancipation Proclamation, and in February, 1863, Richard Cobden wrote Sumner that the proclamation had done its work effectively. By April the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* was ascribing a "new caution" to Lord Russell, stemming from the great outburst of feeling following Lincoln's proclamation. This was being expressed in large public gatherings all over Great

35. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 85; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Nov. 1, 1862; *Morning Star,* Oct. 6, 1862.

36. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Dec. 1, 1862.

Britain.[37] By the autumn of that year Goldwin Smith wrote to the American abolitionist C. E. Norton that since the issue had become one of free labor versus slavery, the North had the support of a good many of the intellectual class, the more religious part of the middle class, the ministers of most of the Free churches, and the great mass of the intelligent lower class.[38]

It may well be, of course, that the abolitionists saw what they wanted to see, but certainly they put forth their utmost efforts to capitalize on what they viewed as the new turn of events enabling them to shift from a defensive to an offensive strategy. Late in 1862, even before the Emancipation Proclamation was to be officially in effect, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society prepared an address to President Lincoln that could also be published as a tract on the American crisis. Copies were sent to all the London daily and religious papers, to fifty American newspapers, and to the governors of all the loyal states. When the mailing list was enlarged to include all of the Members of Parliament, ministers of the Gospel, and newspapers throughout Great Britain, the proposed edition of 5,000 was doubled.[39] About fifty abolitionists, "gentlemen of position and influence" from different parts of the country, met in London to make up a delegation to wait on Charles Francis Adams to present him with the official copy for President Lincoln. Evidently this time they did not want to give the *Times* the pleasure of calling them a one-hansom-cab society. Adams was explicitly told that neither he nor the American people should believe that the *Times* spoke for the British people, and the same message was conveyed in private correspondence with American abolitionists.[40]

37. Cobden to Sumner, Feb. 13, 1863, quoted in Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 86–87; Pierce, ed., *Memoir and Letters of Charles Sumner,* IV, 153; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Apr. 1, 1863.

38. Christine Anne Bolt, "British Attitudes to Reconstruction in the United States, 1863–1877" (Unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, University of London, 1966), published as *The Anti-Slavery Movement and Reconstruction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969).

39. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, Nov. 17, Dec. 5, 22, 1862.

40. *Ibid.,* Feb. 6, 1863; Richard D. Webb to J. Miller McKim, Aug. 30, 1861, Anti-Slavery Papers, Cornell University.

The British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, the London Emancipation Society, and the Union and Emancipation Society of Manchester were especially active in organizing public meetings that would give antislavery people the chance to voice their approval of Lincoln's progress. They were determined that the hitherto silent masses should now be heard to as great an extent as the vocal pro-Confederate press. Much of the effort, therefore, was aimed at the working classes. To start with, in December, 1862, mass meetings were held in London, Liverpool, Manchester, and Sheffield, with a similar format for all. Antislavery lectures were delivered, sometimes debates were included such as in the one at Liverpool where a *Times* correspondent defended the South, and then resolutions were passed in support of Lincoln and the Union. These were embossed and delivered to Minister Adams for transmission to Washington.[41] The fact that Lincoln had solicited such help, and had even sent Bright the draft of a sample resolution, seems not to have been known or, if it was, did not act as a deterrent to the "spontaneity" of such meetings.[42]

Similar meetings continued throughout the war. Professor Royden Harrison, who has concluded that ideological factors rather than the "direct operation of economic considerations" determined the British workers' opinions, counted five pro-Union meetings organized by British workers in 1862, fifty-six in 1863, and another fifty-six in 1864. These do not include those organized by other societies or groups.[43] In one issue alone of the *Anti-*

41. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Feb. 3, 1863.

42. Trevelyan, *Life of John Bright,* 303n; David Donald, *Lincoln Reconsidered: Essays on the Civil War Era* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1956), 123.

43. Royden Harrison, "British Labor and American Slavery," *Science and Society,* XXV (Dec., 1961), 291–319. But he challenges the theory that British labor was solidly behind Lincoln from the beginning. Several labor leaders and editors were actually pro-Confederacy, but Harrison found the change dating from late 1862 (after the news of the forthcoming Emancipation Proclamation). Martin P. Claussen, "Peace Factors in Anglo-American Relations, 1861–1865," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review,* XXVI (Mar., 1939–1940), 511–522, concludes that some working-class papers were critical of both North and South but began to applaud northern abolitionism in the spring of 1863. He thinks a large ingredient in workers' sympathies was the factor of economic opportunity and democracy, which they associated with the North. Richard Greenleaf, "British Labor against American Slavery," *Science and Society,* XVII (Winter, 1953), 42–58, gives much more weight to labor's antislavery convictions.

Slavery Reporter (March 5, 1863) there are brief reports of forty-seven meetings at which pro-North, pro-Lincoln attitudes were expressed. John Bright repeatedly appealed to the workers to stick with the North because of the evil of the South. His great theme was that the Union had given refuge to thousands of British working people, while the South degraded and made chattels of its labor.

It was Bright who suggested that an American fund be raised to aid suffering workers in Lancashire. By early 1863 thousands of dollars had been donated, and the ship *Hope,* followed later by two other vessels, arrived in Liverpool with food and flour as tangible evidence of northern concern.[44] The Reverend Charles Wheeler Dennison, chaplain on the relief ship *George Griswold,* traveled and spoke in Lancashire for the northern cause.

Mary Ellison's recent study indicates doubt that the antislavery meetings, organized mostly by outsiders, had much effect on the attitudes of the Lancashire workers or that Bright carried with him many in the area outside of his own town of Rochdale and the noncotton section of the west. But the significant fact remains that if this is true, the government either did not realize it or chose to ignore it. It listened to voices it wanted to hear—those of Bright and Cobden.[45] Charles Francis Adams certainly appears to have accepted the mass meetings and resolutions as genuine support from the working classes hitherto denied a means of expression because of the pro-southern press.[46] Thomas Dudley, the American consul at Liverpool, reported strong pro-southern feeling in the area, but he credited Bright with "toning down" the war excitement over the *Trent.*[47]

44. Greenleaf, "British Labor against American Slavery"; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Jan. 1, 1863; Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 163.

45. Ellison, "Reaction of Lancashire to the American Civil War," 2, 17, 74, 100, 122. These pages refer to only a few of the pertinent statements. This is the essence of her whole thesis. She maintains that Lancashire workers also rejected such antislavery lecturers as Mason Jones, who had spent some time in the United States, and Peter Sinclair, but were more inclined to listen to Joseph Barker, who had lived there from 1851 to 1860, had been a Garrisonian abolitionist, but now supported the South and argued that slavery was not an issue in the war. See pp. 70–71.

46. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* II, 108.

47. Thomas H. Dudley, *Three Critical Periods in Our Diplomatic Relations with*

It seems to have been in areas other than Lancashire that pro-northern appeals to the working classes received a positive reception and where speeches on northern democracy and free labor were the most effective. The London Trades Council, organized in 1860, promoted massive workingmen's demonstrations against slavery and for the North. Although many of the trade-union newspapers and editors were actually pro-South, the group in the London Trades Council known as the Junta managed to gain control of one paper, the *Beehive,* dismissed its editor, and changed the editorial policy to a pro-northern one. E. S. Beesly, professor of history at University College, London, was thereafter one of the most frequent contributors to the *Beehive,* and he played much upon the theme of "railsplitter to President." [48]

Another way of reaching the working classes, in addition to approaching them through the trade unions, was through the churches. After the crisis of the *Trent* affair, the Evangelical Alliance held a meeting in Exeter Hall to pray for peace that was attended by about 4,000 persons. On December 17, 1861, the ministers of the three great dissenting denominations held a meeting in London that unanimously adopted resolutions calling for arbitration and deprecating war; the Congregational Union took similar action separately. A joint deputation of Baptists and Independents interviewed Lord Russell in the interests of peace.[49] The London Emancipation Society appealed to all ministers of the Gospel to give prominence in their sermons to the Emancipation Proclamation. How many actually did is impossible to ascertain, but some certainly responded positively and were reported in the antislavery papers. Late in 1862 the Reverend Newman Hall, one of the most popular preachers of the day, delivered a series of lectures in Surrey Chapel to crowds of

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England during the Late War . . . , reprinted from *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography,* XVII (Apr., 1893).

48. Jack R. Pole, *Abraham Lincoln and the Working Classes of Britain* (London: Commonwealth-American Current Affairs Unit of the English Speaking Union, [1959]).

49. Donaldson Jordan and Edwin J. Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1931), 39. Miss Ellison's study of Lancashire finds no support for the thesis that Nonconformists were pro-North and Church of England pro-South.

workers estimated in the thousands.[50] The great revivalist C. H. Spurgeon, who also drew thousands to his meetings, prayed publicly for the success of the northern cause.[51] When the *Address of the Southern Clergy,* which defended both slavery and the Confederate cause in the war, came out in England, the antislavery societies distributed it with confidence that it would do more harm than good for the South.[52]

Professor Goldwin Smith contributed to the religious argument with a pamphlet, *Does the Bible Sanction American Slavery?,* in which he traced the institution from Old Testament times but pointed out that just as other Old Testament institutions had been replaced in the course of evolutionary progress, so should slavery. To him the Civil War was basically the Christian ideal at its best versus slavery. Professor Smith did not absolve the North from all fault, but the slave-owning class of the South, in his book, bore the major share of the guilt. If that class should be defeated, he maintained, the poor whites as well as the blacks of the South would be better off.[53] (This was essentially the position Marx and Engels were taking in their *New York Tribune* articles.)

In the summer of 1863 a ministerial antislavery conference was held in Free Trade Hall, Manchester, and although it was disrupted by anti-North demonstrators, the Reverend Dr. James Massie and the Reverend J. H. Rylance were chosen to go to the United States to convey an address to the ministers there and to present a copy to President Lincoln. Massie was already the author of one pro-northern book, *The American Crisis, in Relation to the Anti-Slavery Cause,* and upon his return from America he penned another in defense of the North.[54]

When the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher arrived from Amer-

50. *Morning Star,* Oct. 22, 1862; *Daily News,* Dec. 12, 1862; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Jan. 1, 1863.

51. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 111.

52. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Sept. 1, 1863.

53. Goldwin Smith, *Does the Bible Sanction American Slavery?* (Oxford: John Henry, 1863); *Speech of Mr. W. E. Forster, M.P., on the Slaveholders' Rebellion; and Professor Goldwin Smith's Letter on the Morality of the Emancipation Proclamation* (Manchester: Union and Emancipation Society, 1863).

54. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Feb. 1, 1864; James W. Massie, *The American*

ica in the autumn of 1863, he was sometimes forced to overcome "a turbulent sea of noisy hostility" before he could speak. But he made major addresses to overflow crowds in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. On October 20, in a triumphal climax, he spoke to a more than capacity audience in Exeter Hall, with thousands more outside trying to get in. He left for America convinced that the British people were sound to the core in their antislavery convictions. Other American antislavery ministers who visited England during the war and preached for the northern cause included William H. Channing, Charles Grandison Finney, George B. Cheever, J. M. Sturtevant, Dr. and Mrs. Walter C. Palmer, and Bishop Charles P. McIlvaine.[55]

Throughout the war escaped slaves still flocked to Great Britain for refuge. Indeed, their numbers swelled with the rising tide of freedmen who took advantage of the upheaval. As always, they were eager to cooperate with the antislavery people in publicizing the evils of the South and the atrocities committed against freedmen trying to escape. Among them was William A. Jackson, who had been a coachman for Jefferson Davis and was made to order for propaganda purposes.[56] The Reverend Sella Martin was another American Negro who worked in England during the war years. In March, 1863, the Freedman's Aid Society was organized in St. James Hall, Piccadilly, in London.[57]

Abolitionist optimism was not without its setbacks. In the spring of 1863 there was renewed alarm as news came in of the depredations of the *Alabama*, as reports multiplied that more ships were being built for the Confederacy, and as notice was given of upcoming motions in Parliament favoring recognition of

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Crisis, in Relation to the Anti-Slavery Cause (London: John Snow, 1862); Massie, *America: The Origin of Her Present Conflict; Her Prospect for the Slave, and Her Claim for Anti-Slavery Sympathy . . .* (London: John Snow, 1864).

55. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 127–129, 199–200; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Nov. 2, 1863; Henry Ward Beecher, *American Rebellion: Report of the Speeches of the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher . . .* (Manchester: Union and Emancipation Society, 1864); Timothy Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), 202.

56. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 181.

57. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* May 1, 1863.

the Confederate States of America. The antislavery societies responded as usual with direct pressure on Parliament and the organization of mass meetings of protest. In anticipation of Lord Stratheden's motion for recognition, the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society sent to each member of the House of Lords copies of *What the South Is Fighting For* and their latest tract, *British Aid to the Confederates.* It was not until Stratheden's motion was safely voted down that they could dismiss it as "a weak cause in the hands of the weakest of advocates." [58] In Commons William E. Forster introduced a motion censuring the building of the *Alabama* and other vessels for the South, and in preparation for the vote the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society distributed copies of their tracts to the members of that house. The Manchester Union and Emancipation Society prepared yet another petition.[59] They were able to claim victory when the Commons reacted so strongly that John A. Roebuck of Sheffield withdrew his motion that the British should negotiate with other powers to recognize the Confederacy. They did not, however, relax their agitation.[60]

In March, 1863, a great meeting was held at St. James Hall in London at which John Bright addressed an audience of artisans and workingmen on the subject of the *Alabama.* This meeting marked a reconciliation between Bright and the Junta of the London Trades Council, which had worked closely with Karl Marx, and thereby provided a stronger base for the argument that a northern victory was of prime importance to the English workingman. A victory for free labor in America, the argument ran, would have a direct impact on parliamentary reform in the direction of granting political rights to the British common people.[61]

During the first week in April a similar meeting was held at

58. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Apr. 1, 1863; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, Apr. 20, 1863.

59. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, Apr. 20, 1863; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Apr. 1, 1863.

60. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 135; Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* II, 177.

61. Villiers and Chesson, *Anglo-American Relations,* 201; Pole, *Lincoln and the Working Classes of Britain,* 24.

the Free Trade Hall in Manchester at which George Thompson and Professors F. W. Newman and Goldwin Smith were among the main speakers. In addition to protesting the building of ships for the Confederacy, they concentrated on arguments of special concern to Lancashire. What good would it do to get cotton, they asked, if they could not get corn from the North? To recognize the Confederacy meant certain war with the North, but war would not assure success in breaking the blockade. English workers might be left without either cotton or corn. If free trade were the South's aim, why hadn't those states agitated for it by peaceful means, as the English had done? Always the South was represented as the land of aristocrats allied with English "capitalists, ship-builders and money brokers," while the North was the land of democracy and of opportunity for workingmen. English workers were reminded that the western territories were "the heritage of *your* descendants" (italics mine) and that southern control of those lands would mean decreasing the area of opportunity and liberty for their own sons.

There was also the appeal to antislavery ideals and necessary sacrifices: England had paid £20,000,000 to free her slaves; the North had paid already over 100,000 lives. As usual, the British press was denounced for pretending to speak for the people. The *Times* was accused of even suppressing news of northern military victories in order to make it seem that the South was unbeatable. At the end of the meeting a petition to the Commons was drawn up that objected to the *Alabama* and the *Florida* and to other ships reported in preparation. Abolitionists credited the "wind that blew from Manchester" as a result of this meeting with stopping the release of yet another ship, the *Alexandra*.[62]

Similar meetings protesting ships for the Confederacy were held in the spring of 1863 in Liverpool and Glasgow—on the banks of the rivers Mersey and Clyde, where ships were constructed—and a deputation of trade unionists led by John Bright and Professor E. S. Beesly visited Charles Francis Adams to pre-

62. Goldwin Smith, *War Ships for the Southern Confederacy: Report of a Public Meeting in the Free-Trade Hall, Manchester* . . . (Manchester: Union and Emancipation Society, 1863).

sent him with their resolutions.[63] In the autumn the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society drew up two new memorials on the war vessels, which were sent to Earl Russell and to Viscount Palmerston.[64] At the beginning of the new year, 1864, the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* claimed a victory in the seizure of a steamer called the *Pampero*, alleged to be destined for the Confederacy. According to them, the Glasgow Emancipation Society had spied on and reported its building, forcing the authorities to move in.[65]

While it is true that most of the British press remained pro-South or at least anti-North throughout most of the war, the abolitionists did have some newspapers, periodicals, and influential individual writers on their side. We have noted that the *London Morning Star* was an abolitionist paper, but its circulation was limited. Of more consequence was the *London Daily News*, whose New York correspondent was E. L. Godkin. His letters provided a counterbalance to those furnished the *Times* by W. H. Russell. The *Spectator* and the *Westminster Review* also reached a wide audience.[66] Outside London, the *Manchester Examiner*, *Newcastle Chronicle*, and *Birmingham Post* were pro-Union.[67] In addition to writers who were specifically recruited by the antislavery societies, several others voluntarily added the influence of their names, among them Robert Browning and Sir Charles Lyell. Charles Darwin was strongly antislavery but, like Brougham and Buxton, lost his sympathy for the North. Anthony Trollope, after a tour of the United States in 1861, published a two-volume work called *North America.* He was completely sympathetic to the northern cause but despaired of forcing the South back into the Union.[68]

63. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, Apr. 20, 1863; *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* June 1, 1863.

64. British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, Oct. 2, Nov. 6, 1863.

65. *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Jan. 1, 1864.

66. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* I, 69–70.

67. Bolt, "British Attitudes to Reconstruction," 9. A new study of British newspapers and the American Civil War is the subject of a doctoral dissertation in progress by Thomas Keiser at the University of Reading.

68. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* I, 70, II, 153; Jordan and Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War,* 77–79.

By late 1863 and 1864 there was a definite slackening of pace in antislavery activity. After Gettysburg and Vicksburg there was really no further danger of British recognition of the Confederacy, and hopeful signs loomed larger than discouraging ones. The Emancipation Proclamation had not produced the servile insurrection that Lincoln's critics at first predicted, slaves were being freed as they reached the security of Union lines, and in July, 1864, the much-hated Fugitive Slave Act was repealed. The seizure of the Laird Rams by the British authorities seemed to cinch things. Long before Congress passed the 13th Amendment in March, 1865, the British *Anti-Slavery Reporter* was exuding confidence that all was ending well.

In the autumn of 1864 Goldwin Smith traveled across the ocean to observe at first hand the presidential campaign and election. His optimistic pro-northern and pro-Lincoln reports strengthened British abolitionist conviction that victory was just around the corner.[69] By this time, also, the economic distress in Lancashire, which had reached its peak in 1862, had eased. By the late summer or early fall of 1863 a balance was reached in production, and by the end of 1863 profitable operations were once more possible. By early 1863 even the *Times* correspondent from Lancashire was reporting that prospects were brighter than they had been for months and that the worst was over.[70] Military, diplomatic, and economic factors provided solid backing for abolitionist optimism, and they claimed credit for their own efforts in all of these areas.

In the military area they claimed that abolitionist pressure in America had resulted in the use of Negro troops, thus adding another item on the credit side of Lincoln's good intentions and the North's basic belief in democracy, which British abolitionists had then put to good use in their pro-northern propaganda. Nor had these antislavery camps neglected to publicize Jefferson Davis's order that captured Negro troops would not be dealt

69. Arnold Houltain, *Goldwin Smith, His Life and Opinions . . .* (London: T. Werner Laurie, [1913]).

70. Arthur W. Silver, *Manchester Men and Indian Cotton 1847–1872* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1966), 175, 225; *Times* (London), Jan. 3, 1863.

with as other prisoners of war but would, in fact, be killed. All of these things, they believed, had helped to counteract pro-southern sympathies in England. In the diplomatic area abolitionists recounted the direct pressures they had applied on the British government through deputations and petitions but, more important, their indirect pressure by organizing public opinion and providing channels for its expression. As a result Great Britain had stuck to its policy of neutrality despite interventionist pressures from within the country and particularly from France.

In the economic field abolitionists claimed credit for the fact that the loss of southern cotton was to some extent, at least, compensated for with Indian cotton. Ever since the late eighteenth century they had agitated for the substitution of Indian "free" cotton for American slave-produced cotton. In the 1820s, but especially in the 1840s and 1850s, this idea had been renewed with vigor. When the war came, even though the production of Indian cotton was still not really successful, the idea had taken hold that it could be made so. Belief in the possibility may have deterred both cotton manufacturers and the workers from exerting more pressure to recognize the Confederacy. Their faith in this alternative is evidenced in memorials sent to the government to request aid to facilitate the cotton projects already begun in India. At first the Indian merchants, thinking they no longer had any competition, sent to England their worst cotton—trash and sweepings in some cases—but by 1864 more emphasis was being put on the quality rather than the quantity of Indian cotton.[71]

All in all, the antislavery forces felt they were entitled to share the laurels of victory. Before the war was over, their activities were already shifting to the cause of the future: aid to the freedmen. In May, 1864, Levi Coffin, who had won the unofficial title of "President of the Underground Railroad," arrived from the United States to promote this new cause. He was cordially welcomed, sponsored by the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and a meeting was arranged to organize the London Freedman's Aid Society. It was held at the home of Dr. Hodgkin, the old colonizationist, and attended by John Bright and Richard Cobden as well as such antislavery leaders as William E. Forster,

71. Silver, *Manchester Men and Indian Cotton*, 174, 186, 226.

Samuel Gurney, Newman Hall, and James Massie. Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton was named its first president.[72] For the most part the new society was but an extension of the antislavery societies. Such well-known names as Gurney, Buxton, Chesson, Allen, Forster, Smeal, and Chamerovzow still stood out in the new enterprise.[73]

When George Thompson visited the United States in 1864, the old antislavery men felt their cause had finally come full circle. Unlike his treatment in 1835, when he had been hounded out of the country as a radical agitator, now he (and vicariously all abolitionists with him) was honored in high places. The House of Representatives was opened for his reception, and President Lincoln and most of his cabinet were present to hear him speak. He visited Lincoln at the White House, and by invitation of Secretary of War Stanton, Thompson and Garrison accompanied Major Anderson on board the *Arago* in 1865 to unfurl the Stars and Stripes once more over Fort Sumter.[74] To abolitionists this symbolized the successful climax of Anglo-American cooperation against slavery. Back home in England, antislavery societies disbanded in the atmosphere of euphoria expressed by Goldwin Smith's eulogy: "SLAVERY IS DEAD EVERYWHERE AND FOREVER."

72. Friends Tract Association, *Levi Coffin, the Friend of the Slave* (London: Headley Brothers, 1915), 39–40 (this pamphlet may be found in the Lady Simon Papers, K/21, Rhodes House Library); *Anti-Slavery Reporter,* Aug. 1, 1864; British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, Minute Book IV, July 1, 1864.

73. Bolt, "British Attitudes to Reconstruction," 182–184.

74. Johnson, *William Lloyd Garrison and His Times,* 137; George Thompson to [Oliver] Johnson, Mar. 31, 1864, Jenkins Autograph Collection.

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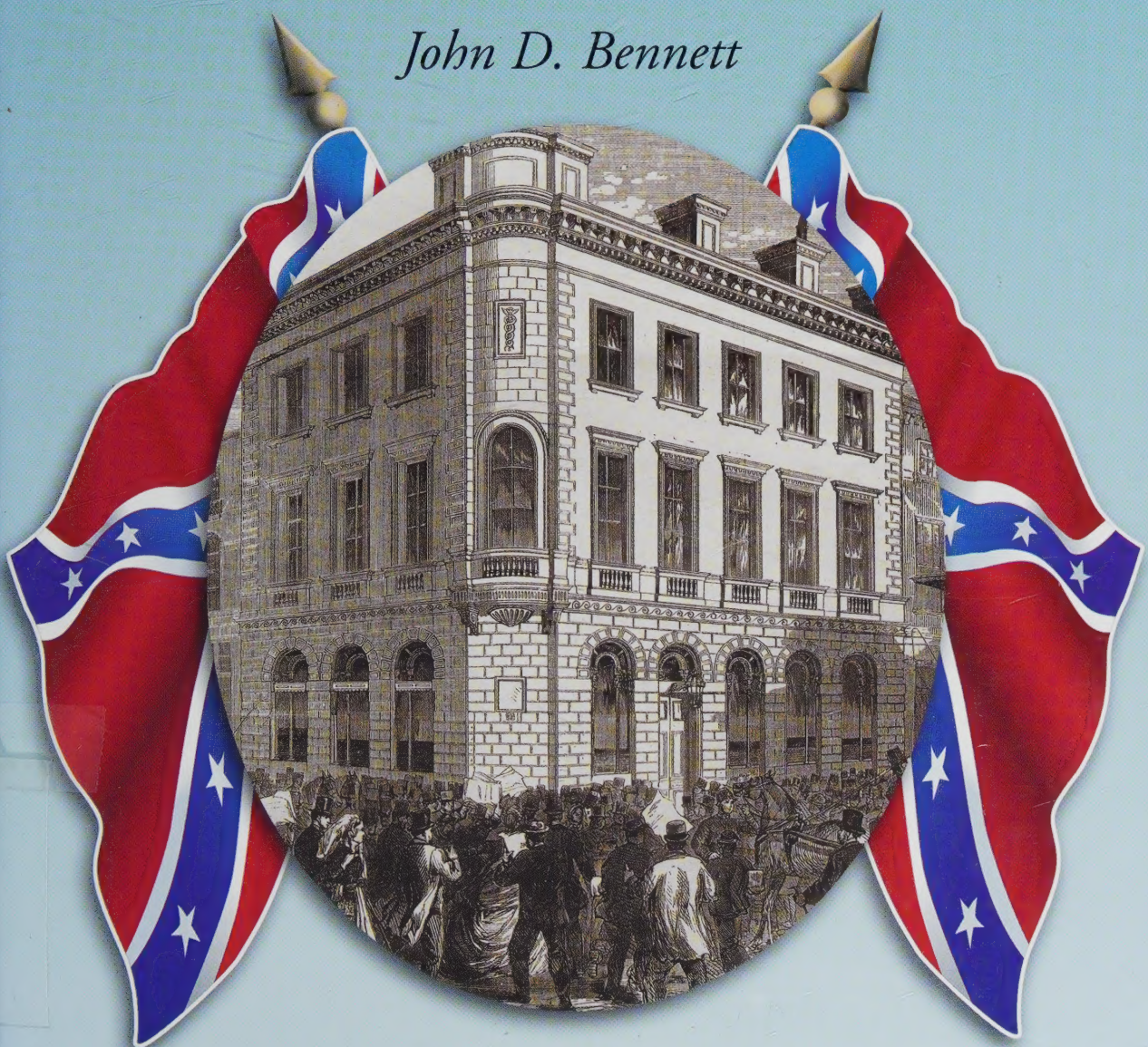
The Officials, Clergy, Businessmen and Journalists Who Backed the American South During the Civil War

John D. Bennett



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The London Confederates

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The Officials, Clergy, Businessmen and Journalists Who Backed the American South During the Civil War

JOHN D. BENNETT

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On the cover: *foreground,* the offices of Overend, Gurney & Company, who lent money to London shipbuilders for the construction of blockade runners and were themselves involved; *background* ©2007 Shutterstock

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Preface

In spite of the enormous interest in the American Civil War which exists on both sides of the Atlantic, there is relatively little awareness of Confederate activity overseas, especially the quest for diplomatic recognition by Britain and France, then the leading European powers, and the procurement of armaments and ships which Britain in particular could supply.

This study of Confederates in London grew out of my interest in the Confederate Navy. The *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies in the War of the Rebellion*, Second Series, contain the published Confederate secret service correspondence, and I noticed that some of the letters bore London addresses. Wondering if any of these still existed, I went along to have a look.

It was to be the start of a long process of investigation and research, some of which was carried out in London — at the British Library, the Guildhall Library and the Institute of Historical Research — and elsewhere — at the libraries of Sussex University, Reading University, Leicester University, Cambridge University, John Rylands University, Manchester, and Sheffield Archives.

Although some of the activities described here — the efforts in the fields of diplomacy and propaganda, the purchasing operations for the Army, the attempts to obtain vessels for the Navy, and the raising of a foreign loan — have been previously chronicled by Frank L. Owsley in *King Cotton Diplomacy,* Charles P. Cullop in *Confederate Propaganda in Europe,* Richard I. Lester in *Confederate Finance and Purchasing in Great Britain*, and Warren F. Spencer in *The Confederate Navy in Europe*, I have taken a fresh look at them in the context of the London of the 1860s in which the Confederates found themselves, for one or two of them a relatively familiar place, but for most, a foreign environment. In addition, there are other aspects of the Confederate presence here which have so far received little or no attention. As far as I am aware, there has been no detailed examination of Federal surveillance and espionage operations, nor any recent account of British business relations with the Confederacy, and the cultural impact of the Civil War has gone largely unnoticed.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to the late Professor Peter J. Parish, formerly Director of the Institute of United States Studies, University of London, and subsequently Mellon Senior Research Fellow in American History at Cambridge University, who found time, in a very busy schedule, to read and comment on an earlier version of this manuscript; I was much encouraged by his remark, "there is plenty of scope for a book-length study of Confederate activity in London."

As well as reading several drafts of the text and making valuable observations, John G.

Cox helped me obtain two important university theses. I also had help from Undine Concannon, archivist at Madame Tussaud's; Tracey Earl, archivist at Coutts & Company; Tony Kelly, sales manager of Firmin & Sons plc; Ray L. Marshall, consultant archivist of De La Rue; the Rev. Prebendary Donald Barnes, formerly vicar of St. Peter's, Belsize Park; and the Manuscripts Department of the Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, which supplied a microfilm of the unpublished diary of James H. North, C.S.N., in the Southern Historical Collection.

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Introduction

The American war has of necessity occupied a large share of the attention of the people of this country, as was to be expected of two nations so closely connected as the English and the Americans in many of their sympathies and their institutions, as well as in their language, literature, race and religion.

— *London Journal,* August 22, 1863

The American Civil War was of great interest to the people of Britain, with their historical, cultural and linguistic links with the United States. The progress of the war occupied much space in the newspapers and magazines of the day, though public attention was inevitably distracted later by events in Europe — the Polish revolt of 1863, and the brief war between Denmark and Prussia over Schleswig-Holstein in 1864.

The war was also the cause of much concern to the British government. Should it intervene? Should it declare the Federal blockade of Southern ports illegal and break it? And most importantly, should it recognize the Confederate States? In the event, the Liberal government of Lord Palmerston declared its neutrality and declined to intervene in any way. Furthermore, it remained unwilling to recognize the Confederacy until the military course of the war became clearer. The events of September 1862 — the failure of Lee's invasion of the North at Antietam, followed by Lincoln's preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which added a moral dimension to the original aim of saving the Union — postponed, and ultimately ended, the likelihood of intervention and diplomatic recognition. On more than one occasion there was also the possibility of armed conflict with the United States — at the time of the *Trent* incident in 1861 and over the building of the Laird rams in 1863.

Hopes that the war would leave the United States permanently weakened as a mercantile power were coupled with the willingness of British firms to supply both sides, and particularly the embattled Confederacy, with whatever they needed and could pay for. Support for the South came not only from the business community, but also most of the aristocracy, some of the professional middle classes, members of Oxford and Cambridge universities, Church of England clergymen, officers in the army and navy, and even some working men, who were by no means all pro–Union.

The port of Liverpool became a center for Confederate shipbuilding and blockade-running, and the base for the South's chief naval purchasing agent, as well as housing the offices of Fraser, Trenholm & Company, the Confederacy's bankers in Europe, and its importance should not be underestimated. But it was to London, the center of power and influence,

that the Confederates inevitably looked. The home of Parliament and the government, London, with its diplomatic, commercial, industrial and financial significance, became a principal focus of Southern activity in Britain and Confederates began to arrive there within weeks of the outbreak of hostilities.

One problem they faced was how to avoid infringing, or at least being seen to infringe, the laws of the host country, particularly the Foreign Enlistment Act and the Proclamation of Neutrality; another was avoiding the attentions of Federal spies. As the war progressed, the Federals became increasingly proficient at the surveillance and infiltration of Confederate activities, particularly shipbuilding and blockade-running.

Another difficulty, for both Confederates and Federals, was the time it took to learn of events in America.[1] In the absence of a transatlantic telegraph — it was not successfully laid until 1866 — it took nearly a fortnight for news to reach Europe.[2] Telegrams, dispatches and newspapers came by mail steamer to Liverpool, Plymouth or Southampton, where newspaper and news agency representatives were waiting, and initial reports were then telegraphed to London, with other items forwarded by post. In 1863, to speed up news-gathering, Reuter's News Agency constructed a telegraph line from Cork to Crookhaven, some 60 miles away on the southwest tip of Ireland, where the mail steamers could be intercepted and the news telegraphed to Cork, and from there to London.[3]

There was also the problem of communicating with the Confederacy. Letters and dispatches were carried through the blockade by purchasing agents, naval officers and emissaries, and the regular mail service between Liverpool and New York was sometimes used by Confederate agents in disguise, but whichever method was resorted to, it was slow and hazardous, with no guarantee of safe receipt.[4] Several attempts were made to overcome the problem, but none were successful.

The men described in these pages served the Confederacy, not on the battlefield — although several of them did have military experience — but in other ways: seeking diplomatic recognition for the South, attempting to put across her point of view, and obtaining much-needed arms and equipment, even warships. Some of them became minor public figures, while others, particularly those involved in purchasing and propaganda activities, preferred to keep a much lower profile. Whatever their role, their task would not be an easy one.

1

London in the 1860s

There is not a more striking sight in London than the bustle of its great streets — the perpetually rolling tide of people, carts, carriages, gay equipages, and omnibuses, in its great thoroughfares.

—Murray's Modern London, 1860

In 1861 London was the greatest city in the world, both in extent and population. It was several times the size of New York, and many times that of New Orleans, the largest city in the Confederacy, as well as Richmond, its capital. In an area encompassing about 78,000 acres, or nearly 121 square miles, were upwards of 10,500 streets, squares, crescents, terraces, courts and alleys, containing 362,890 houses. Beyond the ancient cities of London and Westminster and the parliamentary boroughs of Marylebone, Finsbury, Tower Hamlets, Southwark and Lambeth, the suburbs stretched as far as Hampstead, Holloway, Highgate, Kilburn, Tottenham and Edmonton to the north; Camberwell, Brixton, Dulwich, Peckham, Norwood, Lewisham and Sydenham to the south; Limehouse, Poplar, Blackwall and Greenwich to the east; and Battersea, Wandsworth, Putney, Fulham, Hammersmith and Acton to the west.

The metropolis was indeed vast, and on October 9, 1863, James Glaisher, an astronomer and meteorologist who had made a number of previous balloon ascents over London, described what he saw as he passed over London Bridge at 7,000 feet in a particularly clear atmosphere:

> The scene around was probably one that cannot be equaled in the world at one glance — the homes of 3,000,000 people were seen, and so distinctly that every large building at every part was easily distinguished; while those almost under us — viz., the Bank and Newgate [Prison], the Docks and surrounding buildings, &c., in such detail that their inner courts were visible, and their ground-plans could have been drawn. Cannon Street was easily traced; but it was difficult to believe at first sight that small building to be St Paul's. Looking onward, Oxford Street was visible; the Parks, the Houses of Parliament, and Millbank Prison, with its radiating lines from the centre, at once attracted notice. In fact, the whole of London was visible, and some parts of it very clearly. Then all around there were lines of detached villas, imbedded as it were in shrubs; and beyond, the country, like a garden, with its fields well marked, but becoming smaller and smaller as the eye wandered further away.[1]

The census of London, taken on April 7, 1861, recorded a total population of 2,803,921, which included those in workhouses, hospitals and prisons, as well as an estimate of the numbers living in vessels on the river or sleeping under railway arches or in doorways. Out of a

foreign population of 40,909, 4.68 percent (1,914) were American citizens.[2] Some of these no doubt went home when the Civil War began, to be replaced by new arrivals of the kind described here.

There had been an American presence in London since at least the eighteenth century. Benjamin Franklin first lived there in 1724–1726, and again in 1757–1775, as colonial agent and postmaster for the colonies, while John Adams served as the new republic's first "minister plenipotentiary" in 1785–1788. In the first half of the nineteenth century London attracted American writers like James Fenimore Cooper and Ralph Waldo Emerson, painters such as John James Audubon and George Catlin, and famous actors like Edwin Forrest and Ira Aldridge (who became a naturalized Englishman). In 1842–1845 the short-lived Republic of Texas maintained a legation in London. The Great Exhibition of 1851, held in the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park, had many Americans among its six million visitors. The exhibits included such famous products as Samuel Colt's revolvers and Cyrus McCormick's reaper, the display of which was subsidized by the London-based American banker George Peabody, after the United States Congress had declined to do so.

Some of the Confederates who came to London during the Civil War had been there before, but for many of them it was an unfamiliar place. At this particular time it must also have seemed like a city in turmoil, with the disruption caused by the building of London's main drainage system, as well as the new underground railway, both of which were under construction when the war began.[3] In addition, in 1864 work also started on the Victoria Embankment along the north bank of the Thames.

The metropolis was not only an enormous place, it was also a very confusing one, with many street names repeated in different areas. There were, for instance, no fewer than 37 King Streets, 27 Queen Streets, 22 Princess Streets, 17 Duke Streets, 35 Charles Streets, 29 John Streets, 15 James Streets and 21 George Streets, not to mention 24 New Streets, 16 York Streets, 14 Cross Streets, 16 Union Streets and 10 Gloucester Streets.

To help both strangers and natives find their way around this vast city, there were many pocket maps available. Mounted on linen and folded in covers, they were issued colored and uncolored, priced accordingly, and usually included a street index. Mapmakers copied each other shamelessly and up-to-dateness was not a matter of great concern; sometimes the only features revised were the title and date. The publication of street maps was greatly stimulated by the International Exhibition of 1862, which brought millions of British and foreign visitors to London. Charles Cheffins' *Visitors' Railway Station Map of London and its Environs*, Charles Smith's *Exhibition Map of London, with Omnibus Routes and Cab Fares*, William Tweedie's *Picture Map of London*, Ward & Lock's *New Handy Pocket Map of London, containing all Railways and Proposed Lines, Railway Termini &c.*, and Josiah Whitbread's *Map of London, extending Four Miles round Charing Cross* all appeared in or about 1862, along with others published by George Cruchley, Benjamin Davies, James Dolling, George Philip and George Welland.

Two large-scale maps also appeared, the first proper surveys of London since the 1820s. The *Environs of London*, drawn and engraved by Edward Weller, at nine inches to the mile, was first issued in parts in 1861–1862 as supplements to the *Weekly Dispatch* newspaper and then reissued as the *Dispatch Atlas* in 1863. Edward Stanford's *Library Map of London and Its Suburbs*, at six inches to the mile, was also published in 1862. As well as in sheets, both maps were available on rollers or folded in a case.[4]

Although a street atlas of London had been produced in the late 1840s by James Wyld,

"Geographer to the Queen and H.R.H. Prince Albert," it was too large for use out-of-doors, and it was not until 1854 that the first pocket-sized one appeared. *Collins' Illustrated Atlas of London* was published by a little-known mapseller called Henry George Collins, and had specially drawn plates, a detailed index of streets, and supplementary lists of public buildings, museums and other places of interest. It covered most of the continuously built-up area, though not the sparsely populated outer suburbs. Collins had gone bankrupt by the time a second edition was issued in 1859, and it was brought out by another publisher, Thomas Hodgson. That, and the third edition, called *London at a Glance. A Guide for Visitors to the International Exhibition*, published by Darton & Hodge in 1862, also included a list of hotels, the new postal districts (introduced in 1856) and the railways.[5]

The difficulties faced by strangers trying to find their way around the capital were made worse by the dense winter fogs, caused by the burning of millions of coal fires. Fogs had been a feature of London for centuries but they had become progressively thicker and more frequent as the capital's population increased. Sometimes they appeared to be bottle-green in color, at other times pea-soup yellow, through which the street gas lamps at night could barely be seen. Charles Dickens described fog as a "London particular" and the yellow variety came to be known as a "pea-souper." The American historian John Lothrop Motley, who came to London in 1858, wrote to his mother in Massachusetts in November of the following year, describing a London fog:

> I do not object to fog always excepting a black, thick London fog. I was obliged to pass a day in town yesterday and to breathe unmitigated coal smoke for six hours. When the fog settles down in London the smoke from millions of chimneys settles down with it. It cannot escape upwards and so every breathing being is turned for the time into a chimney. I was a chimney all day yesterday and rejoiced that I was not born in that station in life in London, not finding it exhilarating. London is not attractive in November.[6]

Motley went back to America when the Civil War started, but he was to return to London in the late sixties as United States minister to Great Britain.

Where did people live in this great metropolis? Mayfair was still the traditional home of the aristocracy, but between about 1825 and 1850 a new aristocratic quarter — Belgravia — had come into being, "whose houses, palatial in character and size, denote the high social position of their occupants."[7] An attempt to create a second, or South, Belgravia a decade later — what we now know as Pimlico — was less successful. No sooner was it completed than the railway arrived: Victoria Station, opened in 1860, brought noise, dirt, greatly increased pedestrian and vehicular traffic, and the sort of undesirables who were attracted to London's railway terminals.

Another new area, north of Hyde Park, was Tyburnia, "principally inhabited by professional men, the great City merchants, and by those who are undergoing the transitional state between commerce and fashion."[8] Regent's Park and Marylebone were desirable middle-class areas, though further east, Bloomsbury was now chiefly occupied by lawyers, merchants and rooming house keepers, "its noble mansions no longer holding, as formerly ... the rank and fashion of the town."[9] Further out, once rural Islington was mostly inhabited by middle-class families.

The City of London, the center of trade and commerce, had already lost most of its resident population. "Teeming by day with its hundreds of thousands, its streets gorged by carriages, cabs, and carts, [it] presents at night ... the spectacle of a deserted city ... the railway

Map of central London in 1862. Present-day thoroughfares like Shaftesbury Avenue, Charing Cross Road, the Aldwych and Kingsway did not yet exist. (*Routledge's Popular Guide to London and its Suburbs*, 1862)

carriage, the omnibus, and the steam-boat carry the clerks to the outskirts, and the merchants and principals to their villas and mansions at Clapham, Hackney or the West End."[10]

Those following a particular calling tended to favor certain areas. Authors, journalists and publishers often chose St. John's Wood; artists and engravers, Kensington and Camden Town; and musicians, singers, actors and dancers, Brompton; physicians and surgeons frequently set up their practices in Savile Row or Brook Street, Mayfair; printers could be found in Fleet Street and the Strand; medical students in Southwark, near to Guy's Hospital; Members of Parliament in Westminster; diplomats sometimes resided in Belgravia; stockbrokers and merchants inhabited Bayswater, Brixton and Clapham, as well as Tyburnia; and clerks, Islington and Highgate. At a less respectable level, large numbers of "pretty horse-breakers"—well-dressed courtesans who rode in Hyde Park—had taken up residence in Lower Brompton and the area between Sloane Street and the International Exhibition site in South Kensington.

And what of those who worked with their hands? Watchmakers and jewelers were concentrated in Clerkenwell; silk and velvet weavers in Spitalfields and Bethnal Green; and cabinetmakers and carvers around Old Street and Aldersgate Street; iron-founders, shipwrights and boilermakers could be found in Blackwall, Poplar, Millwall and the Isle of Dogs; sugar bakers and refiners in Whitechapel and Commercial Road; and tanners, parchment makers and skin dressers in Bermondsey; potters and glassmakers were located in Lambeth; tailors in Golden Square and Burlington Gardens; boot and shoemakers in Shoreditch and around Drury Lane; hatters worked in Southwark; carriage builders in and around Long Acre; boat builders in Lambeth and Chelsea; and toy makers and doll-dressers in Hoxton.

The writer of a guidebook aimed at visitors to the International Exhibition of 1862, and intended to show the metropolis in the best possible light, was obliged to admit that "it is not pretended that London is all fair to look upon and bright with cleanliness and godliness," and he went on to paint a suitably lurid picture of another London, inhabited by what the Victorians regarded as the dangerous poor:

> Of course we do not pretend that London has not its squalid quarters—its dens of poverty and its sinks of iniquity, its horrible lanes and fever-haunted courts, its close, unhealthy streets, and its dark wretched bye-ways, its misery-filled alleys and its sinful slums, where the ginshop and the pawnbroker's stand side by side; its Whitechapel and its St Giles, where thieves and costermongers herd with debased women, whose most familiar word is an oath, and children whose earliest education has been picked up in the streets; and its hundreds of squalid lurking-places, known only to their wretched degraded inhabitants.[11]

For anyone arriving in London, the first requirement was somewhere to live. Hotels where Confederates are known to have stayed included the Albemarle, the Berners, the Brunswick, the Burlington, the Euston, Fenton's, the Grosvenor, Hatchett's, Haxell's, Morley's, the Tavistock, the Westminster Palace and Wood's.

The Burlington Hotel, which was owned by James Breach, had its main entrance in Cork Street, just off Piccadilly, but there was another entrance in Old Burlington Street, which was parallel to Cork Street. It had been a hotel since about 1823, and one of its residents in 1861 was the celebrated Florence Nightingale, who had made it her base for her campaign to reform the Army's medical services. Even older was Fenton's Hotel in St. James's Street, which had been established since about 1800. It was now owned by Francis Fenton, and though it was still regarded as a fashionable establishment, its rooms were described as being "small and

dark, furnished like a common lodging house." Hatchett's Hotel, on the corner of Piccadilly and Dover Street, run by Joseph Bowles, was a former coaching inn; a guidebook described it as "a long-established and most respectable house" and it claimed to have been "established 100 years."

"Happily placed in the centre of the West Strand, Haxell's Hotel is one of the most complete and comfortable in London," announced a contemporary advertisement.[12] "It comprises numerous suites of apartments ... spacious coffee rooms, ladies' or family coffee room, etc. The improvements ... comprise a new entrance, noble hall, wide, light and commodious staircases and passages throughout the building, and the establishment now consists of upwards of one hundred rooms ... The hotel is much patronised by families and gentlemen arriving from the Confederate States of America." Run by Edward Nelson Haxell, it now also incorporated the adjacent Exeter Hall Hotel, and was not expensive by West End standards. Single bedrooms cost two shillings and sixpence, double rooms, four shillings, and a drawing room, with bedroom *en suite*, ten shillings and sixpence.

The Tavistock was one of a number of hotels in Covent Garden. It was popular with sea captains on leave, and had a huge dining room occupying the whole of the first floor and as many as two hundred bedrooms, but was thought "a miserable concern for all its reputation" by one Confederate who stayed there. Wood's Hotel, "for families and gentlemen," was part of Furnival's Inn, on the north side of High Holborn, and was owned by William Wood.

Most of these hotels had been converted from one or more private houses, and sometimes provided rather indifferent accommodation, which impressed neither European nor American visitors. The difficulty experienced by strangers in finding good hotels in London, where the accommodation was satisfactory and the charges moderate, was alluded to by guidebooks and newspapers. Some Confederates, particularly those accompanied by their families, undoubtedly found the high cost of living in London's West End a worry, and one army purchasing agent is known to have moved from lodgings in Jermyn Street to cheaper and more spacious accommodation on the western outskirts at Notting Hill, probably following the arrival of his wife and family.

It was the new railways which pioneered hotels built for the purpose in the capital, as they began to provide them at the main railway stations to accommodate travelers. The Euston, one of a pair of hotels situated on either side of the entrance to Euston Station, was opened in 1839 by the London & Birmingham Railway. The Great Northern Hotel at King's Cross and the Great Western Hotel at Paddington both opened in 1854. The Grosvenor Hotel, built next to Victoria Station in 1861 by the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway, contained "every convenience for the comfort of visitors." These were followed by railway hotels at London Bridge (1862) and Charing Cross Stations (1865).

At least one hotel already existed in the West End. Morley's Hotel, at the corner of Trafalgar Square and the Strand, had opened in 1831. It had a hundred bedrooms and in the early 1860s was owned by Thomas and George James; one Confederate who stayed there pronounced it "an excellent house — the best I've seen in London." In 1859 the Westminster Palace in Victoria Street, London's first luxury hotel, was built to provide accommodation for members of Parliament, people frequenting the law courts, foreign visitors and the public at large. It had "thirteen sitting-rooms, gentlemen's and ladies' coffee rooms (the latter an exceedingly fine apartment), several committee and dining rooms, with one hundred and thirty bedrooms, besides servants. apartments."[13] Managed by William Cowell, it was also the first hotel in London to have an elevator, or "rising room" as it was called, and it was noted for its good

THE COSTER-GIRL.

"Apples! An 'aypenny a lot, Apples!"

[*From a Daguerreotype by* BEARD.]

A coster-girl. Costermongers were street sellers of vegetables and fruit, particularly apples. (Mayhew)

English food. Another impressive hotel was the Palace in Buckingham Gate, containing "costly and luxurious suites of rooms," which opened in 1861 and also belonged to James Breach, the owner of the Burlington Hotel.

The year the Civil War ended saw the opening of the magnificent Langham Hotel in Portland Place, which was inaugurated in June 1865 with a reception for 2,000 guests, including the Prince of Wales. The hotel cost £300,000, had forty private sitting rooms and three hundred bedrooms, and provided every conceivable facility. Its second manager was James M. Sanderson, a former hotel owner in prewar Philadelphia and a wartime Union lieutenant colonel, who while an inmate of Libby Prison in Richmond had endeavored to instill some order into its catering arrangements. The Langham soon became a firm favorite with Americans in London.

Other hotels which catered to Americans included the Arundel Private Hotel, off the Strand, the Cavendish Hotel, Jermyn Street, the New York Hotel and the Prince of Wales Hotel, off Leicester Square, the Queen's Family Hotel, Bayswater, the Royal Opera Colonnade Hotel, Haymarket, the Villafranca Hotel, Covent Garden, and Woodall's Commercial and Private Hotel, Euston Road.

As well as hotels, there were innumerable rooming houses, and visitors planning a long stay were advised to rent an apartment. Moderately priced ones could be found in suburbs like Islington and Kensington, while "at the West End, apartments may be obtained from ten shillings a week for a single bed-room, use of sitting-room and attendance, to two or even three guineas a day for accommodation of a more pretentious character," advised a guidebook.[14] The best places to look for these were the streets leading off Piccadilly, Oxford Street, Regent Street and St. James's Street. One rooming house in Bury Street, St. James's, advertised in the *Index*, the South's propaganda newspaper, and several Confederates stayed there.

In addition, many "persons of respectability" were only too happy to let spare rooms. These could usually be found through house agents, as well as advertisements in newspapers like the *Times*, which "will often open to the stranger the doors of very respectable families, where he will get all the quiet and comfort of a home, so difficult to be found in the noisy, and often extortionate ... lodging-house."[15] One of the Confederate commissioners found rooms with a hosier and glover in Half Moon Street, off Piccadilly, while another lodged with a wine and spirit merchant in Albemarle Street in the same area.

There were hundreds of dining rooms and coffeehouses where meals could be obtained, and London guidebooks of the early 1860s were full of advice on where to eat. "A good, plain, cheap dinner or lunch, quickly served" or "a capital dinner, well served" were available at many places. "The visitor may dine well and respectably for a shilling, or luxuriously for a guinea. He has all the choice between a quiet chop or dish of meat and vegetables ... for about a shilling or fifteen pence; and a 'three-course and dessert' spread..."[16] Writing a few years after the Civil War, the American journalist Daniel Joseph Kirwan, the London correspondent of the *New York World*, observed, "at Blanchard's [a well-known restaurant in Soho] you may dine for a pound upon the choicest variety of dishes, cooked by a French *chef*."[17] Many hotels and inns, particularly in the Strand, Fleet Street, Cheapside and Holborn, also had lunch-bars, where "a chop or a snack and a glass of ale for sixpence, or a plate of hot meat, with vegetables and bread, for about eightpence" could be found.[18]

Most of the important institutions were on the north side of the Thames. Linking the north and south banks were ten bridges, the oldest of which were Blackfriars Bridge (1769), which was replaced in the 1860s, and Battersea Bridge, a wooden structure dating from 1772.

Vauxhall Bridge (1816) and Southwark Bridge (1819) were the first iron bridges to be built over the Thames. Waterloo Bridge (1817) was appropriately named as it had been opened on the second anniversary of the battle. The medieval London Bridge was rebuilt in 1831 and the eighteenth-century Westminster Bridge in 1862. The first suspension bridge in London was constructed at Hammersmith in 1827; Chelsea Bridge (1858) and Lambeth Bridge (1862) were also suspension bridges.

The Grosvenor Bridge (1860), serving Victoria Station, was the first railway bridge to be built across the Thames. Further west, at Battersea, the West London Railway constructed a wrought-iron bridge in 1861, while other railway bridges were built in 1864 at Blackfriars, for the London, Chatham & Dover Railway, and at Charing Cross for the South Eastern Railway.

There were a number of ways of getting around this vast metropolis. Horse-drawn cabs had first appeared in the 1830s, and by 1860 there were 4,600 of them on the streets of London. "Travelling in that most rapid and convenient of London vehicles, the cabriolet — or cab, as it is now universally called — is very common," readers of a contemporary guidebook were told. "Remember that the fare for one or two persons is sixpence a mile, by day or night."[19] A reasonable quantity of luggage could be carried free of charge, and to avoid any dispute with the cabdriver, passengers were advised to purchase the Red Book of fares, published by the Metropolitan Police (price one shilling), which told them how much they should pay for a particular journey.

From Mondays to Saturdays, between 9:00 A.M. and 12:00 midnight, as many as 1,200 brightly colored horse buses connected central London with the inner and outer suburbs, running to Bayswater, Brompton, Camberwell, Chelsea, Clapham, Hammersmith, Hampstead, Holloway, Islington, Kensal Green, Kensington, Kilburn, Pimlico, Putney, Richmond and St. John's Wood. In central London they ran between places like Paddington and Charing Cross, and Regent's Circus (now Oxford Circus) and the Bank of England. Usually drawn by a pair of horses, they could accommodate twelve passengers facing each other inside, and ten more on the roof, sitting back-to-back. At busy times they ran every five minutes, with a flat-fare system of fourpence for part of the way and sixpence for the whole distance, and were compelled by law to have a table of fares inside the vehicle. Many of them belonged to the London General Omnibus Company and their fame spread abroad, though foreign visitors were sometimes disappointed:

> We had heard so much about the London omnibuses, with their velvet upholstery and veneered panelling, that we were anxious to see these wonderful conveyances. So our amazement was great on boarding one in the Strand to find it narrow, rickety, jolting, dusty and extremely dirty. The only advantage of these vehicles is that they are closed by a door. The conductor stands outside on a small footboard, incessantly hailing the passers-by.[20]

London's first horse streetcars appeared in 1861, introduced by the American entrepreneur George Francis Train. A line of track laid along the Bayswater Road, between Marble Arch and Notting Hill, opened in March, followed by a second line down Victoria Street, between Westminster Abbey and Victoria Station, in April, and a third, from Westminster Bridge to Kennington Park, south of the river, in August. The single-deck cars, drawn by two horses, had room for twenty sitting and twelve standing passengers. Promising as it seemed, Mr. Train's scheme proved to be short-lived. Not only did the rails project well above the level of the street, creating a hazard for other horse traffic, but Train also met with strong

A cab driver. There were some four and a half thousand horse cabs plying for hire by the 1860s. (Mayhew)

opposition from a body called the Metropolis Road Commissioners, who objected to the inconvenience the streetcars caused to other road users. His case cannot have been helped by a fatal accident which took place in August 1861, when one boy was killed and two others injured "by climbing on the projections." In February 1862 he was ordered to remove his streetcars and ended up being fined £500.

The Thames, or "Silent Highway," still an important means of travel for many Londoners, was "traversed by a number of regular steamers. Eastward there are boats to ... Greenwich, Woolwich, Blackwall and Gravesend, from the piers at London Bridge. Westward, the Citizen [Steamboat] Company and the Iron Boat Company run steamers between London Bridge and Chelsea. These call at intermediate piers, and make a large number of trips daily, at fares varying between a halfpenny and sixpence."[21] There were the halfpenny boats, running between London Bridge and the Adelphi, the penny boats going to and from London Bridge, Hungerford Market and Westminster, and the twopenny and threepenny boats from London Bridge to Chelsea and Battersea. At times, the river could be almost as congested as the city streets themselves, not only with passenger steamers but also with merchant ships.

Work had begun on what was to be the world's first underground passenger railway in February 1860. It was built on the cut-and-cover system and caused enormous disruption, most of the trenches having to be dug along the main thoroughfares. Chancellor of the Exchequer W. E. Gladstone and his wife were among those who took part in the first trial trip on the steam-hauled trains in May 1862. The Metropolitan Railway ran from Paddington to Farringdon Street, with five intermediate stations, at Edgware Road, Baker Street, Portland Road (now Great Portland Street), Gower Street (now Euston Square) and King's Cross. In spite of the *Times'* disparaging observation that it was "an insult to common sense to suppose that people ... would ever prefer ... to be driven amid palpable darkness through the foul subsoil of London," it was an instant success when it opened in January 1863—30,000 passengers traveled on it on the first day—and it was soon extended, west to Hammersmith and east to Moorgate Street.[22] A Confederate naval officer sampled it in August 1863:

> Descended into the bowels of the earth, and tried this underground railroad. It passes through the city & when its proposed ramifications are completed, it will be as pervading as the upper highways ... The stations are lighted from above. The coaches are very nicely upholstered & arranged—each being supplied with two gas burners which in turn are supplied from a reservoir that runs along the top of the cars. Fare six pence to ride about 2½ miles.[23]

By the beginning of the 1860s London was connected by rail to all the main towns and cities in Britain. It then had eight railway terminals: London Bridge, Euston, Shoreditch, Fenchurch Street, Waterloo, King's Cross, Paddington and Victoria. London Bridge was built for the London & Greenwich Railway in 1836, but soon came to be used by the South Eastern Railway (with which it merged) and the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway as well. Euston was opened the following year by the London & Birmingham Railway (later part of the London & North Western Railway). As the station for Liverpool, it saw a number of Confederates coming and going during the war, while London Bridge was used by ones traveling to the Continent. Six years after it opened in 1840, the Shoreditch terminal of the Eastern Counties Railway was renamed Bishopsgate in an attempt to disguise the fact that it was situated in the wrong place—too far from the City and West End and in the middle of a festering slum. Fenchurch Street, the first railway terminal in London, was built in 1841 by the London & Blackwall Railway, which became part of the much larger London, Tilbury &

Southend Railway, and was also used by the Eastern Counties Railway and the North London Railway. Waterloo, the terminal of the London & South Western Railway and the station for Southampton, was opened in 1848. When it was built in 1852 by the Great Northern Railway, King's Cross was the largest station in England; the Midland Railway also used it until St. Pancras station was completed in the late sixties. Paddington, opened in 1854, was the Great Western Railway's London terminal. Victoria was a joint station for the London, Brighton & South Coast Railway and the London, Chatham & Dover Railway and was constructed in 1860–1862; like London Bridge, it was used by Confederates going across to the Continent. To these eight must be added Charing Cross, opened in 1864 as the West End terminal of the South Eastern Railway, and used by passengers wishing to travel to Europe.

London in the early 1860s was still mainly a city of small and medium-sized shops, often with their own speciality, though department stores, aimed at middle-class customers, were beginning to make their appearance. Many of these, such as Dickins & Jones in Regent Street, Swan & Edgar in Piccadily, James Shoolbred in Tottenham Court Road, and Peter Robinson and Marshall & Snelgrove in Oxford Street, were drapers who, by the 1850s, had started to expand by opening other departments. Shoolbred's, founded in 1817, added carpets and soft furnishings, groceries and toys, and by mid-century had several hundred employees who either lived on the premises or in nearby hostels. Between 1854 and 1860, Peter Robinson (established in 1833) acquired no fewer than five adjacent shop premises in Oxford Street, offering "court millinery, mantles, and dressmaking; widows', families' and children's mourning," among other commodities. The prices of the goods were clearly displayed in the windows of these new stores, which operated on a cash rather than credit basis, as was often the case with older, more traditional shops.

William Whiteley, a Yorkshire draper, opened a shop in 1863 selling ribbons, lace and fancy goods in the new suburb of Bayswater, which was now served by the Metropolitan Railway as well as by horse buses. He started with just two assistants, but within a year had eighteen staff; three years later he was starting to expand, adding linens, furs, drapery, millinery, gloves, jewelry and umbrellas to his stock, to become eventually the self-styled "Universal Provider." John Lewis, a Somerset man who had been a buyer for Peter Robinson, bought a job lot of silks and set himself up in a small shop in Oxford Street in 1864; working on the principle of "buying cheap and selling cheap," he never looked back, soon expanding into neighboring shop premises.

In the West End, many shops were open from 8:00 A.M. until 8:00 P.M., though by the mid-sixties a number of the larger ones were closing at 2:00 P.M. on Saturdays as a result of the efforts of the Early Closing Association, formed in 1842 to campaign for the earlier closing of shops and a Saturday half-holiday. Their windows, often now of plateglass, were lit by gas at night. Gas lighting had been introduced in London in the early nineteenth century, and shopkeepers had quickly realized its potential for window displays and storefronts. It was impossible not to be impressed by the appearance of London at night, with its countless gas lamps, its broad streets and its wonderful shops, full of every item that could possibly be imagined. And of all the shopping streets, Regent Street, said the journalist George Augustus Sala, who several years later was to report the Civil War for the *Daily Telegraph*, was "an avenue of superfluities — a great trunk-road in Vanity Fair. Fancy watchmakers, haberdashers and photographers; fancy stationers, fancy hosiers and fancy staymakers; music shops, shawl shops, jewellers, French glove shops, perfumery and point lace shops, confectioners and milliners: ... these are the merchants whose wares are exhibited in this bezesteen of the world."[24]

There were also a number of shopping arcades which contained clusters of small shops. The first of these was the Royal Opera Arcade (1817), which was originally built as an adjunct to the Italian Opera House (later Her Majesty's Theater) in the Haymarket. A place where patrons could leave their hats and coats, rent opera glasses, and stroll during intervals, it gradually assumed the character of a shopping arcade, its shops reflecting the masculine world of nearby clubland.

Writing in 1865, the journalist Henry Mayhew described the Burlington Arcade in Piccadilly (1819) as "one of the brightest, pleasantest, and most aristocratic provinces of modern Arcadia," and it has always been renowned for its luxury goods or "expensive knick-knacks," as he called them.[25] In the 1860s it was also a haunt of what Mayhew calls "Cyprians of the better sort," or high-class prostitutes, who could be seen parading there each day between 3:00 and 5:00 P.M. The Lowther Arcade in the Strand (1831) was equally famous, though for a more innocent reason: its toy shops. It was often thronged with ladies and children buying toys at the French, German and Swiss shops.

When it opened in 1850, the *Lady's Newspaper* called the Royal Arcade, in the recently constructed New Oxford Street, "one of the chief attractions to the resident and stranger among the many that grace our gigantic metropolis," but it seems to have declined fairly quickly.[26] The early optimism had certainly departed by 1865, when Mayhew described its "dreary collection of shops," selling such things as stoves, furniture, kitchen ranges and baby linen. Some of the other early shopping arcades were equally unsuccessful and correspondingly short-lived. The Hungerford Arcade in Hungerford Market, the site of Charing Cross Station, the Exeter Arcade in Wellington Street, on the fringes of Covent Garden, and the South Eastern Arcade at London Bridge Station all closed and were demolished in the early 1860s.

Another feature of London's West End, then as now, were the gentlemen's clubs of Pall Mall and St. James's. Standing in Waterloo Place, at the bottom of Regent Street, the visitor would see:

> On our right hand the Athenaeum, chiefly frequented by literary men; on the left, and exactly opposite it, the United Service Club, whose members are naval and military veterans. Next to the Athenaeum ... is the Travellers'. The Reform, which is observable from its great size and from its Italian architecture, stands next in order. To the Reform succeeds the Carlton, the headquarters of the Conservatives, a stately building, and the last erected. The Oxford and Cambridge and the Guards' club houses complete this side of clubland. On the north, or opposite side, turning into St James's Square, is the Army and Navy Club ... Ascending [St James's Street] on the left hand side are seen the Conservative Club, Arthur's, and Brooks's (the Whig headquarters), whilst near the top is the once famous or infamous Crockford's ... White's and Boodle's, once fashionable political clubs, but now principally resorted to by elderly country gentlemen, stand on the opposite side near the top ... The stranger should endeavour to procure orders (given by members) to see some of these clubs, especially the Reform, famous for its central hall, and its kitchens planned by M. Soyer. The staircases and apartments of the Carlton, Reform, Conservative and Army and Navy Clubs are very beautiful.[27]

Most London theaters at this time offered a mixed fare, which might include drama, tragedy, melodrama, comedy, farce, spectacle and pantomime, usually in a double or triple bill, and they were often managed by actors who were themselves also dramatists. Programs were long, usually starting at 7:00 P.M. (7:30 P.M. for opera) and ending about midnight. In the West End, the cheapest theater seats cost a shilling, the most expensive, five or six shillings; after 9:00 P.M. they were usually half price. Private boxes at Covent Garden and Her Majesty's,

where opera and ballet were performed, however, were from two or three guineas upwards and even seats in the stalls cost twenty-one shillings. At Her Majesty's, gentlemen were not admitted unless in black or white neckcloths, black pantaloons and dress coats. Several Confederates who kept diaries described their theater visits, which included the Theater Royal, Haymarket; the Adelphi in the Strand; the Olympic, Wych Street; the Princess's, Oxford Street; and further out, the Britannia, Hoxton.

Regarded as the leading theater in London, the Theater Royal, Haymarket, was run by the comic actor and playwright John Baldwin Buckstone. The American actor Edwin Booth (brother of John Wilkes Booth) made his London debut at the Haymarket in 1861, the same year that Tom Taylor's *Our American Cousin* was staged there. The Adelphi Theater in the Strand was owned and managed by another actor-dramatist, Benjamin Webster, and had seating for 1,300 people. The famous American actor Joseph Jefferson appeared there in a new version of Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle* in 1865.

Reconstructed after its predecessor had burnt down, the Olympic Theater, Wych Street, had witnessed the first stage version of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852 and also saw the production in 1862 of Horace Wigan's *A Southerner Just Arrived*, a play inspired by the Civil War. Two years later its author took over the running of the Olympic on the sudden death of actor-manager Frederick Robson. The Princess's Theater, Oxford Street, also managed by Benjamin Webster, had originally been built for concerts, but came to be used for operas and plays, and the American actress Charlotte Cushman made her London debut there in 1845. Disturbances in theaters still sometimes occurred, and in 1865 it was the scene of a riot during the first night of Charles Reade's *It's Never Too Late to Mend*, caused by an over-realistic flogging scene.

Other West End theaters included the Theater Royal, Drury Lane, the oldest in London, where the nautical extravaganza *The Alabama* was staged in 1864; the Royal Lyceum, Wellington Street, renowned for its interior decorations; the St. James's, King Street; and the Strand Theater, Strand.

Outside central London, the Britannia Theater, Hoxton, where Colin H. Hazlewood's play, *The Confederate's Daughter,* was performed in 1865, was owned and managed by Sam and Sara Lane. It was extremely large, with a total capacity (seated and standing) of nearly 4,000, though this was later reduced to some 3,000. Sadler's Wells Theater, Finsbury, sometimes put on plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries; the Royal Victoria Theater, Lambeth (the "Old Vic"), which had a huge gallery, and where the most expensive seat cost a shilling, presented lurid melodramas which tended to attract unruly audiences; and the Surrey Theater, Blackfriars Road, offered an intriguing mixture of melodrama, farce and pantomime, and occasionally tragedy, comedy and even opera.

Music halls, providing food and drink in the auditorium, along with singing acts and comedy turns, had originated in the inner suburbs in the 1840s. They appealed to audiences which the *Observer* newspaper described scathingly as "mixed crowds of folly and vice," while *Punch* wondered "whether the music hall was the place for a gentleman to go to, or even for a greengrocer, a chimney-sweep, or costermonger, or any man who entertained a liking to be thought respectable."[28]

By the early 1860s more sophisticated ones were starting to appear in the West End. Among the first were Weston's in High Holborn and the Oxford in Oxford Street. Another was the London Pavilion in Tichborne Street, near what is now Piccadilly Circus. It had a capacity of 2,000 and had only been open two years when a Confederate diarist went there in 1863. He described it thus:

> A great cafe, at the upper end a stage, a gallery too, fronting the stage and on the right side; but on the left a wall hung with mirrors ... The acting on the stage was capital — a sort of ballet — a burlesque opera ... Had nearly expired when some women came out with abbreviated dresses & much muslin & ankle who gyrated around ... The lower floor was filled with people sitting at tables with their hats on & their pipes & cigars alight, drinking beer or strong drink, eating Welsh rarebits & chatting...[29]

The same diarist found Evans' Supper Rooms in Covent Garden, an older establishment, to be more decorous than the London Pavilion. It was housed in a seventeenth-century building, which was now a hotel, whose basement dining saloon had been turned into a song-and-supper room. Run by a man called John Greenmore, better known as "Paddy Green," the entertainment there consisted of selections of madrigals, glees, choruses and songs, with an occasional comic turn, sometimes supplemented by contributions from members of the audience.

Among other London music halls were the Middlesex, Drury Lane; the Metropolitan, Edgware Road; Collins', Islington; the Grecian Saloon, City Road; Wilton's, Whitechapel; the Bedford, Camden Town; and the Canterbury, Westminster Bridge Road. The Alhambra Palace, Leicester Square, which started life as the Royal Panopticon of Science and Art, had been converted into the Great United States Circus in 1858, then became a music hall in 1860, where the following year Charles Blondin, who had recently crossed Niagara Falls on a tightrope, appeared.

Casinos in the 1860s were places for music and dancing rather than gambling. The two best-known ones were the Holborn Casino in High Holborn and the Argyll Rooms in Great Windmill Street, at the top of the Haymarket. One Confederate agent, visiting London in 1861, was taken after dinner to the Holborn Casino, whose real name was the Casino de Venise. It cost a shilling to gain admittance to a large, brilliantly lit hall, where people were dancing to polkas and quadrilles. Among its clientele were medical students, clerks, apprentice lawyers and young ships' officers, as well as a large number of prostitutes. In spite of its doubtful reputation, it was a surprisingly sober establishment, where the main drinks served were beer and soda water.

A day or two later, on his way home from the theater, the same agent stopped for a brandy and soda at one of the bars in the Haymarket. He found it crowded with rough and rowdy individuals and, as soon as he had swallowed his drink, realized that it had been drugged. Fortunately, one glass was not enough to stupefy him, and he wisely resisted the temptation of a second drink.[30]

During the daytime the Haymarket, with its theaters, hotels, restaurants, cigar divans, coffeehouses and shops selling shellfish, had a half-deserted air, but it took on a very different aspect once darkness fell, when it and the adjacent streets became the center of London's nightlife. It was a tourist sight in itself and a guidebook recommended that the visitor should see it "between ½ past 11 and 12 of a night in the thickest of the London season; when the crush of carriages and cabs, the crowd of orderly and disorderly people, the brilliant appearance of the taverns and shell-fish shops, form an extraordinary picture."[31] Henry Mayhew also observed: "A stranger on his coming to London ... seldom leaves the capital before he makes an evening visit to the Haymarket and Regent Street." He drew attention to "the brilliant illumination of the shops, cafes, Turkish divans, assembly halls and concert rooms," as well as "the troops of elegantly dressed courtesans, rustling in silks and satins ... promenading along these superb streets among throngs of fashionable people, and persons apparently of

every order and pursuit, from the ragged crossing-sweeper and tattered shoe-black to the high-bred gentleman of fashion and scion of nobility."[32] When the theaters closed at midnight, many of their patrons helped to swell the jostling crowds heading for the bars and oyster shops, cafes where it was not difficult to get one's pocket picked, and high-class night houses like the Cafe Royal, off Leicester Square, better known as Kate Hamilton's.

For those in search of more refined pleasures, there were a number of places where concerts, advertised in the *Times* and some of the other daily papers, were held. These included the Hanover Square Rooms, Exeter Hall, in the Strand, which could easily accommodate 3,000 people, St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, and Willis's Rooms, King Street; in addition, weekly concerts were held at the Crystal Palace, Sydenham, which could be reached by train from Victoria or London Bridge.

And there were other diversions. Burford's Panorama ("The Views are varied every Season") still lingered on in Leicester Square, where it had been since 1793, though it was about to close, as was also James Wyld's Great Globe, which had been there for the previous decade, "exhibiting the different divisions of the world on its concave or interior surface." Unusual sights could often be seen at the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly; John Banvard's moving "Panorama of the Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio Rivers," twelve feet high and 1,320 feet long, had caused a sensation when it was shown there in 1848–1849, and the Hall offered an ever-changing program of illustrated lectures and exhibitions. The evening was suggested as the best time to visit Madame Tussaud's Waxworks, which had been on Baker Street since the 1830s; admission cost one shilling and the Chamber of Horrors was sixpence extra.

Among London's other attractions were its parks. St. James's Park, its lake frequented by waterfowl, was the oldest, dating from the sixteenth century; Hyde Park, the largest of the London parks, had been opened to the public at the beginning of the seventeenth century; and Green Park was created by King Charles II in the second half of the seventeenth century. A notable feature of Hyde Park was Rotten Row (supposedly a corruption of the French *Route du Roi*), a carriage drive where, "from May to August ... may be seen all the wealth and fashion and splendid equipages of the nobility and gentry of Great Britain. As many as 800 equestrians ... have been seen assembled at Hyde Park in the height of the season."[33] For twenty-four weeks in 1851, Hyde Park had also been the setting for the Great Exhibition, held in the Crystal Palace, now moved to Sydenham.

Regent's Park, laid out in the early nineteenth century, housed the zoo. Kensington Gardens, next to Hyde Park and originally the grounds of Kensington Palace, had been opened to the public on a daily basis in the 1830s. Victoria Park was created in the 1840s to serve the people of the East End, and Battersea Park, south of the river, was opened in 1853. Further out, Greenwich Park and Richmond Park both dated from the seventeenth century and Kew Gardens, with its great variety of plants, was laid out in the eighteenth century.

Visitors to London in the early 1860s would have found the main streets extremely crowded. At certain times of day traffic congestion had reached epic proportions, with cabs, horse buses, private carriages, coal carts, railway vans, country wagons, drays and handbarrows all jostling for space, along with hordes of pedestrians. Until the introduction of cheap workmen's fares on the railways, many people walked to and from work; bus fares were simply too expensive for the thousands earning less than a pound a week. The situation was made even worse by the herds of cattle and flocks of sheep which were driven through the streets, bound for the Metropolitan Cattle Market at Islington. A few new thoroughfares had been built in an attempt to improve the traffic flow — Farringdon Road and New Oxford Street in

the 1840s, Victoria Street and an extended Cannon Street in the 1850s, and Garrick Street in the early 1860s — but they had done little to alleviate the problem.

Central London was not only very congested, it was also remarkably noisy, with thousands of iron-rimmed wheels and iron-shod horses. hooves passing through streets laid with granite sets. The huge volume of horse traffic also made it very dirty, particularly in wet weather, hence the need for that legendary Victorian street character, the crossing sweeper.

Anyone visiting the metropolis for the first time would have been amazed by the street life. Hundreds of people made a living of sorts as street entertainers. A few years previously, Henry Mayhew had recorded a number of them in his *London Labour and the London Poor.* They included "Punch and Judy" men, exhibitors of mechanical figures, acrobats, strong men, jugglers, conjurers, snake, sword and knife swallowers, fire-eaters, clowns, jesters, tightrope dancers and stilt walkers, reciters, exhibitors of dancing dogs, "Ethiopian serenaders" (black-faced minstrels playing banjos, tambourines and fiddles), whistling men and ballad singers.

Even more numerous were the street vendors, who constituted about one-fortieth of the working population of the metropolis. An astonishing range of items could be bought on the streets of London, from fruit and vegetables, oysters, hot eels, fried fish, ham sandwiches, pea soup, roasted chestnuts, baked potatoes, ice cream, cakes, pastries and sweets, boiled puddings, milk, ginger beer, lemonade and coffee, to flowers, stationery, hardware, crockery, walking sticks, combs, matches, shoelaces, cigars, second-hand clothing and even birds and dogs.

Although there seems to have been no London equivalent of the gangs of the Five Points and the Bowery who plagued New York at this time, an outbreak of violent street robberies in 1862–1863 nevertheless spread alarm and panic throughout the metropolis. Attacks were being reported as early as March 1862 and were usually carried out by teams of three men using a technique known as garroting, whereby their victims were half-throttled with a rope or cloth from behind, while their pockets were rifled. At first the attacks took place at night, but soon they were occurring in the daytime as well, and in the heart of the capital. Garroting was not an entirely new phenomenon — there had been an outbreak of it in 1856 — but what made it different this time was its persistent and widespread nature.

No one, it seemed, was safe. In mid–July 1862, James Pilkington, M.P. for Blackburn in Lancashire, was garroted and robbed in an "open well-lighted place" while walking from the House of Commons to his club in Pall Mall, and on the same night Edward Hawkins, the former Keeper of Antiquities at the British Museum, was attacked in a similar manner between St. James's and Bond Street. Several of the garroters' victims were so badly injured that they died. Many attributed this ferocious crime wave to the ending of transportation (the sending of criminals to the penal settlements in Australia), and the ticket-of-leave system (the release of prisoners on license before their sentences were completed), which meant that London was full of former convicts.

The excitement and hysteria generated by the outbreak produced antigarroting collars, antigarroting societies and cartoons in *Punch.* There were some arrests: in November 1862, for instance, a number of men accused of garroting were tried at the Central Criminal Court, in the Old Bailey, and given sentences of penal servitude varying from four years to life. The public disquiet over the wave of garrotings led to the setting up of a government commission to inquire into the legislation relating to transportation and penal servitude. It recommended stricter penal discipline in the convict prisons and the surveillance of ticket-of-leave men by the police. Finally, in July 1863, there was what was known as the "Garroting Act," which amended the criminal law to make robbery with violence punishable by flogging.

Although Henry Mayhew refers to previous instances of garroting in his survey of London's criminal population (1862), the research for this probably took place before the main outbreak occurred.[34] In the course of his investigations he met and interviewed madams, pimps and prostitutes, thieves, swindlers, pickpockets, shoplifters, horse and dog stealers, burglars and housebreakers, receivers of stolen goods, forgers of banknotes and checks, embezzlers, card sharps, and many types of beggars, both real and sham; among this criminal fraternity were many juvenile thieves, who in due course graduated from stealing from stores to become pickpockets or burglars. They all had their own descriptions: "cracksmen" were housebreakers; "rampsmen" were footpads, criminals who rob pedestrians; "bludgers" were street thugs; "buzzers" were pickpockets; "snoozers" booked a room at a hotel, then burgled the rooms of the other guests; "area sneaks" called at the kitchen doors of big houses in the hope of finding something to steal; "skinners" were women who enticed children into their homes and then stripped them of their clothing; "shoful men" were counterfeit coiners, "smashers" those who passed the coins; and "drummers" were men who put knockout drops into their victims' drinks before robbing them.

Visitors to London certainly needed to be on their guard, and a guidebook which appeared in the year the garroting scare began advised its readers not to linger in crowded thoroughfares or relieve beggars, to avoid byways and poor neighborhoods after dark, to carry no more money than was necessary for the day's expenses, and to take care of their pockets at the entrances to theaters, exhibitions and churches, on buses and the streets. The interiors of buses, in particular, where people sat very close together, offered excellent opportunities for pickpockets. Many of these were well-dressed women, and Mayhew described in some detail the techniques they employed.

In spite of the best efforts of the police, the criminal underworld was still very active in the 1860s, and criminals were quick to seize the opportunities which new developments like railways presented. The railway terminals attracted swarms of prostitutes, pickpockets and confidence tricksters, and, in addition, London criminals could now travel all over the country, and even abroad, to pursue their particular callings.

London had had a uniformed police force since 1829, when the Metropolitan Police were established, though the City chose to be excluded from their jurisdiction and set up its own separate force a decade later, in 1839. The Metropolitan Police, whose headquarters were at Scotland Yard, were originally organized in seventeen divisions — in central London these covered the districts of Whitehall, Westminster, St. James's, Covent Garden, Marylebone and Holborn — and there were separate divisions to police the river and the shipyards. A major advance was the establishment of a detective branch in 1842.

In the early 1860s policemen in London still wore the dark blue, swallowtail coats and black top hats which had been their uniform since 1829, though these were replaced by short tunics and helmets in 1864, and they were issued with a baton, a whistle and a lantern. Average pay was about eighteen shillings a week, in addition to which officers were given a clothing and coal allocation. In 1863 the total establishment of the Metropolitan Police was 6,590, and the City Police, 743, or about one officer for every 382 inhabitants of London.

There was certainly no lack of prisons to accommodate criminals once they had been caught, tried and convicted; every year upwards of 30,000 prisoners were said to pass through London's jails and houses of correction (prisons for those serving short sentences, usually with hard labor). The oldest prisons were Newgate, in the City, Horsemonger Lane, Southwark, and Cold Bath Fields, Clerkenwell, which all dated from the late eighteenth century. By the

1860s Newgate was being used for prisoners awaiting trial or execution, which still took place in public just outside its walls; Horsemonger Lane, the Surrey County jail, housed mainly petty criminals; and Cold Bath Fields was a house of correction, notorious for its severe regime.

A number of London prisons were built or rebuilt in the nineteenth century. Millbank, the largest in London, was the first penitentiary, but now housed convicts awaiting transfer to other prisons. Pentonville, a "model prison" based on the Eastern Penitentiary, Philadelphia, was described as "bright and cheerful and airy." The Clerkenwell House of Detention, a remand prison used for prisoners awaiting trial, received unwelcome publicity in 1867 when, in an unsuccessful attempt to rescue Irish Fenian prisoners, part of it was blown up and six people were killed. The most remarkable feature of the City House of Correction, Holloway, was its appearance: it was built to resemble a medieval castle. Tothill Fields, Westminster, contained females and juveniles. Brixton, originally a house of correction, now housed only female convicts, whose tasks included washing all the clothes for Pentonville, Millbank and Brixton Prisons. Wandsworth was also built as a house of correction.

The early sixties were not uneventful years in London. In March 1861 Charles Spurgeon, one of the most popular preachers of the nineteenth century, opened the Metropolitan Tabernacle, near the Elephant & Castle in south London; it could accommodate 6,000 people. An American ship, the *Hortense*, caught fire in the London Docks in April; and a strike of London building workers, which had begun the previous month, ended with the men accepting the hourly system of payment and a Saturday half-holiday. One of the greatest fires London had ever seen broke out in June in a hemp warehouse in Tooley Street, Southwark, near London Bridge. It soon spread to neighboring warehouses containing tallow, cotton, sugar and saltpeter and continued for several days, attracting thousands of spectators. In the course of it, James Braidwood, the superintendent of the London Fire Engine Establishment Brigade, was killed when a wall collapsed on him. That same month the Royal Horticultural Society opened its ornamental gardens in South Kensington to the public. There was a huge meeting in Exeter Hall, Strand, in July to welcome the fugitive slave John Anderson, who had arrived in London the previous month. In September two trains collided at Gospel Oak, near Kentish Town, in north London, killing 16 people and injuring 321. Deerfoot, a Seneca Indian, ran a six-mile course against three Englishmen in December, before the Prince of Wales, and was declared the winner; he ran again later that month against a man called Mills at Hackney Wick. The death from typhoid fever of the prince consort, the husband of Queen Victoria, at Windsor Castle later that month caused "general gloom and consternation throughout the metropolis," and his funeral a week later took place "amidst universal demonstrations of mourning."

In January 1862 the queen was reported to be in a state of nervous collapse and her royal duties were carried out by her uncle, King Leopold of the Belgians, who was in temporary residence at Buckingham Palace. Deerfoot ran again in February, this time against Job Smith, of Hulme, near Manchester, at the Copenhagen Grounds, Wandsworth, for a purse of £50. The following month, to mark his twenty-five years in London, and "as a token of gratitude to the English nation," another American, the banker and philanthropist George Peabody, gave the enormous sum of £150,000 to improve the condition of the "artisan and labouring poor," a gesture which the queen described as a "noble act of more than princely munificence" and one "wholly without parallel." In May the International Exhibition opened in South Kensington; one of the more unusual exhibits was a mechanical bullfinch which later sang

for the benefit of the Lancashire distress fund, in aid of victims of the Cotton Famine, "producing a considerable sum." A number of convicts escaped from London prisons in May and June: one from Newgate, three from Millbank and three more from Horsemonger Lane. George Peabody became the first American citizen to be given the Freedom of the City of London in July. That same month there was an explosion at a match factory in Bethnal Green, causing injuries and some fatalities. The International Exhibition closed in November after more than six million people had visited it, while the following month 20,000 people came to see the first cattle show held at the new Agricultural Hall, Islington.

There was "an immense demonstration" at Exeter Hall in the Strand "in favor of Negro Emancipation" in January 1863. Several persons were injured in an accident on the newly opened Metropolitan Railway in February. The following month there were celebrations to mark the wedding of the Prince of Wales and Princess Alexandra of Denmark, which took place at Windsor Castle. The day was observed as a general holiday but it was not without incident: eight women and a child were crushed to death in the crowds during the London celebrations in honor of the marriage. In April there was a crowded meeting at St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, organized by the Freedom Aid Society, to raise money to assist escaped slaves in the United States. The famous explorers John Speke and James Grant, discoverers of the source of the Nile, were present at a special meeting of the Royal Geographical Society at Burlington House, Piccadilly, in June.

The first dwellings built by the Peabody Trust for the industrious poor were opened in Whitechapel in February 1864. The Italian patriot, General Garibaldi, received an enthusiastic reception on his eleven-day visit to the capital in April and was granted the Freedom of the City of London. Work began on the Albert Memorial in Hyde Park in May, though it would not be completed until 1876. London's first railway murder took place in July when Thomas Briggs, a senior bank clerk, was killed in a carriage on the North London Railway, causing alarm among the commuting middle classes. In September Karl Marx helped to organize a meeting of the London Trades Council and the First International at St. Martin's Hall, Long Acre, which was attended by many European delegates. Franz Muller, the murderer of Thomas Briggs, was hanged outside Newgate Prison in November before an enormous and unruly crowd of spectators.

Savile House, Leicester Square, once a royal residence but in recent years used for a variety of miscellaneous entertainments, was destroyed by fire in February 1865. The metropolitan drainage system, begun in 1855 by Joseph Bazalgette, was finally completed, and opened by the Prince of Wales in April. Lord Palmerston died in October while still prime minister and was succeeded by Lord John Russell; at Queen Victoria's request, there was a public funeral later that month when he was buried in Westminster Abbey. Another funeral the following month, at Highgate Cemetery, also turned into a public event when an estimated 10,000 people attended that of the celebrated pugilist Tom Sayers, who in 1860 had fought the American John C. Heenan to a draw.

Much of the London the Confederates knew — the London of the 1860s — has inevitably disappeared, but there are still houses in Half Moon Street, Sackville Street and Savile Row where some of them lodged; nearby, the church in Piccadilly where one of them was married; and further afield, in Notting Hill, a house where a purchasing agent lived; and in Belsize Park, the church where a Confederate parson presided and houses where other Confederates stayed.

2

A Diplomatic Presence

Though with the North we sympathise,
It must not be forgotten,
That with the South we've stronger ties,
Which are composed of cotton.

—*Punch*, March 30, 1861

This rhyme might have been written for the leaders of the newly formed Confederate States of America, the cornerstone of whose foreign policy was the importance of cotton in the European economy. About 80 percent of the cotton used in British factories came from the South, and it was generally believed that withholding it would bring about British intervention and diplomatic recognition. In the event, an embargo on the export of cotton in the first year of the war was not the result of Confederate government legislation, but of voluntary action on the part of planters and shipowners, strongly supported by newspapers like the *Charleston Mercury*, which confidently assured its readers in June 1861: "The cards are in our hands, and we intend to play them out to the bankruptcy of every cotton factory in Great Britain and France or the acknowledgement of our independence." The power of King Cotton, however, would turn out to be illusory.[1]

In March 1861, Jefferson Davis, provisional president of the Confederate States of America, appointed three commissioners to represent the Confederacy's diplomatic interests in Europe. The men selected for this difficult mission were William L. Yancey, Pierre A. Rost and A. Dudley Mann.

They were not the first Southern representatives to be sent overseas. In January 1861, as soon as Georgia seceded, Thomas Butler King, a lawyer, planter and congressman, was appointed "Commissioner to the government of Queen Victoria, to the Emperor Napoleon III, and to the government of the King of the Belgians" by Governor Joseph E. Brown and sent to Europe to explain his state's new situation and gain recognition of her independence. King left for Europe at the beginning of March, but his role as a state commissioner, apparently a unique one, does not seem to have been particularly fruitful. His attempts, by means of negotiations in London and Paris, to establish a steamboat service between Savannah and European ports were thwarted by the blockade and he returned to Georgia early in 1862.

Jefferson Davis's emissaries were, meanwhile, on their way to London. The first to arrive was Dudley Mann, the only one of the three commissioners with any previous diplomatic experience. Born in Virginia in 1801, Ambrose Dudley Mann had attended West Point, but,

deciding against a military career, had opted instead for the legal profession. Between 1842 and 1853 he had held a series of government appointments as consul or commercial agent in various European countries, then, back home, had served as assistant secretary of state from 1853 through 1855 during Franklin Pierce's administration. This seemed a promising background, and together with his known advocacy of states rights, Southern economic independence and the establishment of a Southern merchant marine, no doubt helped secure his appointment as one of the first Confederate commissioners.

Dudley Mann reached London on April 15, having traveled via New York, but did not get off to a good start. He caused astonishment when, three days later, he called at the U.S. legation in Portland Place, where the outgoing minister, George Mifflin Dallas, was an old friend. Though less well-known than his successor, Charles Francis Adams, George Dallas had actually had a more distinguished career, having served as U.S. minister to Russia in 1837–1839 and as vice president to James Polk in 1845–1849; in addition, Dallas, Texas, had been named after him.

Mann's appearance at the legation was recorded in his journal by Benjamin Moran, the assistant secretary there, who was well-placed to observe events. He noted disapprovingly:

> Dudley Mann is nearly 60 years of age. He is not more than 5 feet 5, is thick, short and rather heavy. His voice is soft and enunciation slow, with a decided Southern accent. He has a rather good head, but there is not much in him, being like most Southern men, a mere talker...[2]

Despite his previous experience, Dudley Mann was not a particularly good choice as a diplomat. Verbosity was not his only failing; he was tactless, as his presumptuous appearance at the U.S. legation demonstrated, credulous, indecisive and not overendowed with common sense. One historian has described him as "full of words and wind" and having "great vanity and ego."[3]

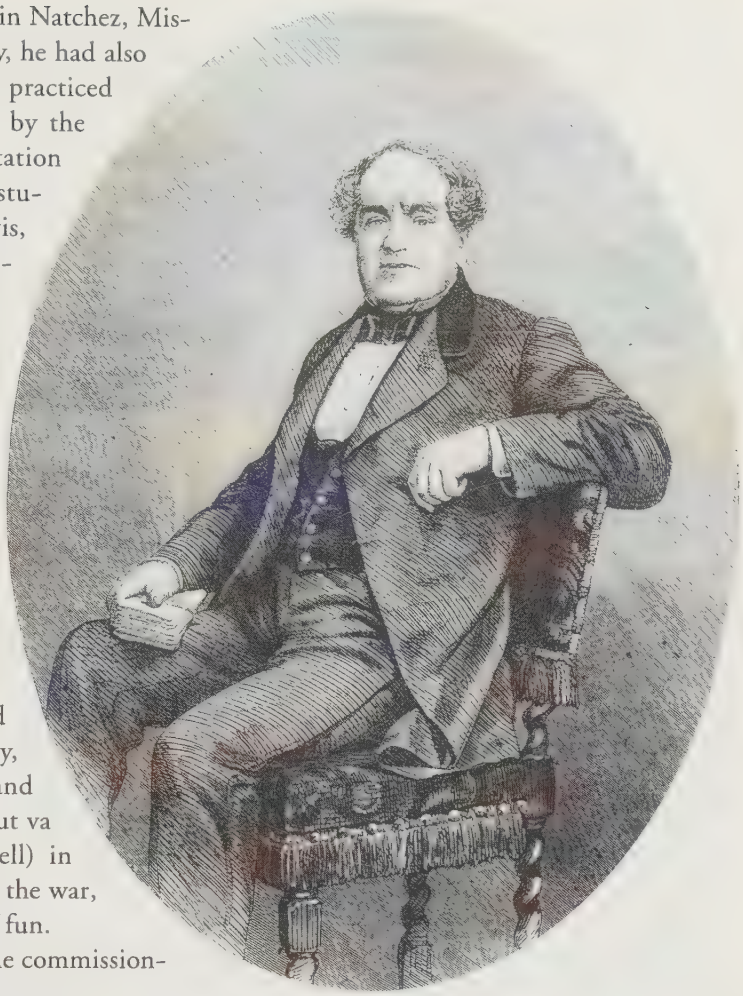
Benjamin Moran had further reason to exercise his disapproval when, nine days later, a telegram came, addressed to Mann, announcing that his colleagues, William Yancey and Pierre Rost, had also arrived. Yancey and Rost, who had left New Orleans at the end of March, reached London on April 29, where William Thompson, the American consul at Southampton, had obligingly engaged rooms for them, an act for which he was later to be severely censured.

William Lowndes Yancey was born in Georgia in 1814. Like Dudley Mann, he had studied law and in 1836 established a practice in Dallas County, Alabama, where he also rented a cotton plantation. In the 1840s he served in both the Alabama state legislature and the U.S. House of Representatives. Well-known for his support for states rights, he had advocated secession as early as 1858, and had come to be regarded as one of the most important orators in the South. At the inauguration of Jefferson Davis at Montgomery, Alabama, in February 1861, Yancey had introduced him with the words: "The man and the hour have met."

However, as a leading defender of slavery, he was an even worse choice than Dudley Mann, and certainly not the man to send to a country renowned for its dislike of the "peculiar institution." Robert Bunch, the British consul at Charleston, had met both Mann and Yancey; he dismissed the former as having no special merit of any kind, and described the latter as "impulsive, erratic and hot-headed, a rabid Secessionist."[4]

Pierre Adolph Rost was the oldest, but least well-known, of the three men. He was born in Lot-et-Garonne, in southwest France, about 1797, educated in Paris, and emigrated to

Louisiana in 1816, then settled in Natchez, Mississippi. Like Mann and Yancey, he had also read law and after qualifying, practiced for a while in Louisiana, but by the 1850s was managing his plantation there. One of his fellow law students had been Joseph E. Davis, the brother of the future president of the Confederate States, and this, together with his French birth, appears to have been largely responsible for his appointment as a commissioner in 1861. He based himself in Paris, but found he could achieve very little there. The fact that he appeared to have turned his back on France in early life, coupled with his poor French accent, did not create a very good impression in Parisian society, and his boundless optimism and continual use of the phrase "tout va bien" (everything is going well) in answer to every question about the war, soon made him into a figure of fun.



A. Dudley Mann was the first Confederate commissioner to arrive in London. (*Illustrated London News*)

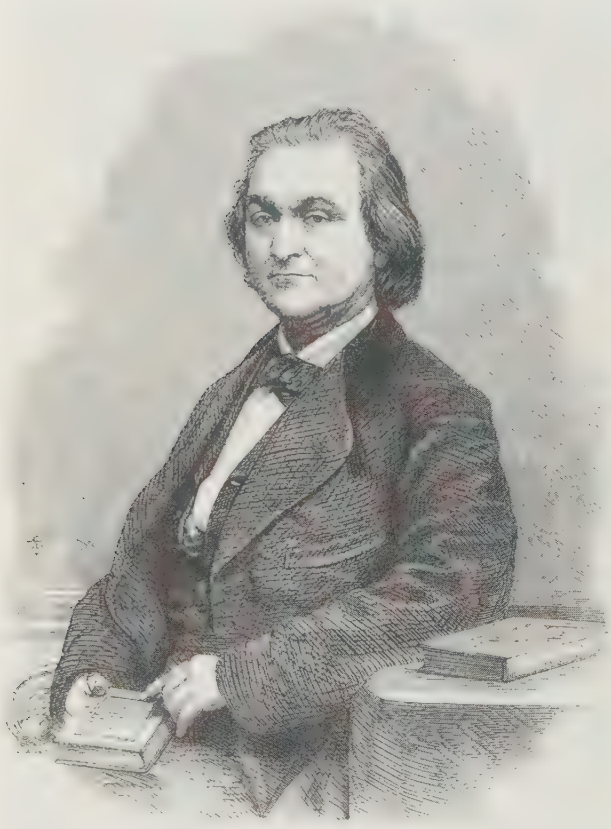
Back in London, one of the commissioners' first visitors was William H. Gregory, M.P. for County Galway, Ireland, through whom an unofficial meeting with Lord John Russell, the foreign secretary, was arranged for May 3, at his house in Chesham Place, Belgravia. William Yancey conducted the interview on their behalf; it lasted an hour, and Russell's response was cautious and noncommittal. A second meeting followed on May 9, which the foreign secretary terminated by saying that he would take up the matter of diplomatic recognition with the cabinet as soon as possible.

That same day Yancey was called on by Joshua Bates, the senior partner at Baring Brothers, an old, established merchant bank in Bishopsgate, which did business with both the Federal government and the Confederate government. Within the bank itself, Bates supported the North, while another partner, Russell Sturgis, favored the South. Bates, a Bostonian who eventually became a British citizen, had been with the bank since 1826 and directed its affairs with "great nerve, self-possession and self-confidence, with prudence and in the main, good judgement." Later that month a report appeared in an American newspaper that the commissioners had approached Barings in search of a loan, but had met with a frosty reception; Bates left them in no doubt about his low opinion of Jefferson Davis, and reminded them of the

millions of dollars owed to the Federal government by the states of Alabama, Mississippi and Florida in prewar repudiated bonds. A second approach, made about the same time by Dudley Mann to another American banker, George Peabody in Old Broad Street, was equally unsuccessful, for much the same reason.[5]

On May 4, William Yancey and Pierre Rost moved to a hotel in Victoria Street. "The Southern commissioners ... [have] recently taken up their quarters at the Westminster Palace Hotel," reported a London newspaper.[6] Twelve days later Yancey moved again, this time to 15 Half Moon Street, off Picadilly, where furnished rooms cost 3 1/2 guineas per week, including such extras as coal fires and gas lights.[7] Dudley Mann had been installed in lodgings in nearby Albemarle Street since at least May 1, and was joined there by his son, William Grayson Mann, who had arrived on May 17 with dispatches, and was to serve as his private secretary. Yancey's secretary, John Walker Fearn of Alabama, was already in London, having traveled with him and Rost. An experienced and able man, before the war Fearn had been secretary to the United States legation in Belgium and Mexico. Rost, meanwhile, proceeded to Paris.

Yancey had a letter of introduction to William S. Lindsay, another leading pro–Confederate M.P., by whom he was invited to the Houses of Parliament, where he met a number of members. Some sightseeing was not ruled out, and included visits to the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park, the Tower of London, and trips downriver to Greenwich for a traditional whitebait supper, and Woolwich, with its great dockyard and arsenal. Early June saw him in Paris, where a number of Confederates were already living.



William L. Yancey was another of the Confederate commissioners sent to London. (*Illustrated London News*)

The new U.S. minister, Charles Francis Adams, reached London on May 13 and took over from George M. Dallas. The son of John Quincy Adams, sixth president of the United States, who was himself a former U.S. minister to Great Britain, he had practiced as a lawyer before being sent to London, and had been a congressman in the three years prior to the Civil War. His arrival coincided with the issue of a Proclamation of Neutrality, which granted belligerent status to the Confederate States, and did little to improve relations between Great Britain and the United States.

Five days after Adams' arrival, the U.S. legation moved from Portland Place to nearby Duke Street; at the beginning of June it moved again, this time to St. George's Place, Hyde Park Corner; then at the end of July, to

The house in Half Moon Street, Mayfair, where Yancey lodged in 1861–1862, during his time in London. (Author's photograph)

Mansfield Street, in the vicinity of Portland Place; finally, after all this upheaval, in April 1862 it relocated to Upper Portland Place, close to Regent's Park, where it was to remain until after the war.

The first reports of the Federal rout at Manassas (Bull Run), which appeared in the *Times* on August 5, caused a great stir. "The sensation produced by those great events both here and in Paris was profound, and has tended to produce a conviction that the Confederate States cannot be brought back into the Union by arms," Yancey wrote to Secretary of State Robert M.T. Hunter.[8] Rost, who was now in Paris, was telegraphed to rejoin his colleagues in London, with a view to another meeting with Lord John Russell about diplomatic recognition.

Russell refused to see them and asked them to put any further communication in writing.[9] This they did on August 14, in a long letter written from Half Moon Street, which embodied the Confederacy's desire for recognition by the British government. The foreign secretary's carefully worded reply, ten days later, was that Britain must wait until a military solution or a negotiated settlement resolved the present situation, and in the meantime must maintain her neutrality.

Benjamin Moran was disgusted by the way in which William Yancey and Dudley Mann were being made welcome in London, and wined and dined. On November 9 they were guests of honor at a dinner at Fishmongers' Hall, in London, and Yancey's speech, punctuated by cries of "hear, hear" and cheers, was reported in the *Times*:

> One thing is clear, and that is that the contest now going on is upon the people of the Confederate States for the right to govern themselves, and to resist subjugation by the North ... In defence of their liberties and sovereign independence, the Confederate States and people are united and resolute. They are invaded by a power numbering 20,000,000; yet for eight months has the Confederate Government successfully resisted — aye repelled — that invasion, along a frontier of 1,000 miles.[10]

He went on to deny any wish for foreign intervention. Earlier he had expressed his thanks for the granting of belligerent status to the Confederate States. He understood there might be delays in recognition, but that each nation would grant it when the time was right. Peace with the North would come, he felt, when it recognized the Confederate States as a belligerent power, and not as rebels.

By early autumn, the Confederate government having decided to disband the original commission, Pierre Rost had been appointed commissioner to Spain and Dudley Mann to Belgium; William Yancey, who had been reluctant to come to Europe in the first place, had concluded that the Confederates could never expect any sympathy or help there, and decided to resign and return to the Confederacy. Two new commissioners, James M. Mason and John Slidell, both states-rights Democrats, were appointed for London and Paris. Until they arrived, Yancey, Rost and Mann were to remain in their present posts.

Born in the District of Columbia in 1798, James Murray Mason was a lawyer who had practiced in Winchester, Virginia, before entering the realm of politics in 1826. He served at both local and national levels and became a senator in 1847. John Slidell was born in New York in 1793, but moved to New Orleans in 1819, where he also became a lawyer as well as a prominent figure in Louisiana politics; he was elected to the Senate in 1853. Unlike Mason, Slidell had previously traveled abroad, having been sent to Mexico on a diplomatic mission in the 1840s, and England in 1853, as a financial agent for the New Orleans & Nashville Railroad.

Fishmongers' Hall. William Yancey and Dudley Mann were guests at a dinner here given by the Fishmongers' Company in November 1861. (Author's photograph)

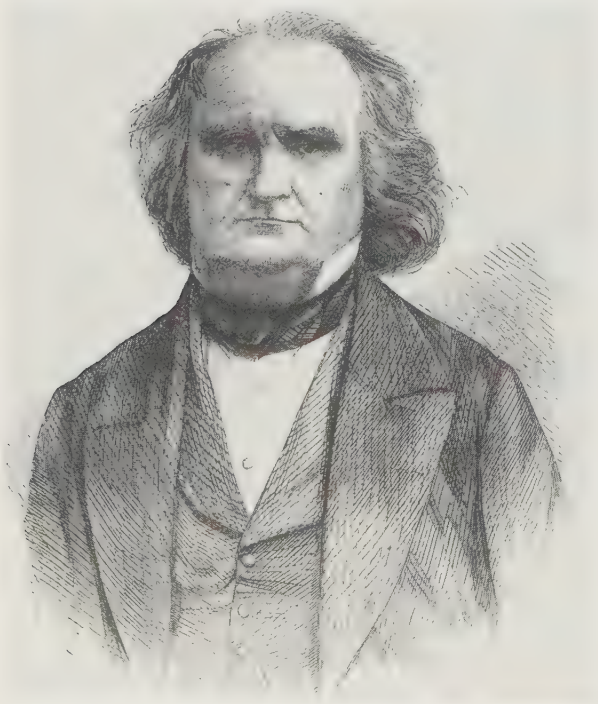
In October 1861 Mason and Slidell successfully ran the Union blockade of Charleston in the *Theodora* and sailed for Havana, Cuba. From here they were to travel in the British mail steamer *Trent* to St. Thomas, in the British West Indies, where they would catch a connecting steamer for England. The news of the stopping of the *Trent* by the USS *San Jacinto*, the forcible removal of the two commissioners and their secretaries, on the middle

leg of their journey, and their subsequent imprisonment at Boston reached London on November 27.

It provoked a wave of indignation, and was almost universally condemned; only one London paper, the *Morning Star*, thought the action of the *San Jacinto* was justifiable.[11] This violation of the British flag created an international crisis, which threatened to erupt into war with the United States. Troops were dispatched for the defense of Canada — it was reported that as one troopship left the Mersey, a regimental band was playing "Dixie" — and a royal proclamation prohibited any further exports of arms, ammunition and military stores.

Pierre Rost was again in Paris when he learned of the incident and he returned to London at once. Further letters were sent by the commissioners to Lord John Russell about this, and the effectiveness of the blockade, to be answered by a tart little note stating, "in the present state of affairs, he must decline to enter into any official communication with them."[12] In the meantime, a false sense of optimism had been created in Confederate circles, both in London and elsewhere; South Carolina diarist Mary Chesnut thought that something good was bound to come from such a stupid blunder on the part of the United States, while Dudley Mann felt that recognition by the British government could not be far away, and said so in a letter to Richmond at the beginning of December.

The possibility of war, however, was averted when the American cabinet ruled the stopping of the *Trent* to be illegal, and the prisoners were released into British custody at the end of December to continue their journey to Europe. When news of Mason's release and imminent arrival in the metropolis became known, the humorous weekly magazine, *Punch,* marked the occasion with a rhyme:



Commissioner James M. Mason, who was sent to replace William Yancey and Dudley Mann. (***Illustrated London News***)

A Masonic Ditty

Sing high diddle diddle
The colleague of Slidell,
Released from the stone-jug, or basin,
And by England received,
May now be believed,
A free, and an accepted Mason.[13]

James M. Mason and John Slidell, together with their secretaries, James E. McFarland and George Eustis, finally arrived at Southampton on January 29, 1862 in the steamer *La Plata*. In spite of their recent fame as the focus of an international incident, "There was no demonstration whatever when these gentlemen, whose capture in the *Trent* has been the subject of so much discussion, landed at Southampton, there being nothing more than the ordinary assemblage on the arrival of the mail-steamers. A moderate crowd, as is usual, was collected outside the barriers which are always placed until the specie [coinage] and mails are landed,"

reported the *Illustrated Times*. "Mr Mason," it added, "is rather tall and stout, of tolerably well-formed figure, full colour, and determined and severe expression of countenance. Mr Slidell is a little shorter and stouter, with a round face, and white hair and beard." Confederate propagandist Henry Hotze, who came to England on the same ship as the commissioners, also noted the absence of comment on their arrival; attributing this to their earlier notoriety, he imagined that "it was thought necessary to discourage and prevent manifestations and demonstrations to which a political significance might be attached."[14]

The commissioners proceeded to London, Mason taking rooms at Fenton's Hotel in St. James's Street; from there he would subsequently move to addresses in Piccadilly, Devonshire Street and finally Upper Seymour Street. Slidell, meanwhile, made arrangements to continue his journey to Paris.

With the arrival of their replacements, the original commissioners departed. While abroad, William Yancey had been elected to the Confederate Senate and he returned to the South in February 1862 to take his seat. Disillusionment had set in. As early as July 1861 he had written to a friend: "The anti-slavery sentiment is universal. 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' has been read and believed"; and someone who knew him described him as "the most broken-up, demoralized, and wretched-looking man I ever saw."[15]

Pierre Rost, accompanied by John Fearn, departed for Madrid, but found no more success there than in Paris. The Spanish foreign minister refused to see him, and this, together with poor health, led to his resignation in May 1862. He retired to Fumel, a small town in southwest France, where he remained until the end of the war, and Fearn returned to the Confederacy.

Though appointed to Brussels, Dudley Mann decided to remain in London for the time being, thinking that, as Parliament was about to meet, he might be of more use there. When he did finally proceed to the Continent, he found the Belgian government also unwilling to receive or communicate with him, and he was equally unsuccessful when he visited Denmark; even his attempt to get the Vatican to impede the Federal recruitment of Irish and German Catholics was unsuccessful, though the pope received his request courteously. As a result, he seems to have spent much of his time contributing articles to English and Belgian newspapers and journals.

James Mason's ten years' experience as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, and therefore presumably with some knowledge of European affairs, made him seem a better choice than his predecessors. But, like Yancey, he was also tainted by slavery, in his case as the author of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, and even someone as well disposed towards him as Mary Chesnut, who thought him "a manly old Virginian — straightforward, brave, truthful, clever," was appalled by his appointment:

> My wildest imagination will not picture Mr. Mason as a diplomat ... Well, this sending Mr. Mason to London is the maddest thing yet. Worse in some points of view than Yancey — and that was a catastrophe! ... You know it set all the world a-laughing when we sent Mr. Mason abroad as a *diplomat*! ... They say at the lordliest table Mr. Mason will turn round halfway in his chair and spit in the fire![16]

Further disparaging remarks came from Henry Adams, the son of Charles Francis Adams, and his unofficial private secretary, who in June 1862 wrote his brother, then serving with the Union Army: "I hear very little about our friend Mason ... He has little or no attention paid him except as a matter of curiosity, though occasionally we are told of his being at dinner

somewhere or other."[17] Many years later, he expressed surprise that Jefferson Davis had chosen him: "The Confederacy had plenty of excellent men to send to London, but few who were less fitted than Mason. Possibly Mason had a certain amount of common sense, but he seemed to have nothing else, and in London society he counted merely as one eccentric more."[18] Benjamin Moran also thought Mason highly unsuitable, "the unfittest man they could have sent here ... an ignominious failure. His antecedents were bad, his associates were questionable, and his manners vulgar."[19]

Yet James Mason's mood at the start of his mission was remarkably optimistic. The day after his arrival, he wrote Secretary of State Robert M. T. Hunter: "Now with but a day's experience in London, my impressions decidedly are that, although the ministry may hang back in regard to the blockade and recognition ... the popular voice, through the House of Commons, will demand both."[20]

He lost no time in arranging an unofficial meeting with the foreign secretary, Lord John Russell. They met on February 10, but Lord Russell was not encouraging, and Mason concluded, wrongly as it happens, that his personal sympathies were not with the Confederates and that he was pursuing a policy of inaction; it was to be their only meeting. In the following months, he would liaise with purchasing agents, cooperate with propagandists, be involved in the raising of money for the Confederate cause, and correspond with the British government about the blockade, recognition and ironclads.

In addition, Mason greatly enjoyed the social life of the metropolis and cultivated the friendship of leading figures in the world of politics and commerce. His private memorandum book, in effect his diary, shows he dined with various members of the Southern lobby in Parliament, such as William H. Gregory, Sir James Fergusson, Sir Edward Kerrison and Lord Campbell; bankers like John S. Gilliat; John W. Cowell, "a retired gentleman of family," who had published a pro–Confederate pamphlet; and the veteran radical M.P. Richard Cobden, "decidedly Northern in his sympathies, but deploring the war." He met the Marquess of Bath, "an intelligent and accomplished young gentleman," whom he later visited at his seat at Longleat, in Wiltshire, attended a reception at Stafford House, the Duke of Sutherland's London residence, and had meetings with people as diverse as royal physician Sir Henry Holland, novelist Mrs. Caroline Norton and Prince Oscar of Sweden, who "expressed himself earnestly on the Southern side."[21]

He certainly did not lack for invitations, and on February 11, 1863, was a guest at the Lord Mayor's banquet at the Mansion House in London, where, in response to calls from the assembled gathering, he made an impromptu speech:

> I am a stranger in London — or, rather, I was a stranger; but I have learnt since I came to London that none of English blood from my own Southern land are strangers among you. (cheers) I speak this from my heart (cheers), for I have been by every circle in England and by every class of society a welcomed and honoured guest. (cheers) ... The day will come (great cheering) — and it is not far off — when the relationship between that Government which is now in its infant fortune and yours will be one of close and intimate alliance. (renewed cheers)[22]

A member of the audience wrote a friend the following day: "I was at the Mansion House last night and heard the Lord Mayor virtually recognize the South in the quietest and most inoffensive way that could be imagined. The *Times* gives a very good report of what Mr. Mason said, but no description can picture the effect of his calm and dignified delivery of these simple sentences."[23]

The home of Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell in Chesham Place, Belgravia. William Yancey, Pierre Rost and Dudley Mann visited him here in May 1861 and James Mason in February 1862. (Author's photograph)

At the beginning of March 1863 yet another Confederate commissioner arrived in London. He was Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Lamar, who came from an old, established Georgia family. Born there in 1825, he moved to Mississippi after training as a lawyer and in the 1850s was elected to Congress. At the outbreak of the Civil War he served for a while in the Confederate Army until ill health forced his resignation in October 1862. The following month he was appointed commissioner to Russia. He was accompanied as secretary by John Fearn, who had previously worked with William Yancey in London and Pierre Rost in Madrid. Lamar and Fearn moved to Paris in April, but while there it was learned that their mission to Russia was unwelcome and it was terminated in June. For several months Lamar assisted with propaganda activities in London before returning to the Confederacy with Fearn towards the end of 1863.

Lucius Lamar seems to have been a more able and talented man than James Mason, and Henry Adams, who came to know him in the 1880s, concluded, "he would have done better in London, in place of Mason. London society would have delighted in him; his stories would have won success; his manners would have made him loved; his oratory would have swept every audience."[24]

A curious correspondence between James Mason and the Rev. Moncure Daniel Conway appeared in the *Times* in June 1863. Though he was the son of a Virginia slave-owner, Conway was an antislavery agitator and had arrived in England that year to lecture on behalf of Northern abolitionists. He proposed that, if the Confederate States would emancipate their slaves, "then the Abolitionists and Anti-slavery leaders of the Northern States shall immediately oppose the prosecution of the war ... and since they hold the balance of power, will certainly cause the war to cease by the immediate withdrawal of every kind of support from it."[25] Mason questioned Conway's authority for this sweeping claim, confirming that in any case the South would never negotiate with the North, and his unauthorized proposal also caused some embarrassment in abolitionist circles, from whom an overture of this kind would have been highly unlikely. Conway chose to remain in London, becoming pastor of South Place Chapel, Finsbury, a post he was to hold for more than twenty years.

In September 1863 James Mason informed Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell that he was "directed to withdraw at once from the country," the Confederate government having decided that their commissioner would never be recognized in London. "Mr. Mason has been very solemnly withdrawn from here on the grounds that Lord Russell treats him with hauteur," the U.S. minister wrote his soldier son that month.[26] On September 30 Mason left London for Paris, where he would now be based as a commissioner-at-large, or as he described it, "Commissioner on the Continent."

In Paris, his colleague, John Slidell, whose knowledge of the French language and customs had helped secure his appointment, had made a better impression than Pierre Rost. On his arrival in February 1862 he had been warmly welcomed by Confederate sympathizers, and had set up home in the Avenue d'Antin, with an office in the Rue de Marignan. He had two interviews with Napoleon III, at Vichy in July and at St. Cloud in October, though neither produced any material results, as the emperor was unwilling to act without Britain in recognizing the Confederacy. Slidell's proposal for a Franco-Confederate treaty came to nothing, and arrangements made in conjunction with naval purchasing agent James Bulloch in 1863 for the construction of two ironclads at Bordeaux and four wooden corvettes at Nantes were thwarted, following protests from the U.S. minister in Paris, William L. Dayton. He did,

however, make an important contribution to the negotiations for the Confederate Cotton Loan earlier that year.

James Mason returned to London briefly about mid-October 1863 to clear up some outstanding matters, and he made a number of subsequent visits to London, during one of which, on July 14, 1864, there was an unofficial meeting with the prime minister, Lord Palmerston, at his residence, Cambridge House, Piccadilly. Towards the end of that month he embarked on a tour of Scotland and Ireland, stopping at Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, where a number of Confederate families were living, on the way back to London in September. The following month he paid a visit to the Confederate Bazaar held in St. George's Hall, Liverpool, in aid of the Southern Prisoners' Relief Fund.

News of the Confederate defeats at Franklin and Nashville reached London during December 1864, together with that of Sherman's occupation of Savannah. Even worse was to follow: on January 31, 1865, the *Times* reported the capture of Fort Fisher, at the mouth of the Cape Fear River in North Carolina, effectively closing Wilmington, the last major Confederate port, which surrendered within weeks.

When reports of the Hampton Roads Peace Conference were received in London in the middle of the following month, they caused consternation of a different kind:

> The public funds fell ... You would have thought that a great calamity had befallen the good people of England ... Happily for the distressed nerves of our friends, the next day brought them a little relief. A steamer had come with ... later news. It was not so bad as they had feared ... There would be no peace. Hurrah. The papers this morning are all congratulating the public that the war will go on indefinitely.[27]

The abandonment of Fort Sumter, where the war had started, and the evacuation of Charleston, reported on March 4, had an even more dramatic effect: "The news of the fall of Charleston has made a profound impression here. It is greater, perhaps, than any other event of the war," Charles Francis Adams wrote the secretary of state.[28]

As far back as the autumn of 1863 there had been rumors that the South was planning to arm and liberate some of its slaves for military and perhaps diplomatic reasons, while more recently similar ideas were being openly discussed in the Confederate press. "Richmond papers assert," stated the *Times* in January 1865, "that England and France would recognize the South upon conditions of negro emancipation, and urge that a proposition to that effect should be made to those Powers." Gladstone was no doubt expressing the feelings of many when, a few days after Appomattox, he wrote a friend that, had the Southerners been able to dissociate their cause from slavery by actually or virtually abolishing it, then his sympathies would have been with them.[29] The *Index*, previously a supporter of slavery, now prepared to support the proposal, arguing: "If it be necessary to convince the world that we are fighting for the self-government of the whites, that we should liberate the negroes, and if that liberation can be made to secure our independence, we believe that the people of these [Confederate] States would not hesitate to make the sacrifice."[30]

It was against this background that Duncan Farrar Kenner, a wealthy Louisiana sugar planter and horse breeder, and a member of the Confederate Congress, arrived in London at the end of February 1865. Traveling in disguise via New York, he had been sent as a special envoy by President Davis, and with him he carried the secret proposal to emancipate the slaves in return for diplomatic recognition.[31] Born in New Orleans in 1813, Kenner was himself a major slave-owner, but had long been convinced that European

recognition was vital for Confederate success, and that it would only come if slavery was abolished.

Finding that James Mason was in Paris, Duncan Kenner proceeded there. Mason was initially reluctant to heed the instructions contained in Kenner's dispatch, in view of the deteriorating military situation, and the firm stand the British government had so far taken against recognition, but he eventually agreed to return to London. Here, Kenner and Mason obtained an interview with Lord Palmerston, who told them that their proposition could not be considered without the agreement of the emperor of the French. Kenner accordingly went back to Paris and secured an interview with the emperor; France, he was told, would do what England was willing to do in this matter, but would do nothing without her. By the time Kenner returned to London for a second meeting with Palmerston on March 14, news had arrived of Sherman's march through the Carolinas. The prime minister's reply was unequivocal: at no time had his government been convinced that Confederate independence could be achieved beyond all doubt, and now it was too late to grant recognition, whatever the terms might be.

Almost exactly a month later, on April 15, 1865, Benjamin Moran wrote in his diary: "Early this morning I got news of the capture of Richmond and Petersburg. This has staggered the English rebel sympathizers here. They give the rebels up now."[32] The *Times* purported to think otherwise, claiming: "The event has been anticipated not only in America, but in this country for some time past."[33] Three days later, in a letter to Secretary of State William H. Seward, Charles Francis Adams nevertheless confirmed: "The disappointment is undisguised. One of the daily journals correctly affirms of the higher circles that few expected, and still fewer desired the result."[34] In the early hours of April 23, 1865, a Reuter's telegram was received in London: General Lee had surrendered. "We this day received the grand news of Lee's surrender," noted Moran triumphantly in his journal.[35]

In what was to be his last dispatch as Confederate commissioner, James Mason wrote Secretary of State Judah Benjamin (a letter he was destined never to receive): "The evacuation of Richmond and surrender of Lee has produced the confident belief here, and throughout Europe generally, that further resistance is hopeless and that the war is at an end, to be followed on our part by passive submission to our fate. I need not say that I entertain no such impression and endeavor as far as I can to disabuse the public mind."[36] Writing many years after the war, James Bulloch echoed that view, observing: "Even in Europe it was not universally thought that the surrender of General Lee would immediately end the war," though he added that it was soon obvious to Confederates abroad who knew the real state of affairs in the South that the end had come; there could be no recovery.[37]

The Confederate government was unfortunate in the men it chose to represent it in London, but would it have made any difference, had it been a wiser choice? The answer is, probably not. Although for a brief period in the late summer of 1862, the British cabinet was indeed considering the possibility of extending diplomatic recognition to the Confederate States, the news of Antietam raised doubts in their minds and Lincoln's preliminary Emancipation Proclamation a few days later ended the possibility.

3

The Propaganda War

Few suspect, none know, the silent, unobtrusive agency through which it [the Index*] has operated upon its contemporaries.*

—Henry Hotze, August 27, 1863

Henry Hotze was to be the key figure in Confederate propaganda activities in London, and indeed in Europe, but books and pamphlets supporting the Confederacy were already being published before he appeared on the scene. One of the earliest and most important of these was James Spence's *The American Union* (1861). According to its author, a wealthy Liverpool tin and iron merchant, it was written in fourteen weeks, and it argued the right of the Southern states to secede, and the inevitability of secession, given the differences between North and South. It was seen as a major piece of Confederate propaganda, in spite of its condemnation of slavery. "It has attracted more attention and been more generally read both here and on the Continent than any production of like character of the many that have appeared," observed James Mason to Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin.[1]

That was not an exaggeration, as favorable reviews in publications like the *Quarterly Review,* the *Athenaeum* and the *Times* demonstrated. On December 21, 1861, *All the Year Round*, the weekly magazine edited by Charles Dickens, commented: "Mr. Spence has assembled facts and authorities in support of his reasoning, and has grouped them with a temperate and logical clearness that cannot fail to convince. He writes with the discretion of a judge who has all the evidence before him, strong and honest in his own convictions." *The American Union* went through four editions in six months, and was translated into French and German.[2]

John W. Cowell's *Southern Secession: A Letter addressed to Captain M. F. Maury, Confederate Navy* (1862) attributed the war to Northern attempts to rob the South through protective tariffs, and described "the genuine Yankee nature" as "that amalgam of hypocrisy, cruelty, falsehood ... insensibility to the opinions of others, utter callousness to right, barbarous delight in wrong, and thoroughly moral ruffianism."[3] John Welsford Cowell, an economist who had served on both the Poor Law Commission and the Factory Commission, had been sent to the United States in 1837 as a representative of the Bank of England to collect money owed by American firms. He remained there until 1839, during which time he met many important Americans and came home convinced that Southern secession was inevitable.

Particularly influential was Alexander James Beresford Hope's *The American Disruption*, which also appeared in 1862. It contained the texts of three lectures—"A Popular View of the

American Civil War," "England, the North and the South" and "The Results of the American Disruption"—which had been published separately the previous year, the overriding theme of which was that Confederate independence was in Britain's best interests. Like James Spence, Beresford Hope was opposed to "the abominable institution of slavery," but this did not affect his support for the South. *The American Disruption* was a remarkably successful book, with no fewer than six editions in one year.

Alexander James Beresford Hope was an important figure in London Confederate circles. Born in 1820, he was a man of considerable wealth and culture and had commissioned the famous London church of All Saints', Margaret Street (built during 1850–1859 and designed by William Butterfield), as well as founding the influential *Saturday Review*. He was also the brother-in-law of Lord Robert Cecil, a leading member of the Southern lobby in the House of Commons. Beresford Hope himself had been an M.P. from 1841 through 1852 and again from 1857 through 1859, but he was not to return to Parliament until 1865 when the Civil War was over.

The steamer which brought Mason and Slidell to England on January 29, 1862, also carried Henry Hotze, the newly-appointed commercial agent for the Confederate States of America. Henry Hotze was born in Zurich, Switzerland, in 1834 and emigrated to the United States in early life, settling in Mobile, Alabama, where he became a naturalized citizen in 1856. After an appointment as secretary at the U.S., legation in Brussels in 1858–1859, he served as associate editor of the *Mobile Register* from 1859 to 1861. Following a short spell of service in the Confederate Army, as a member of the Mobile Cadets, which became part of the Third Alabama, he was sent to London in September 1861 by Secretary of War Leroy P. Walker to check on the purchase of arms and munitions; he also carried dispatches for William Yancey and Dudley Mann. The experience convinced him of the need for a Confederate propaganda offensive.

Alexander Beresford Hope, a Confederate supporter and early propagandist for the Southern cause. (*Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*)

On his return to Richmond in November, he was appointed to the post of commercial agent, with a subsidiary role of organizing Southern propaganda. His instructions from Robert M. T. Hunter, the secretary of state, stated: "You will be diligent and earnest in your efforts to impress upon the public mind abroad the ability of the Confederate States to maintain their independence, and to this end you will publish whatever information you possess calculated to convey a just idea of their ample resources and vast

military strength and to raise their character and Government in general estimation."[4] What Hotze regarded as his real mission was largely self-instigated; propaganda had not yet assumed a very high priority with his political masters, who probably had little understanding of what was required. It would be the greatest challenge of his career.

The need to counteract the "official," i.e., U.S., version of events in America, and so help promote the Confederate cause, had become considerably more pressing in the autumn of 1861, when Secretary of State William H. Seward had sent Thurlow Weed to Europe as a propaganda agent, and John Bigelow, who had been appointed U.S. consul general in Paris, had been given the job of coordinating Northern propaganda in Europe. Both were capable and experienced former journalists.

The prospect before Henry Hotze was daunting: "I confess that the nearer I approached the scene of my labors the more the difficulties of my position loomed up before me, and on arriving here as the advocate of our case through the most fastidious press in the world, a stranger with barely a few friends or introductory letters, with no extensive political or literary reputation to precede me and smooth my way, I felt almost disheartened," he wrote the secretary of state on 23 February 1862.[5] He took rooms initially in Bury Street, St. James's, before setting up his commercial agency in Savile Row.

Hotze lost no time in making contact with newspapers thought to be sympathetic to the Confederate cause and offering to write for them. His first contribution, on February 22, was a leader in the *Morning Post* (the mouthpiece of the Liberal prime minister, Lord Palmerston), describing the inauguration of Jefferson Davis as president of the Confederate States, a copy of which he sent to Richmond. It was published largely unaltered, "only one or two expressions being somewhat enfeebled," he observed, and "produced a deep impression in the clubs."[6] This was followed by others in the *Standard* and the *Morning Herald*, which represented the views of Lord Derby, leader of the Conservative opposition.

He was pleased with the result: "Now the most formidable obstacles are overcome. The columns of the journals to which I most desired access are open to me, and with this I have acquired the secret of the 'open sesame' of the others I may need." The next stage of his plan was to present his articles to professional "leader writers," the freelance journalists who wrote regularly for those papers, "thus conciliating friendly goodwill where otherwise annoying jealousies might arise."[7]

One of his earliest allies was Thomas Hamber, chief editor of the *Morning Herald* and the *Standard*, a colorful character who was known in Fleet Street as "Captain Hamber" or the "Swiss Captain." He was so called because he had been an officer in the British Swiss Legion, three regiments of light infantry which were raised as mercenaries to fight in the Crimean War (1854–1856). Having only got as far as the Turkish town of Smyrna (present-day Izmir) by the end of the war, he apparently did not see active service, though one of his foreign correspondents thought that he "looked every inch a fighting soldier."[8] He was a staunch supporter of the South, and during the Civil War the *Standard* became renowned for its "Manhattan Letters," written by the paper's New York correspondent, Joseph A. Scoville. So critical were they of the Federal government that at one stage their author was arrested and imprisoned. The effect of them in London was to increase the paper's circulation dramatically.

Addressing the new secretary of state, Judah P. Benjamin, on April 25, 1862, Hotze was able to write: "Two more newspapers, the *Herald* ... and the *Standard* ... have voluntarily placed themselves at my disposal. The editor-in-chief of both called on me and offered the use of

The offices of the Confederate States Commercial Agency in Savile Row, Mayfair. (Author's photograph)

the columns of both, including the editorial columns, of which offer I have, though guardedly, availed myself."[9] Thereafter, the *Standard* was assured of a regular supply of news items about the Confederacy.

There was certainly no lack of demand for what Hotze had to offer. "All information concerning the South, and especially the material and organisation of our armies, is eagerly sought by the leader writers who find a profitable market for it in the journals and magazines with which they are connected. One writer usually writes for several publications, and I have thus the opportunity of multiplying myself, so to speak, to an almost unlimited extent."[10]

In spite of his success with his fellow journalists, Hotze felt that something more was needed to promote the Confederate cause. Accordingly, he wrote Judah Benjamin:

> I have now ... concluded to establish a newspaper wholly devoted to our interests, and which will be exclusively under my control, though my connection with it is known only to a few initiated and will not be suspected by the public at large ... The assistance of two personal friends, Mr H. O. Brewer of Mobile, and Mr A.P. Wetter of Savannah, together with my private resources, enabled me to overcome the pecuniary difficulties of the enterprise and to place its publication for at least three months ... beyond the possibility of failure.[11]

The *Index*, "A Weekly Journal of Politics, Literature, and News devoted to the Exposition of the Mutual Interests, Political and Commercial, of Great Britain and the Confederate States of America," first appeared on Thursday, May 1, 1862, and in his first leader Hotze set out its aims:

> The manners and customs of the Confederate States, their resources and capabilities, and the real status of their people in the work of civilization, are still a sealed book to the intelligence of Europe ... If to this sealed book, which contains much worth studying, "The Index" can act that humble part which is intended to awake the interest of an indifferent reader, and induce him to turn over the pages, we shall have attained the highest reward of our labors...[12]

Each issue consisted of sixteen pages, containing events of the week, at home and abroad, the latest direct intelligence from the South, correspondence from Richmond, Charleston and New Orleans, leaders, extracts from Northern and Southern newspapers, cotton market news, Confederate state papers, book reviews and advertisements. Such topics as the Lancashire cotton famine, statistics on blockade-running, and the peace movement in the North were also featured from time to time. On May 15, Hotze sent copies of the first three issues to Judah Benjamin: "Nearly all of Southern talent available in Europe is rallied to its intellectual assistance," he wrote enthusiastically.[13]

While conveying the Confederate viewpoint, the *Index* was able to provide its readers with a much-needed Southern news service. As early as July 1861, Commissioner William Yancey, aware of the lack of information about events in the South, had suggested that files of the leading Richmond, Charleston and New Orleans papers should be kept and forwarded to the commission as opportunity allowed, and in April 1862 James Mason was told that this would be done "if possible." Some Southern newspapers were by then apparently available at Gun's American Agency and Reading Room in the Strand.

Henry Adams, the son of the U.S. minister, was inevitably unimpressed: "A Southern newspaper called the *Index* lately started here, contains numbers of Southern letters, all of which are so excruciatingly 'never conquer' in their tone, that one is forced to the belief that they think themselves very near that last ditch," he wrote his brother in June 1862.[14]

Index,

A Weekly Journal of Politics, Literature, and News devoted to the Exposition of the Mutual Interests Political and Commercial, of Great Britain and the Confederate States of America.

Published every Thursday Afternoon. Price 6d. Subscription 26s.

Office---13, Bouverie-street, Fleet-street, London, E. C.

The INDEX contains the Events of the Week at Home and Abroad. Latest Direct Intelligence from the South. Correspondence from New York. Correspondence from Richmond, Charleston, and New Orleans. Leaders on topics of Interest. Gleanings from the Northern and Southern Press. The Cotton and Dry Goods Market. Affairs, Financial and Commercial. Confederate State Papers. Reviews of Books. Magazine Articles. Southern Statistics, &c.

The INDEX enjoys an extensive and influential circulation in Great Britain, the Continent, the West Indies, and the Northern and Southern States of America. It goes into the hands of Shippers, Merchants, Members of both Houses of Parliament, &c. and all who, through business interests, political pursuits, or personal sympathy, are concerned in the great Transatlantic questions now in process of solution.

Money Orders to be made payable to J. B. Hopkins, 13, Bouverie-street, Fleet-street, E. C.

A contemporary description of the Index. (*Mitchell's Newspaper Press Directory*, 1864)

The *Index* was first published by William Freeman at 102 Fleet Street and printed by Henry F. Mackintosh in nearby Crane Court, but from October 30, 1862 it was issued from 13 Bouverie Street, where Mackintosh became both publisher and printer. On March 10, 1864 the journalist John Baker Hopkins, who had been engaged originally as the paper's business manager, became the publisher, with George A. Spottiswoode as the printer. Observing that "our offices in Bouverie Street [two rooms] have long been too confined for the transaction of our business," it moved later that year to 291 Strand, from where it was published from October 27, 1864 until it ceased publication the following year.

Although it claimed an extensive circulation in Great Britain, the Continent, the West Indies, and the Northern and Southern states of America, it was in fact fairly small — 2,250 copies at the end of 1864, according to the *Newspaper Press Directory* of that year, of which 400 were sent to the Northern states and 150 to France. This was approximately half that of other small-circulation London papers, like the *Morning Post* (4,500), the *Morning Star* (5,500) and the *Daily News* (6,000). (Newspapers like the the *Times* [70,000], the *Standard* [130,000] and the *Daily Telegraph* [150,000] were, of course, in a different league.)[15] The chief consideration was that the *Index* should reach the people who were thought to matter, and this seems to be borne out by the *Newspaper Press Directory*'s comment: "It goes into the hands of shippers, merchants, Members of both Houses of Parliament, etc, and all who ... are concerned in the great transatlantic questions now in process of solution."

From the outset, the *Index* went out of its way to emphasize the social, cultural and economic ties that were thought to exist between the Confederate States and Great Britain. The economic relationship received particular attention, and it was pointed out that the abolition of slavery would seriously curtail the production of cotton for the British market. The paper never set out to apologize for slavery, which was portrayed as being advantageous to both races; indeed, it was asserted, the South "had been the friend and benefactor of the negro race."[16] Late in the war, it accepted that arming some of the slaves, in conjunction with partial emancipation, might be required in order to secure Southern independence; total emancipation, as embodied in the Kenner mission, was seen as neither necessary nor desirable.

Following the usual journalistic practice of the time, none of the contributions to the *Index* was signed. Apart from those written by Henry Hotze himself, which included almost all those relating to slavery, some were presumably by John Hopkins, "my manager and assistant ... an Englishman who has zealously and successfully applied himself to the study of the great question involved in the independence of the South."[17] In addition, material came from a small group of American and English contributors in London, correspondents in Europe and America, private letters, and other newspapers, both English and foreign. "At least half the articles in the Index," wrote Hotze, "are written by Englishmen, who, only a few months ago, had but imperfect knowledge of and little active sympathy with the South."[18]

Among the American contributors were Robert B. Campbell, Albert T. Bledsoe, James Williams, Hiram Fuller and John L. O'Sullivan. Robert Blair Campbell, a South Carolinian and former congressman, had been U.S. consul in Havana, Cuba, from 1842 until 1850, and in London, from 1854 until 1861. When the administration changed, he was recalled, but returned to London to assist Henry Hotze. His death in July 1862, however, meant that his contribution to the propaganda war was short-lived.[19]

Albert Taylor Bledsoe was from Kentucky. A former college professor and lawyer, he had served in the Confederate War Department, first as Head of the Bureau of War, then as assistant secretary of war, before coming to London in October 1863. His mission there was to

research and write the definitive justification of secession and he wrote President Davis: "After reading all the speeches in Congress, on both sides, I was profoundly ignorant of the transcendent merits of our cause ... No cause, in my humble opinion, so great and so glorious, has ever been so feebly advocated by the pen, or so nobly advocated by the sword."[20]

A native of Tennessee, James Williams had had experience of journalism as well as diplomacy, having founded and edited the *Knoxville Post* in the 1840s and served as U.S. minister to Turkey from 1858 through 1860. In 1861 he came to London, where he wrote influential articles about the slavery question for the *Times* and the *Standard*, as well as the *Index*. Some of Williams's essays, published in America in 1861 under the title *Letters on Slavery from the Old World*, were reissued the following year in an expanded English edition as *The South Vindicated*, with an introduction by John Hopkins, and were also translated into German. Benjamin Moran, who recorded seeing him with James Mason at the House of Commons one day in July 1863, described them both in distinctly unflattering terms as coarse, gross, ponderous, vulgar-looking men.

A New York newspaper editor from Massachusetts, Hiram Fuller's increasingly pro-Southern views made it advisable for him to leave America when the Civil War started. In London, in December 1861, he gave a lecture about secession and its causes at the St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, at the time of the *Trent* incident; it was published the following year as *The Causes and Consequences of the Civil War in America*. Between July 1862 and February 1863, under the pseudonym "A White Republican," he also contributed a series of articles to *Fraser's Magazine* which were reissued under the title *North and South* (1863).[21]

Like Hiram Fuller, John Louis O'Sullivan was a Northerner who identified with the Southern cause. He had been educated in France and England as well as America, and also had both journalistic and diplomatic experience. A founder and editor of the *United States Magazine and Democratic Review*, he is credited with the invention in 1845 of the famous phrase "manifest destiny," meaning the right of the United States to expand across the North American continent, and had also served as U.S. minister to Portugal in 1854–1858.

His *Union, Disunion and Reunion*, published in London in 1862 and favorably reviewed by the *Times* and the *Athenaeum*, set out what he saw as the main reasons for the breakup of the Union. It was intended to secure support in the North for the South's actions, but his efforts to get it published there were unsuccessful. The following year two more tracts appeared: *Peace the Sole Chance Now Left for Reunion* urged the Northern Democrats to end the war, because the North would never defeat the South, while *Recognition. A Letter to Lord Palmerston*, published to coincide with the parliamentary debate on Confederate recognition in July 1863, tried to persuade the British government to recognize the Confederacy. O'Sullivan's publications were subsidized by the Confederate propaganda fund; there is also a suggestion that he may have been on the Confederate secret service payroll. Certainly, in 1864, he began negotiations with a Copenhagen banker for the building of Confederate ironclads in Sweden, and though initially very promising, they ultimately proved fruitless.[22]

One of the first English contributors to the *Index* was James Spence, the author of *The American Union*, who was invited by Henry Hotze to write for his new paper. Though he declined any remuneration for this, he suggested to Commissioner James Mason that, as a businessman of many years' standing, with overseas experience, he might instead be considered for appointment as financial agent to the Confederate government.

It was Spence's uncompromising stance on slavery that was partly to blame for the rift with Hotze that occurred shortly after the *Index* began to appear. As he indeed became the

Confederacy's European financial agent, excuses were found, though it was already clear in October 1862 that there were problems. In a letter Hotze wrote to Judah Benjamin he commented: "Mr Spence, I regret to say, has of late rendered the idea of ultimate emancipation unduly conspicuous," adding that, while "Mr Spence is sincere to our cause ... at this juncture of affairs I almost dread the direction his friendship and devotion seem about to take." Not until a year later, when Spence was about to be replaced, was the real reason for the dispute made plain:

> I have differed from Mr Spence on almost all essential points relating to the manner and the means of recommending our cause to the public. For instance I was naturally prone to place perhaps an exaggerated estimate upon the value of *The Index*; he, after the third number, could scarcely bring himself to believe in its usefulness at all ... The fault then that I found with Mr Spence ... was that he assumed to occupy at one and the same time two opposite and irreconcilable positions — that of a high official [financial agent] of our government ... and that of a disinterested alien friend.[23]

It would not be the only time that James Spence would be criticized by prominent Confederates.

As well as writing for the *Index,* Spence also contributed a series of articles to the *Times.* Presented in the form of letters, under the heading, "American Affairs," and signed "S," they were a commentary on the war from a Southern viewpoint. Their author was undoubtedly well-informed about military events, though they contained some wishful thinking and wrongful prognostications. They appeared between February 1862 and January 1865 and were apparently commissioned by the paper. Spence also refused payment for his *Times* articles, but instead accepted a specially-bound set of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* when they were concluded.[24]

Another English contributor was the journalist and novelist Percy Greg, "one of the most talented leader writers of London, who, besides being a valuable contributor to the *Index*, is one of our most efficient supporters in the columns of the *Saturday Review* and other literary and political periodicals of high standing"; he also wrote for the *Standard* and the *Manchester Guardian.*[25] He, too, was to cause problems: after being turned down for the new post of assistant editor in 1864 because of ill health, he submitted a spate of increasingly spiteful and bitter articles which required drastic editing, resulting in even more acrimony.

These instances were not typical, however, and relations with other English contributors such as Thomas Colley Grattan, a travel writer and novelist, who had been British consul at Boston in 1839–1846, were much more harmonious. He was the author of *England and the Disrupted States of America* (1861), which suggested that England should prepare for war and encourage Spain to take the lead in recognizing the South. His work for the *Index* was terminated by his death in 1864.

In addition, there were those "professional leader writers" whom Hotze had been supplying with material for their London newspapers, who now also became contributors to the *Index.* "I have given partial employment by means of the *Index* up to the present time ... to seven writers on the daily London press," he wrote to Benjamin in March 1863. Four of them were "colleagues of one editorial corps" [possibly the *Standard*], and one of them, "the Chief Editor of one of the leading daily journals — for obvious reasons I omit the name."[26] It seems likely that this was Thomas Hamber. Among the others was Thornton Hunt, assistant editor of the *Daily Telegraph* and son of the famous Regency essayist Leigh Hunt. Hotze encouraged

them with "little personal compliments such as boxes of cigars imported from Havana ... American Whiskey, and other articles which not being generally procurable, form acceptable presents."[27]

It was a cunning move: the ideas and information which they absorbed as writers on the *Index* would carry over into the articles they supplied to the other papers for which they wrote. The journalists employed by the *Index* were among the leading members of their profession, and through them Hotze was able to infiltrate the columns of some of the most influential publications in the country. His success in this was certainly helped by the fact that, before the *Index* began publication, or even before Hotze himself arrived in London, many journalists had already adopted a pro–Southern stance.

The *Index* received a subsidy from the Confederate government: from May through October 1862 it was $2,206, and from October 1862 through December 1863, $9,675.[28] It was not enough, however, and had to be supplemented by loans and donations from private individuals in Europe and America, and by Hotze himself. When he was first sent to London, he was given an annual contingency budget of only $750, an indication of how relatively unimportant his mission was then seen to be, though this was increased a number of times, and eventually reached $30,000.

Northerners in London also had a weekly newspaper called the *London American*. Established in May 1860, it was published by John Adams Knight and edited by George Haseltine and later by A.W. Bostwick. Each issue usually contained eight pages, and included U.S. and Canadian news, correspondence, details of American arrivals in London, literary notices, American inventions, commercial and shipping news and advertisements. It had not, of course, been founded for propaganda purposes, but with the outbreak of the Civil War it inevitably assumed that additional role with the introduction of a new feature, "Progress of the Great Rebellion." It was published on Wednesdays from a building in Fleet Street, where for some months in 1862 its close neighbor was the *Index*.

Unlike the *Index*, the *London American* received no government support, though it did get some financial assistance from the American George Train, who also made speeches in support of the North, and by October 1862 it was clearly in trouble. The following month, announcing itself as "the only American organ in Europe"— no doubt a dig at the *Index*, which it never actually deigned to mention by name — it appeared under new ownership, and published now from an address in the Strand.

Somewhat surprisingly, Benjamin Moran had a low opinion of it. At the end of January 1863 he noted in his diary that J.A. Knight and A.W. Bostwick, the publisher and editor, had called at the U.S. legation in an attempt to raise money to carry on their paper. It was, he thought, a hopeless scheme and, for all the good it did, their journal might as well cease to exist.[29] The *London American* did indeed die, ceasing publication with the issue of March 4, 1863.

Hotze drove himself hard, and admitted: "My physical as well as intellectual powers sometimes flag from sheer exhaustion from the unremitting strain upon them. My eyes have suffered most, and I am now unable to read small print or to write by artificial light, forced therefore to depend on the aid of a private secretary." In August 1862 he traveled to Germany "to consult oculists of eminence about my eyes, the condition of which from over-exertion had become alarming."[30] While there, he took advantage of the opportunity to arrange for the publication of a cheap edition of a German translation of "Mr Spence's celebrated book" (*The American Union*).

In his diary for July 30, 1862, William Ewart Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer, recorded that he had dined at Lord Campbell's residence and had an interesting conversation with a "Mr Hotze, a Southern [sic] in office."[31] The talk was about the most suitable border between North and South, when Lincoln finally gave up his attempt to force the South back into the Union, and Gladstone sent a memorandum about it to Lord Palmerston; it was useful information for a government then considering mediation. The meeting took place at Stratheden House, Knightsbridge, and Hotze reported it to Secretary of State Benjamin:

> I met, a few days ago, by arrangement, Mr Gladstone, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, at a private dinner table, and had several hours' conversation with him. He is, of all the members of the cabinet, supposed to be the most friendly to us, and his manner and language certainly so impressed me ... The ... other salient feature of Mr Gladstone's conversation was an emphatic prediction that the war would speedily end in the acknowledged independence of the South.[32]

In the spring of 1862 a new propaganda agent appeared on the scene. Born in South Carolina in 1818, Edwin De Leon had been editor of several Southern newspapers before becoming U.S. consul general in Egypt in 1854. He resigned from this post in 1861 to offer his services to the Confederacy, and was appointed chief European propaganda agent by President Davis early the following year. The post carried with it a generous contingency allowance of $25,000, demonstrating the importance that was now being attached to propaganda. At this stage, neither Davis nor De Leon knew of the progress Henry Hotze was already making in this field.

When he reached London at the end of June 1862, De Leon had an interview with Lord Palmerston and also met with James Spence and Henry Hotze. His instructions were to base himself in Paris and conduct propaganda operations from there, with a view to influencing French public opinion, and although he collaborated with Hotze when necessary, the two men disagreed about policy, and criticized each other on a number of occasions. De Leon, like Spence, also thought the *Index* was a waste of time and advised Hotze to discontinue it.

Although De Leon did have some success in influencing the French press, contributed an article to the *Cornhill Magazine* about the ineffectiveness of the blockade, and wrote a pamphlet called *Three Letters from a South Carolinian Relating to Secession, Slavery and the Trent Case*, his contribution to the Confederate propaganda war was relatively short-lived. It came to an end when letters from him containing adverse comments about the French press, and Commissioner John Slidell, with whom he had a very acrimonious relationship, were intercepted on their way through the blockade in November 1863 and published in the *New York Daily Tribune*. His mission was terminated by Secretary of State Judah Benjamin the following month.

Henry Hotze's reponsibility increased considerably after this and now took on a European dimension. Through the Havas News Agency in Paris, he was able to control material about the war which appeared in French newspapers, and he supplied articles to the Italian and German press as well. "Some twenty newspapers in England, the Continent and the North are furnished through me with regular newspaper correspondence," he wrote Judah Benjamin in December 1864.[33]

His most spectacular propaganda initiative was the campaign he orchestrated in June 1863, prior to the debate in the House of Commons about diplomatic recognition of the Confederate States by Great Britain and the other European powers. Colored posters showing the new Confederate flag (the second national flag of 1863) in conjunction with the British flag, appeared in London and the principal towns and cities, as well as at railway stations throughout the

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country. "I have taken measures to placard every available space in the streets of London with representations of our newly adopted flag, conjoined to the British national ensign," he wrote.[34] In conjunction with the posters, the *Morning Herald* and the *Standard* were persuaded to print leading articles every other day between June 6 and July 1 in support of recognition; and all over London barrel organs could be heard playing the well-known Confederate tune, "The Bonnie Blue Flag." Efforts to combat his poster campaign, at least in the metropolis, were made by the London Emancipation Society and the Ladies' London Emancipation Society.

This was the high-water mark of Confederate hopes in London, and it was all in vain. The motion, introduced to the House of Commons on June 30, was withdrawn on July 13 without ever coming to a vote. Recognition would never again receive serious attention in Parliament, Hotze complained to the secretary of state.

In July 1864, the staff of the *Index* was augmented with the arrival in London of John R. Thompson, formerly the paper's Richmond correspondent, and the appointment in September of that year of John G. Witt as assistant editor. John George Witt, who had a legal background, is not thought to have had much influence on the way the paper was conducted, but John Reuben Thompson was to become its chief writer. He stayed at Haxell's Hotel in the Strand for a few days before moving to Savile Row on August 3, where the Confederate States Commercial Agency was located.

Before the war, Thompson, a Virginian, had been editor of the influential *Southern Literary Messenger*, and more recently of the short-lived *Southern Field and Fireside,* the *Richmond Record* and the *Southern Illustrated News*. He was considered a useful advocate for the Confederate cause, and his "gentlemanly presence, pleasant manners and intimacy with the Confederate leaders secured him entrance in both aristocratic and literary society."[35] On a previous visit to London in the 1850s he had been acquainted with such literary celebrities as Edward Bulwer-Lytton, William Makepeace Thackeray and Robert and Elizabeth Browning, and now he met well-known authors like Thomas Carlyle, Charles Dickens, Alfred Tennyson and Wilkie Collins, though not all of these were neccessarily sympathetic to his views.[36]

In March 1865, Hotze informed him that Confederate funds in Europe "were in a state of bankruptcy, and the *Index* would probably be discontinued in two or three months"; Thompson's connection with the paper ended in June.[37] The *Index* ceased publication on August 12, 1865 and in his final leader its founder concluded:

> To suppose that the continued publication of "The Index" has a political significance and that it must needs be hostile to the United States is natural, and almost inevitable. We have then no choice. We have sought to do the South good, and we cannot harm her to further our own views. We therefore suspend publication. "The Index" shall not be the excuse, the plausible excuse, for perpetuating a contest which can only aggravate the miseries of the conquered and disarmed.[38]

Henry Hotze was undoubtedly one of the most remarkable Confederates to be sent to Europe. Talented, able and hardworking, and in many ways ahead of his time, he employed the suave, subtle and silent methods of an experienced diplomat. Yet at the same time he had a blind spot: he never really understood the English dislike of slavery. He referred to the *Index* as "that little kingdom of mine," and as a source of Southern news it was certainly a success, though he probably exaggerated its influence; sympathy for the Southern cause already existed among journalists before the *Index* was established. And in spite of his best efforts, he ultimately failed in his mission to persuade England to recognize the Confederacy.

4

Supplies for the Confederate Army

I knew how dependent the South had been in almost everything upon the North. But little reflection was needed to present the whole matter clearly before my mind ... almost every article that can be mentioned, needed for the protection and comfort of an army, had to be obtained from a foreign source.

— Caleb Huse, July 3, 1862

These words were written by the Confederacy's principal army purchasing agent about a year after he first arrived in London. From the outset it had been apparent to the new Confederate government that, given the South's lack of resources and manufacturing capability, it would need to buy most of its armaments abroad. The most obvious source was Great Britain, then the world's leading industrial nation. The government acted remarkably quickly, and within weeks of the bombardment of Fort Sumter, Confederate purchasing agents began arriving in Britain. Many difficulties lay ahead: imprecise instructions, overlapping responsibilities, poor communications, problems with funds, competition with other agents and Federal surveillance of their activities. All these handicaps faced men representing a government not yet recognized abroad.

Captain Caleb Huse was the first to arrive. Born in Massachusetts in 1831, Huse was a graduate of the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, where he was an assistant professor of chemistry, mineralogy and geology in 1852–1859. He then took a year's leave of absence in 1859–1860 to travel abroad and study the European arms industry, experience which would prove to be of great value in the future. When the Civil War broke out, he was commandant of cadets at the University of Alabama.

Huse, who had a Southern wife, had chosen to serve the Confederacy, but his Northern background was to cause problems, and he was to be suspected of disloyalty, suffer from jealousy among his fellow agents and be accused of financial irregularities. In early April 1861, now a captain in the Confederate Army, he was sent to Europe by Colonel Josiah Gorgas, Head of the Ordnance Bureau, to buy arms and munitions.

He arrived at Liverpool on May 10, and recalled: "On arriving in London I went to what was then a favorite hotel for Americans — Morley's in Trafalgar Square ... My orders were to purchase 12,000 rifles and a battery of field artillery, and to procure one or two guns of large caliber as models."[1] His first visit was to the London Armory Company in Bermondsey, in south

London, where he encountered a Federal purchasing agent. Although the firm was under contract to the U.S. government, Huse persisted, and within a few days had succeeded in obtaining an agreement under which he was to have all the arms the company could manufacture after it had fulfilled its present obligations. "This company," he recalled, "during the remainder of the war, turned all its output of arms over to me for the Confederate Army."[2] He later expressed great satisfaction with the quality of their arms, commenting that the rifles manufactured by the company were far superior to those obtained from almost every other source.

For the moment, however, Huse found that the small arms market in England had been largely swept clean: "Everything has been taken by the agents from the Northern States, and the quantity they have secured is very small," he reported.[3] In spite of that, he succeeded in buying a substantial number of Enfield rifles. Later, Colonel Gorgas was to write: "He succeeded, with very little money, in buying a good supply, and in running my department in debt for nearly half a million sterling, the very best proof of his fitness for his place."[4]

Huse and the other purchasing agents made extensive use of commission merchants. One of them was Sinclair, Hamilton & Company, whose offices were in St. Helen's Place. Founded in the 1840s by Alexander Sinclair and Archibald Hamilton, by the time of the Civil War the firm was being run by Archibald Hamilton, who also happened to be a director of the London Armory Company.

Another was Isaac, Campbell & Company of Jermyn Street. This had been founded about 1852 by Samuel Isaac, an army contractor, who first appears in the London directories in 1848, and Alexander Campbell, an outfitter. Campbell had either retired or died by 1861 and the firm was then being operated by Samuel Isaac and his younger brother, Saul. Between 1852 and 1863 Isaac, Campbell are described as army contractors, but after that, simply as merchants. They had a far from unblemished reputation: there were scandals dating back to the time of the Crimean War (1854–1856), and in 1858 both brothers had been witnesses at an official enquiry concerning irregularities at the Army Stores and Clothing Depot at Weedon, Northamptonshire.[5] Huse, of course, knew nothing about this, and his close connection with the firm, which was later found to be overcharging the Confederate government, was to undermine his own position considerably.

The War Department had doubts about Huse's abilities, as well as his loyalties, and in June 1861 sent Major Edward Clifford Anderson to London. Born in 1815, Anderson was a Georgia businessman, planter and former officer in the U.S. Navy, and as well as buying weapons for the Confederate army he was to investigate Huse's trustworthiness and, if circumstances demanded it, take his place. Anderson met Huse in Liverpool on June 25 and the following day they traveled to London. Taking rooms at Hatchett's Hotel in Piccadilly, they called on Commissioner Yancey in Half Moon Street; Anderson met him again two days later, together with fellow commissioners Rost and Mann.

> My first duty on arrival in England," recorded Major Anderson in his diary, "was to comply with the instructions which I had received ... to scrutinize very closely the operations and sentiments of Capt. H[use]. To this end I conferred very fully with ... Capt. Bulloch, whose closer intimacy with H would enable him to afford me correct information ... I received the most satisfactory assurances of the fidelity and loyalty of Mr H. My own intercourse confirmed this, and I took the earliest opportunity to relieve the minds of the Confederate authorities....[6]

Though Anderson thought Huse lacked discretion and judgment, he clearly liked him and described him in his diary as honest, kind-hearted, and untiring in his duties, and the

The house in Clarendon Road, Notting Hill, where purchasing agent Major Caleb Huse lived in 1862–1863. (Author's photograph)

two men worked well together. Huse, for his part, apparently never suspected Anderson's real purpose, or the government's misgivings about his fidelity. The doubts about his loyalty now banished, Huse was given complete authority in July to purchase whatever he thought necessary for the Confederate war effort. At Colonel Gorgas's request, a special messenger was sent to London with new orders sewn between the layers of one of his boot soles. They informed Huse that he was to disregard all former instructions and act in accordance with his own judgment, based on the state of affairs indicated by the newspapers and other sources of information, and forward supplies and equipment as rapidly as possible.[7] In addition, "political agents of the Government" were to have no authority over him, something which would cause trouble later with Commissioner Mason.

On July 16, after returning from a visit to Liverpool, Major Anderson wrote in his diary: "Drove to 58 Jermyn Street where I found that Huse had secured me very comfortable quarters, consisting of a parlor, bedroom, bathroom, water closet &c, all on one floor."[8] Three weeks later he recorded: "We have a very pleasant mess composed of Huse, Bulloch, Fearn, George Jones and myself. Our rooms are on the second floor. Our sitting room is a large apartment, trenching on the yard and covered in overhead with glass so as to admit light and air."[9]

They had a number of visitors, including Charles Green, manager of the Savannah branch of a Liverpool firm who had been sent to London to help with purchasing operations; future propagandist Edwin de Leon, who would soon be on his way back to the Confederacy; James Kerr, of the London Armory Company; Mr Britton, "manufacturer of the Blakely shell"; and Major Charles J. Helm, on his way to Havana to take up his appointment as Confederate agent for the West Indies, who breakfasted with them one morning.[10]

There were many visits to London firms. From Isaac, Campbell, Major Anderson ordered 500 cavalry sabers, 10,000 muskets ("old army pattern"), a lot of Enfield rifles, and 11,000 English muskets. On another occasion he went with James Bulloch to Isaac, Campbell's packing establishment "to look after certain matters." At Sinclair, Hamilton's premises he inspected samples of Enfield rifles and pistols, and a storeroom which he referred to as "our warehouse," where Captain Huse proposed depositing future purchases of arms; from them he bought 12,000 Genoese muskets and gunpowder. While at the London Armory Company's works, he encountered Mr. C. McFarland, the Federal purchasing agent whom Captain Huse had met on his first visit to that firm. He also called on Curtis & Harvey, gunpowder manufacturers, in Lombard Street, and Alexander Ross & Company, the Bermondsey leather merchants and army accoutrement makers.

It was a busy time, with frequent trips to Liverpool, and others to places as far apart as Birmingham, Falmouth and Paris. Nevertheless, Major Anderson found time to visit the Royal Arsenal at Woolwich, "the largest in the world, covering more than 100 acres, and containing about 25,000 pieces of ordnance, besides other warlike stores ... everything that can attract the attention of military ... inquirers is abundant."[11] Admission was free on Tuesdays, by letter from the under secretary of war, or tickets from the master-general of Ordnance or "certain officers of artillery ... To be admitted through the interior, an order must be obtained from the Royal Board of Ordnance. Foreigners must apply for these orders through their respective ambassadors."[12]

Traveling down the Thames by steamer, in the company of naval purchasing agent James Bulloch, Anderson's first visit on July 9, was a failure, the two men arriving too late to be admitted. Two days later, accompanied this time by Captain Huse and John Fearn, as well as James Bulloch, he tried again. Although the party had a letter of introduction provided by

The London Armory Company supplied many weapons to the Confederates. (*Kelly's Post Office London Directory*)

one of the Isaac brothers, it proved insufficient to gain admittance, but they finally got in by a combination of bribery and subterfuge.

There was also a trip to Wimbledon Common on July 12 to see a grand review of 10,000 members of the Volunteer Force (the forerunner of the Territorial Army), which left Anderson unimpressed; an excursion with William Yancey and Samuel Isaac on September 17 to Greenhithe, Kent, where HMS *Warrior*, the Royal Navy's first ironclad warship and a vessel much admired by the Confederates, was at anchor in the Thames; and a visit to see the celebrated Crystal Palace at Sydenham in south London.

Major Anderson seems to have been fond of the theater, and while in London he paid a number of visits. At the Haymarket Theater on August 12, in company with James Bulloch and Charles Green, he saw a new comedy called *My Lord and My Lady; or It Might Have Been Worse*, by J.R. Planché, and paid a second visit there with Green about a month later to see another comedy, called *The Soft Sex*, by Charles Matthews. When he went to the Olympic Theater, Wych Street, on August 24, where the program included John Oxenford's drama, *The Porter's Knot,* and Henry Mayhew's farce, *The Wandering Minstrel*, starring the famous actor Frederick Robson, he found that Mr. Isaac had provided the tickets and obtained a stage box for them.

Samuel Isaac was undoubtedly generous; so was Archibald Hamilton. On September 15 Major Anderson was a guest at Mr. Hamilton's country house in Kent, to which he traveled by train from London Bridge station. "Our dinner was sumptuous, the costliest wines being lavished upon us ... his hospitality is princely," he noted.[13] Anderson remarked on the generous hospitality of some of the firms with whom he was doing business, particularly Isaac, Campbell and Sinclair, Hamilton. At the same time, he was under no illusions, observing, "Friend Isaac is a most useful man to us, but he never loses sight of his profits," while "Mr. Hamilton is the business man in the London Armoury Company contracts, and in trade haggles over a ha'penny [halfpenny]."[14]

Major Anderson's last few days in London were spent mainly in social activities. He dined at Richardson's Hotel in Covent Garden, an old-fashioned establishment, both dingy and dark, but where the major and his companions were served an excellent dinner, with copious amounts of good wine. This was followed by a visit to the Holborn Casino, a somewhat dubious establishment in High Holborn, where people went to dance and listen to the music. They remained there until quite late, enjoying the festivities and watching the dancers.[15] There was also time for the Zoological Gardens in Regent's Park and a final visit to the theater, this time to the Adelphi in the Strand to see Dion Boucicault's *The Colleen Bawn*. Unfortunately, on this occasion his visit was marred by the inability of one of his companions, Richard Meade, a former U.S. minister to Brazil, to understand the plot and his persistence in continually asking for explanations. On the way home they stopped for refreshment at one of the "gin houses" in the Haymarket, where Anderson realized that his brandy and soda had been drugged.

On October 2 Major Anderson left for Liverpool, on his way to Holyhead, to join the *Fingal,* the ship that would take him and James Bulloch and a cargo of much needed munitions and supplies back to the Confederacy. While in Liverpool Anderson met "a German [sic] gentleman by the name of [Henry] Hotze, sent over by the Govt. as a special bearer of dispatches, with instructions to return as soon as practicable."[16] Hotze would be returning to England the following January to undertake a much more demanding role.

The first shipment of arms bought by Huse left West Hartlepool in August 1861 in the steamer *Bermuda*, the first vessel to run the blockade. On board were field pieces, seacoast guns, rifles and cartridges, as well as large quantities of shoes and blankets. The steamer's safe arrival at Savannah in September was recorded in an angry note in Benjamin Moran's diary on October 17: "It appears the pirate *Bermuda* has actually run the blockade and safely landed all her warlike stores."[17] Another consignment, consisting of rifles and ammunition, blankets, surgical equipment and medicine, was in the *Gladiator*, which cleared London in November 1861, bound for Nassau. Confederate purchases made in London in January 1862 of Enfield rifles, percussion caps, blankets, shoes and other military equipment were sent in the blockade-runner *Economist*, which arrived at Charleston in March.[18] All three vessels belonged to Fraser, Trenholm & Company of Liverpool, who played a major role in shipping goods to the Confederacy.

Not all runs were so successful. One blockade-runner, carrying a shipment of goods sent by Huse and captured on its inward journey in May 1862, included a report from him to Colonel Josiah Gorgas, detailing the arms, munitions and military supplies he had dispatched. This reached the hands of the U.S. State Department, and was also published in a New York newspaper. Huse refers to this in a letter to William Yancey, written in July 1862. He also refers to allegations of financial misconduct, fueled no doubt by jealousy and resentment of his Northern background. These were to surface again.[19]

By the end of 1862 Huse had bought and shipped some 131,000 rifles and muskets, with another 23,000 in store in London awaiting shipment. To these must be added some 16,000 cavalry sabers, 139 pieces of heavy artillery, 484,000 pounds of gunpowder, 4 million cartridges, 10 million percussion caps, 1,000 hundredweight of saltpeter, and 100,000 pounds of lead. There were also sets of armorers', saddlers' and farriers' tools, knapsacks, greatcoats, boots, socks, trousers, shirts, and quantities of leather, cloth and flannel, some $5 million worth in all.[20] How much of this reached its destination is impossible to say.

Until then Huse, who had now been promoted to major, had acted on behalf of all War Department bureaus, but it had become apparent that additional agents were needed. One of them, Major James B. Ferguson, a Virginian, was sent to London in December 1862 by the Quartermaster's Bureau. Supplying the clothing needs of the armies of the Confederacy was a never-ending problem, and as late as September 1864 he was being instructed: "Purchase woollen cloths, or flannels or felt hats in lieu of socks, as we can manufacture the latter from cotton yarn. A cheap and serviceable felt hat would be very acceptable to the army. Also wanted, best quality of blankets, and gray cloths, with a fair proportion of trimmings."[21]

Earlier that year Ferguson was joined by his wife, Emma, who, together with their two children and a nursemaid, had run the blockade in the *Lynx*, another vessel belonging to Fraser, Trenholm. The passage from Wilmington to St. George's, Bermuda, was arranged by Major Benjamin Ficklin, "a government shipper of cotton," for whom Mrs. Ferguson carried dispatches for James Mason and John Slidell.[22] She also brought a letter from General Robert E. Lee, revealing that a box containing a uniform and blanket sent him by her husband had failed to get through the blockade.

In July 1864 Major Ferguson proposed to make another attempt, and Mrs. Irvine, "the wife of a Scotch manufacturer, and an ardent admirer of Gen. Lee," Lady Florence Eardley, the American-born wife of Sir Eardley Eardley, a Confederate sympathizer, and Mrs. Ferguson made up another box for Lee, with "a very fine uniform, cavalry boots, gauntlets, and the handsomest lieutenant general's scarf to be found in London." There was also cloth to make a uniform for General James Longstreet, whose measurements they did not have. It was sent from Liverpool in August and this time arrived safely at Wilmington. Lee expressed his thanks to Major Ferguson in a letter written from Petersburg in October, adding: "The army appreciates your zealous and self-sacrificing efforts in promoting their comfort, and hail with pleasure the arrival of every cargo you send. May you continue to be able to supply their wants!"[23]

Captain William Graves Crenshaw was a Richmond merchant who had formed an artillery company called Crenshaw's Battery. In the late autumn of 1862 he was sent to London to organize a blockade-running company and also supervise the purchase of commissary stores. When Huse returned from a visit to Paris in April 1863, he found that Crenshaw, in conjunction with Commissioner James Mason, had signed an agreement with Alexander Collie & Company, a firm of merchants, to buy and operate four blockade-runners for the War and Navy Departments, to be built by John & William Dudgeon at their yards at Cubitt Town, on the Thames. At a cost of £14,000 each, they were to be completed by July 1863.

Huse had already purchased several steamers for the Ordnance Bureau, and Crenshaw's demands that some of Huse's purchases should be carried in the Collie-Crenshaw steamers, and that he should also provide money to help pay for them, were refused. Friction over purchasing operations now reached a serious level, with Captain Crenshaw and Major Ferguson, supported by Commissioner Mason, pressing for Major Huse's recall on the grounds of lack of cooperation, as well as financial misconduct involving the firm of Isaac, Campbell.

News of this highly unsatisfactory situation reached John B. Jones, a clerk in the Confederate War Department in Richmond, who noted in his diary in August 1863:

> Letters from Mr. [W.G.] Crenshaw, in England, and the correspondence forwarded by him, might seem to implicate Major Caleb Huse, Colonel J. Gorgas's ordnance agent, in some very ugly operations. It appears that Major H. has contracted for 50,000 muskets at $4 above the current price, leaving $200,000 commission for whom? And that he really seems to be throwing obstacles in the way of Mr. C., who is endeavoring to procure commissary stores in England. Mr. C. has purchased £40,000 worth of bacon, but Major Huse, he apprehends, is endeavoring to prevent its shipment. Can this be so?[24]

The War Department, alarmed at this development, partly resolved the matter by making Huse responsible for medical and ordnance supplies only, while Crenshaw was to deal with quartermaster and commissary goods. At the same time, it was decided to examine Huse's accounts.

The man assigned to this task was Colin John McRae, the leading negotiator for the Seven Per Cent Cotton Loan (see chapter 7), who was now being sent back to Europe to manage it.[25] McRae was born in North Carolina in 1812, but subsequently moved to Mississippi and then to Alabama, where he settled in Mobile. He had become a highly successful businessman, with a wide range of interests which included coastal shipping, railroad promotion and real estate, and had already made a major contribution to the Confederate war effort with the establishment of the Selma Ordnance Works, the second largest ironworks in the South. In terms of what he achieved, he would prove to be one of the most important Confederates to come to London.

McRae reached Southampton on May 13, 1863, and after a visit to Paris, arrived in London at the beginning of June, staying at the Burlington Hotel in Cork Street. An assistant, M. Hildreth Bloodgood, was sent to help with the investigation of Huse's accounts and arrived at the end of August. A firm of accountants, Quilter, Ball, Jay & Company, was also employed to assist in the matter. No evidence of financial irregularities was found, and McRae concluded that although Huse "has made some very serious mistakes, I think there is no good reason to suspect his integrity, and that he has always sought what seemed the best interests of the government, and has with all his mistakes really been of great service and done great good."[26]

He soon had the measure of Isaac, Campbell, whom he suspected of fraudulent bookkeeping. His suspicions proved correct: it was found that the firm was keeping two sets of books, one showing the real price, and the other the price quoted to the Confederate government. As a result, all further dealings with them were terminated. They were almost certainly not the only ones guilty of unethical practice in dealings with the Confederacy.

Until the autumn of 1862, purchases of military supplies abroad had been made with coin shipped to Fraser, Trenholm in Liverpool, letters of credit and bills of exchange. As the volume of purchases increased, the Treasury Department then resorted to the issue of bonds, cotton certificates and warrants, backed by cotton stored in the Confederacy, as well as money from the Seven Per Cent Cotton Loan. To supplement these, the government also made a number of agreements with shipowners to purchase and deliver war materials, to be paid for with cotton at Confederate ports.[27]

These agreements often proved anything but satisfactory, with contractors competing with each other as well as with purchasing agents, and often supplying goods of inferior quality. Henry Hotze noted "the clashing interests, the rivalries and hostilities, sometimes the

disgraceful public squabbles of contractors," as well as "the lax manner in which, in many instances, contracts appear to have been granted," in a letter to Richmond.[28]

In October 1863 Colin McRae suggested to Christopher Memminger, secretary of the treasury, that in order to rationalize these haphazard arrangements and restore Confederate credit abroad, all commission-based agreements with contractors should be canceled; that there should be one purchasing agent each for the War and Navy Departments; that one person should be put in overall charge of Confederate finances in Europe, with authority over government purchasing agents and their spending; and that the government should requisition all cotton and transport it to Liverpool, where it would be sold to finance the war effort.

James Spence, who had served as the Confederacy's financial agent in Europe since October 1862, was replaced in December 1863 by Colin McRae. Spence's antislavery views, which he had never attempted to hide, almost certainly influenced the decision to replace him. Though he was paid for his services, Spence had only acted in an advisory capacity, whereas McRae was an official of the Treasury Department and had authority over Confederate purchasing agents. The following February, his recommendations — what became known as the New Plan — were adopted by the Confederate government, bringing order into what had become a confused financial situation, centralizing purchasing operations, and largely ending the competition and friction between agents.

Not all Confederate purchasing agents came to buy arms and equipment. Major Norman Stewart Walker was a Virginian who had served in the Confederate Army before joining the Ordnance Bureau in 1862 and being appointed resident disbursing agent at Bermuda. Here his duties included the transshipment of goods to the Confederacy and the procurement of coal for Confederate vessels. He was sent to London in November 1862 with $2 million in Confederate bonds, partly to clear some of Major Huse's debts and partly to purchase steamers for the Bureau.

His business concluded, Major Walker was back in Bermuda by February 1863, but in August 1864, having moved his base to Halifax, Nova Scotia, because of a yellow fever outbreak, he returned to London. His wife and family were already there, having arrived the previous month in the blockade-runner *Index*. Conditions on board the vessel had been poor, with a shortage of sheets, towels, tablecloths and food, and a head steward whom Mrs. Georgiana Gholson Walker described as "the filthiest beast ... which it has ever been my misfortune to encounter." She was highly relieved when the voyage was over:

> On Monday afternoon about six, Capt. Horner raised the Confederate flag, & we entered one of the docks of London. Our party immediately took a boat & came on shore, determined not to spend another night on board ship. The baggage had to be left for the inspection of custom house officers — as if poor Confederates had any contraband goods![29]

Mrs. Walker had come to England to take her little daughter, Georgie, to see William Bowman, the leading ophthalmic surgeon in London, and "handsome apartments" had been found for her in Sackville Street, just off Piccadilly. Here, the first familiar face she saw was that of Mrs. Rose Greenhow, the Confederate spy and emissary, whom she had previously encountered in Bermuda, and who had rooms in the same house. Mrs. Walker was visited by James Mason, James McFarland, his secretary, and Major Huse, among others, before moving to Leamington Spa, where there was a small Confederate community. At the beginning of September the Walkers returned to London for a few hectic days — "Norman finds himself overrun with business engagements with the various officers of the Confederate

Government"—before leaving for Paris.[30] They went back to Leamington for a few weeks, but in October sailed from Liverpool for Halifax.

Captain John Moncure Robinson, former superintendent of the Seaboard and Roanoke Railroad, who was sent to England in February 1863 on behalf of the Engineer Bureau, was also authorized to act as a purchasing agent for five Virginia railroad companies, for whom he bought badly needed iron. A proposal that he should repeat the operation on behalf of the other railroads in the South, who were all in dire need, was rejected, the secretary of war refusing to become involved in what he regarded as private business matters.[31]

As well as Confederate purchasing agents, state agents were also sent to England. Major Anderson took on a dual role when he was informed, while on a visit to Liverpool in July 1861, that Governor Joseph E. Brown of Georgia had appointed him a state agent, with authorization to spend up to $100,000 acquiring arms and war material. "This will enable me to take up many muskets that are at this time being offered...," he remarked in a letter to Secretary of War Leroy P. Walker, "added to which is the advantage presented me of going continuously on with our purchases, without being compelled to stop for the arrival of additional means from Richmond."[32] In his diary in late September he noted that he had paid Sinclair, Hamilton in full for the Georgia muskets.[33]

Another state agent was Colonel John Lewis Peyton. Born near Staunton, Virginia, in 1824, Peyton was a former lawyer, and, though opposed to secession, had helped raise a regiment for Virginia, but was prevented by ill health from serving with it. Instead, he accepted an appointment by Governor Henry T. Clark as a state purchasing agent for North Carolina. Judah P. Benjamin, Leroy P. Walker's successor, asked Major Anderson and Captain Huse to assist Colonel Peyton in buying arms, but he warned them to give preference to government purchases; in the event, Anderson had departed before Peyton arrived. Accompanied by his wife, Peyton left Charleston in the CSS *Nashville* in October 1861, and arrived at Southampton in November. Proceeding to London, he spent a few days at a hotel near Charing Cross before moving to a suite of rooms in Jermyn Street, which cost three guineas a week, plus meals. "Nothing could exceed the snug and cosy character of my Jermyn Street abode, with its blazing coal fires, and its massive furniture, all selected with reference to convenience and comfort," he recalled.[34]

One of his first acts was to call on Messrs. Yancey and Mann in Half Moon Street, who were waiting for their replacements to arrive. He also wrote to the *Times*; his letter, headed "A Voice from the South," assured its readers that recent newspaper reports of disaffection towards the Confederate government in states like North Carolina were quite untrue.[35] While in London he was made an honorary member of the Reform Club in Pall Mall, and visited the House of Commons, as well as attending a soirée at Bath House, Piccadilly, the residence of Lord Ashburton.

He had only limited success with his purchasing mission, but was able to buy a consignment of 1,760 long Enfield rifles for the use of North Carolina troops, which left London in February 1862 on board the steamship *Southwick*, bound for Nassau. Though their safe arrival there was acknowledged, he was never informed whether they reached their final destination. Writing from Paris at the beginning of 1863, he complained about this to Governor Zebulon B. Vance, Henry Clark's successor, and reminded him that his services were still available if required: "A letter will always reach me addressed to the care of John Wilson Esq., 93 Great Russell Street, Bloomsbury, London."[36] He had had an unofficial interview with Lord Palmerston in May 1862 which had convinced him of Britain's determination to remain neutral and he reiterated this point in his letter to Vance.

In November 1862 Governor Vance appointed two more purchasing agents for North Carolina. They were John White and Thomas M. Crossan. John White, a Scotsman, was born in Fifeshire in 1814 and had emigrated to North Carolina in the late 1820s, where he had become a highly successful dry goods merchant at Warrenton; Thomas Morrow Crossan, also of Warrenton, was a former officer in the U.S. Navy and now a lieutenant in the Confederate Navy.

The two men left Charleston in November 1862 and reached London at the beginning of January 1863. With them they had $1.5 million in state cotton bonds, the proceeds from the sale of which were to purchase blankets, shoes, leather and clothing for North Carolina troops serving with the Confederate armies. The two men dealt with Alexander Collie, through whom they also acquired a steamer, the *Lord Clyde*, renamed the *Advance*, the only blockade-runner to be owned by an individual Confederate state. For its first few trips it was commanded by Lieutenant Crossan. A part interest in three other vessels was obtained, and during the rest of the war large quantities of supplies were purchased on behalf of North Carolina and taken through the blockade.[37]

Captain Crenshaw observed that John White had also been to see Isaac, Campbell: "Mr White ... sent here by the State of North Carolina, who has had some opportunity of seeing something of Isaac, Campbell & Co., informs me that he entertains of them the same opinion that I do; nor have I seen any man since my arrival here who would say a good word for them except Major Huse."[38]

Major Anderson had returned to Georgia at the end of 1861, but other purchasing agents from that state came to London to buy blankets, clothing and shoes for its troops, and early in 1864 Governor Joseph E. Brown chartered steamers to export cotton and import supplies.[39] Louisiana and Texas also sent agents to England, as apparently did Virginia, South Carolina and Alabama. Governor Thomas O. Moore of Louisiana appointed a Mr. Tilton as a state agent; Major Anderson encountered him in Piccadilly in August 1861 and seems to have formed a poor opinion of him, though his diary does not tell us why. The Texas State Military Board, set up to purchase supplies for Texas troops, sent John Swisher, an Austin merchant, to London in April 1862 to negotiate the sale of some 300 prewar U.S. bonds. Some were sold to George Peabody & Company, the well-known American banking house, but the result was far from satisfactory and ended in a lawsuit.

Nelson Clements, another Texas state agent, arrived in London at the end of March 1863 to buy supplies to be paid for with cotton. Dealing with Isaac, Campbell, he sent out rifles and muskets, blankets, flannel shirts, shoes and gray army cloth. He was also introduced to the firm of Sinclair, Hamilton by Edgar Stringer, a ship and insurance broker, and through them he purchased 7,000 long Enfield rifles, 1853 pattern, with bayonets, at a cost of £3 each, in May 1863.[40] For this service, Mr Stringer charged a commission of 5 percent, or £1,000.

Useful as it was, the work of the state agents was peripheral to that of the purchasing agents working for the Confederate government. Given the circumstances, theirs was a remarkable exercise in logistics, probably without precedent. It has been estimated that War Department agents spent more than $12 million, of which Caleb Huse alone accounted for at least $10 million. It was indeed a crucial role: for four years, their efforts helped the Confederacy maintain its armies in the field, and without them the South would almost certainly have been defeated much sooner.

5

Vessels Suitable for Our Purposes

I regard the possession of an iron-armoured ship as a matter of the first necessity. Such a vessel at this time could traverse the entire coast of the United States, prevent all blockades, and encounter, with a fair prospect of success, their entire Navy.

— Stephen R. Mallory, May 8, 1861

At its inception, the Confederate Navy had virtually no ships of any kind, ironclad or otherwise, and, as the secretary of the navy indicated, the purchase or construction of them was clearly of the utmost priority. At the beginning of the war, the Confederate government was offered the opportunity to purchase ten vessels belonging to the East India Company, then in the process of disposing of its assets, following the transfer of authority to the British crown. The ships, iron-hulled steamers of recent construction, capable of being fitted with guns, were available for £2 million, and the company was willing to accept Confederate government bonds in payment, backed by 40,000 bales of cotton. This proposition was put to the government by influential businessman George A. Trenholm, but it was turned down, partly because the ships were thought unsuitable for most Southern harbors.[1]

Although approximately twenty ironclads were built and launched in the South during the war, these were for coastal and river defense; they were not oceangoing vessels. These, it was very quickly realized, would have to be obtained abroad, and in May 1861 James D. Bulloch was sent to England as a purchasing agent for the Confederate Navy Department. His mission was threefold: to initiate the construction of ironclads; to buy or have built cruisers or commerce raiders to prey on enemy merchantmen; and to purchase weapons and equipment for the Navy and Marine Corps.

James Dunwody Bulloch was born near Savannah, Georgia, in 1823 and, after serving in the U.S. Navy from 1839 until 1853, resigned to work for a New York shipping company operating between there and New Orleans.[2] When the Civil War broke out, he was captain of the steamer *Bienville*, which he felt morally bound to return to her owners before offering his services to the Confederate government at Montgomery, Alabama.

To avoid the blockade, he traveled by train to Detroit and Montreal, where he took passage in the steamer *North America*, and arrived at Liverpool on June 4. Here he called on Fraser, Trenholm & Company, who were to be the Confederacy's overseas financial agents, then proceeded to London to see the Confederate commissioners. Though he was to be based

in Liverpool, James Bulloch's work inevitably involved many visits to London, including liaison with his army counterparts, with whom at times he shared accommodations. In August 1861 he was able to report to Secretary of the Navy Mallory: "Major Anderson, Captain Huse and myself consult freely together upon our duties and are now engaged in sending forward a quantity of munitions."[3]

Like his army counterparts, Bulloch did not find his task an easy one. "There were at that date," he recalled, "numerous agents of the United States in England, who seemed in no way desirous to conceal their operations. They went about their business with the air of men who were sure of their position, and who neither anticipated nor feared interference or opposition. They were well provided with money, or satisfactory bank-credits, and they rapidly swept the gun market of well-nigh every weapon, whether good or bad."[4] Confederate agents, on the other hand, were often embarrassed by lack of funds.

By the end of June 1861 a contract had been signed at Liverpool with William C. Miller & Sons and Fawcett, Preston & Company for a ship to be called the *Oreto*, supposedly destined for the Italian government. Though Thomas H. Dudley, the U.S. consul at Liverpool, was highly suspicious, and conveyed those suspicions to U.S. minister Charles Francis Adams and Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell in London, searches of the vessel found nothing to prove she was intended for Confederate service. James Bulloch had found a loophole in the Foreign Enlistment Act by making sure that when his commerce raiders put to sea they were not yet equipped for war.

The *Oreto* was ready to be launched by January 1862, and on March 22 she sailed for Nassau, where she was joined by her new captain, Lieutenant John N. Maffitt, and a cargo of arms brought out separately in the steamer *Bahama*. In August the *Oreto* was commissioned as the CSS *Florida*. After capturing or sinking thirty-seven U.S. merchant ships, her career as a commerce raider came to an end in October 1864 when she was rammed and captured in the Brazilian port of Bahia by the USS *Wachusett*.

Work on a second commerce raider began in August 1861 at John Laird & Sons' shipyard across the Mersey at Birkenhead. She was the No. 290, destined to be the largest of the Confederate cruisers, and her construction was watched closely by Federal spies, and the Foreign Office in London kept abreast of developments.

When launched on May 15, 1862 she was named the *Enrica* to foster the impression that she was being built for the Spanish government. Informed privately in late July that she was about to be impounded by the British government, Bulloch arranged for her to sail from the Mersey, on the pretext of a trial run, on July 29.[5] Successfully eluding the USS *Tuscarora,* which was lying in wait, she set course for the Azores. Here the bark *Agrippina*, purchased in London in May as her tender, and loaded with ordnance, ammunition, stores and coal, joined her, and armed and provisioned, she was commissioned as the CSS *Alabama* in August 1862, under the command of Captain Raphael Semmes. She had captured or destroyed sixty-five merchant ships by the time she was sunk off Cherbourg by the USS *Kearsarge* in June 1864.

Both these cruisers or commerce raiders were wooden vessels, but in July 1862, the month that the *Alabama* sailed, Bulloch signed another contract with John Laird, this time to build two ironclads. They were powerful vessels, 230 feet long, with twin revolving turrets and capable of speeds of up to ten knots. Designed by Captain Cowper Coles, R.N., a leading naval architect who was related to the Laird family, they were fitted with underwater rams which could stave in the hull of any wooden ship, and might be used to break the blockade or

threaten cities like New York and Washington. Ostensibly for the pasha of Egypt, and known at one stage as *El Tousson* and *El Mounassir*, they were to be ready by the spring of 1863. The Laird rams were to prove the most contentious of all the Confederate ships built in Britain.

As their true purpose could not be disguised, Bulloch, all too aware that the British government might try to prevent their departure, transferred ownership to a French citizen. The Foreign Office, informed of developments, at first refused to act for lack of hard evidence, but U.S. minister Charles Francis Adams, knowing that at least one of the rams was ready for sea, was determined to prevent a repetition of the escape of the *Florida* and *Alabama*. On September 5, 1863, he indicated to Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell, in the strongest terms, that it would be superfluous of him to point out that allowing them to sail would mean war with the United States. His letter had the desired effect, and on September 8 it was reported that the rams were being detained. Impounded by the British government, they were later purchased for use by the Royal Navy.

As well as the vessels built on Merseyside, Bulloch also contracted late in the war for a number of gunboats for the Confederate Navy. Four of these were to be built in Scotland, at Denny & Company's yards at Dumbarton, on the Clyde, and two more in London, by John & William Dudgeon at Cubitt Town, on the Thames; all were to be iron-hulled, twin-propeller steamers. Only one of Denny's vessels, the *Ajax*, was completed in time to go into service, but, unable to reach the South, it returned to Liverpool in June 1865. Another, the *Hercules,* attracted unwelcome attention from the authorities, but they found nothing to connect her with the Confederates.[6]

The two vessels built by Dudgeons were the *Louisa Ann Fanny* and the *Mary Augusta*. These appear to have been named after the wives of John Gilliat, head of J.K. Gilliat & Company, and his younger brother, Algernon, perhaps because the firm was financially involved in their construction or in recognition of previous services rendered to the Confederacy. The *Louisa Ann Fanny* was completed on January 18, 1865. The Federals were well-informed about her, the Dudgeons' foreman, Mr Cooper, having obligingly supplied one of their agents with a detailed description. When she made her trial trip down the Thames, from Gravesend to Maplin Sands later that month, under the command of her nominal master, William Pinchon, a *Times* correspondent who was on board had this to say:

> The engines are amply protected by the arrangements of the coal bunkers from shot if the ship in her future career should ever come within range of hostile guns. The *Louisa Ann Fanny* has been built for purely commercial purposes, but as she may not improbably some day cross Wilmington bar, this protection afforded to her machinery by the arrangement of her coal bunkers is a very necessary precaution.[7]

Commanded now by Lieutenant William F. Carter, the *Louisa Ann Fanny* left Victoria Docks on February 9, 1865, with seven passengers, and delivered dispatches to the CSS *Stonewall* at Lisbon before departing for Bermuda. From there, in March 1865, she took Major Norman Walker to Nassau and Havana. She never ran the blockade, and in May brought the major and his family back to England.

The war was nearing its end when the *Mary Augusta* embarked on her sea trial on March 14, 1865. It consisted of a race from Dover to Calais with the London, Chatham & Dover Railway Company's new mail steamer *La France*, which was described by the *Times* as "the most exciting and interesting contest that has ever yet occurred since steam was first applied for the propulsion of ships."[8] The *Mary Augusta* emerged as the winner, but the

Confederates never took delivery of her. She was laid up in Victoria Docks, and at the beginning of May 1865 was reported for sale, to be joined later that month by the *Louisa Ann Fanny*.

The *Sea King*, which Commander Bulloch purchased in September 1864 as a replacement for the *Alabama*, was a merchant ship, built on the Clyde in 1863 by Alexander Stephen and Sons and constructed of wood and iron. She would become the CSS *Shenandoah*, the last Confederate raider. Lieutenant William Conway Whittle, Jr., her future executive officer, was in Liverpool when he received his orders from Commander Bulloch, written in an uncharacteristic, cloak-and-dagger style:

> You will proceed to London by the 5 o'clock train this afternoon and go to Wood's Hotel, Furnival's Inn, High Holborn ... It has been arranged for you to be in the coffee room of the hotel at 11 o'clock a.m. precisely tomorrow, and that you will sit in a prominent position, with a white pocket handkerchief ... through a buttonhole of your coat, and a newspaper in your hand ... you will be recognized by Mr. Richard Wright, who will ... ask you if your name is Brown. You may say yes, and ask his name; he will give it, and you will then retire with him to your room, hand him the enclosed letter of introduction, and then ... discuss freely the business in hand....[9]

Richard Wright, the father-in-law of Charles K. Prioleau, the head of Fraser, Trenholm, had inspected the *Sea King* prior to its purchase and was her nominal owner. He would introduce Lieutenant Whittle to Captain Peter Corbett, who was to sail the *Sea King* to Madeira. Corbett was later arrested for attempting to enlist men to serve on the CSS *Shenandoah* and tried under the Foreign Enlistment Act, but was acquitted.

The *Sea King*, which sailed from London in October 1864 to become the CSS *Shenandoah*, the last Confederate raider. (*Illustrated London News*)

On October 8, 1864, the *Sea King* left the Port of London with Lieutenant Whittle, and early on the following day the steamer *Laurel* left Liverpool. The *Sea King's* departure was noted by Federal spies and reported to Washington by U.S. consul Freeman Morse together with details of her history and previous and present owners. At Madeira she rendezvoused with the *Laurel*, and was fitted out and commissioned as the CSS *Shenandoah*. Her captain was Lieutenant Commander James Iredell Waddell, who, together with his officers and the ship's guns and ammunition, had traveled out in the *Laurel*. She would remain at sea long after the surrender of all Confederate land forces, capturing or destroying no fewer than thirty-eight ships, and not finally returning to Liverpool until November 1865.

Another purchasing agent to be sent to Europe by the Confederate Navy Department in the spring of 1861 was Lieutenant James Heyward North, C.S.N. Born in 1813 into a seafaring family in Charleston, North had spent many years in the U.S. Navy before the secession crisis forced him to resign. His orders were to buy, or have constructed, an ironclad in England or France, of which he would then take command. In addition, he was to consult with naval experts like Captain Cowper Coles, R.N., and also assist and collaborate with James Bulloch in any way he could.

Together with his wife and daughter, Lieutenant North left Savannah for Liverpool on May 25, 1861, in the *Camilla* (the former racing yacht *America*, which had won the first cup race against England in 1851 and had now been acquired by the Confederate government). It proved to be a trying voyage — the *Camilla* rolled excessively and most of those on board were ill. Among the other passengers was Major Anderson, on his way to buy munitions for the Confederate Army and investigate Captain Huse's progress.

Exactly a month later, on June 25, 1861, they finally reached their destination.[10] There, North met James Bulloch, then in company with Major Anderson and Captain Huse, who happened to be visiting Liverpool, he took the train to London the next day. He had important papers for Commissioners Yancey and Mann, with whom he had a long talk before returning to Liverpool.

On this first visit to London, James North stayed at Hatchett's Hotel in Piccadilly, but when he returned with his family on July 16, they lodged in less expensive accommodations in nearby Jermyn Street, found for them by Major Anderson. Over the following weeks, North had several more meetings with the commissioners, made two trips to inspect the exterior of HMS *Warrior*, the new British ironclad nearing completion on the Thames, and had a talk with a Mr. Pritchard, of the firm of Henry S. Pitcher, wood and iron shipbuilders, of Tokenhouse Yard.

Much of his time, however, was spent in sightseeing: St. James's Palace, the Houses of Parliament, Westminster Abbey, Hyde Park, Madame Tussaud's waxworks, the Tower of London, St. Paul's Cathedral, Covent Garden, Regent Street and Oxford Street, and, further afield, the Crystal Palace at Sydenham and the Botanical Gardens at Kew. In his diary he expressed some concern at this inactivity: "I have been so much worried at the news from America that it has almost made me sick, especially when I think how little I am doing for my poor country. The only consolation that I have is, that the fault is *not* mine, and I am ready and willing to do any thing in the world for her." Nevertheless, he left London at the beginning of August for Cowes, and after a fortnight spent in the yacht *Camilla,* off the Isle of Wight, proceeded to Paris, where sightseeing again seemed to be a principal occupation.[11]

North's stay in Paris was interrupted by a hasty trip to Liverpool in early October, when

he learned that Bulloch and Anderson were about to return to the Confederacy in the blockade-runner *Fingal.* This was a fast, iron-framed steamer which had been purchased jointly by the army and navy in September to transport war supplies back to the Confederacy. The *Colletis,* a Thames freighter, was hired to carry some of the supplies from warehouses in London up to Greenock, in Scotland, where the *Fingal* was waiting; the rest went by train. The cargo consisted of rifles, cartridges, percussion caps, revolvers, cavalry sabers, four pieces of naval ordnance, lead shot and shells, gunpowder, medicines, blankets, clothing and leather; because the *Colletis* was delayed in the Thames by fog, Anderson arranged for Sinclair, Hamilton to put an additional amount of gunpowder onboard.[12] It would be the largest consignment of war materials ever sent to the Confederacy. On October 15, Bulloch, and Anderson, whose task in England was now complete, joined the *Fingal* at Holyhead, for her voyage to Savannah; Bulloch returned to England the following March in the blockade-runner *Annie Childs.*

North's requests, both verbal and written, that as a precautionary measure, Bulloch should hand over all drawings, contracts and specifications to him, as "the only agent of the Navy Dept. left out here," were refused. "It is nothing more than I expected," he concluded. "Sorry! but so much for sending a naval officer and civilian on the same duty."[13] This encounter marked the beginning of the animosity which was to mar their relationship for the rest of the war.

In January 1862, while he was still in the Confederacy, James Bulloch was commissioned a commander in the Confederate States Navy. Officers who had resigned from the U.S. Navy to join the Confederate Navy had usually done so in their original rank. Bulloch had left the U.S. Navy in 1853 after fifteen years' service, but with less than a year in the rank of lieutenant, and realized that such a senior appointment might not be well received in Confederate naval circles. An astute man, he was all too aware of the trouble it might bring.

The trouble was not long in coming. James North, who had served in the U.S. Navy for thirty-three years, more than twice as long as Bulloch, including twelve years in the rank of lieutenant, was incensed by it, and took it as a personal slight. "I am not aware of anything that I have done to merit such treatment from the department," he complained to Secretary of the Navy Stephen Mallory in March 1862. "Rank to a military man is everything and that rank has been taken from me."[14] His own promotion to the rank of commander in May 1862, news of which unfortunately did not reach him until August, did little to pacify him, and he then insisted that Secretary Mallory should inform him who was now the ranking officer. The matter of rank, he was told, was of no great importance among agents serving abroad, but in fact Commander Bulloch was the senior officer. The fact that, as a result of confusion, North did not get command of either of the cruisers Bulloch was having built on Merseyside — the *Florida* and the *Alabama*— caused even more resentment.

James North was really not suited for the admittedly difficult job he had been sent to do. Lacking initiative and persistance, rather dilatory, with limited imagination and short on tact, he was also inflexible and stubborn. His complaints and inactivity soon irritated the secretary of the navy, who several times considered recalling him, and their correspondence was often acrimonious and aggravated by the problem of poor communications.

In September 1861, North reported to the Navy Department that he had not yet made any progress in acquiring an ironclad in France. This news was not well received by Secretary Mallory, and North was ordered to remain in England to investigate the purchase or building of an ironclad there. The Norths returned to London in mid–November and were soon installed in lodgings in Russell Square, Bloomsbury.

The following spring, North was introduced to Glasgow shipbuilders James & George Thomson by Edgar Pinchback Stringer, a member of the firm of William S. Lindsay & Company, shipowners and insurance brokers. In spite of Bulloch's reservations about its suitability, North signed a contract with the Thomsons on May 21, 1862, for an armored frigate, which he hoped to command, and on June 7 he reported to the Navy Department that work had now commenced on his ironclad. Negotiations were then started with Joseph Whitworth & Company in Manchester for cannon, gun carriages and ammunition.

The Confederate Navy, however, was to receive no benefit from his belated efforts. Fears that the ship might be seized led to the contract for "Number 61" or "Lieutenant North's ironclad" being terminated in December 1863 and its subsequent sale to the Royal Danish Navy. "It has been a sad, sad disappointment to me after so many months of labor to find it was necessary to part with so noble a ship when I felt confident she would have done us most valuable service," he wrote to Mallory.[15] After that, North moved to France, where he hoped to take command of one of the ironclads which Bulloch was having built there.

In the spring of 1863, the Federal government, greatly concerned about Confederate shipbuilding in England, sent two agents, John Murray Forbes and William H. Aspinwall, with instructions to buy any ships which were thought to be potentially dangerous in order to keep them out of Southern hands. When they arrived, they not only found that the newly launched Cotton Loan had seriously reduced the likelihood of their being able to purchase ships from cash-starved Confederates, but also that their "secret" mission was already public knowledge, with a report in the *Times* describing the large sums they had at their disposal to buy up "the gunboats now building in England for the rebels."[16] Forbes and Aspinwall liaised with Freeman Morse and Thomas Dudley, the U.S. consuls in London and Liverpool, from whom they obtained lists of suspicious vessels, and decided to concentrate on those rather than the ones being constructed for the Confederates. In the end, they found that their mission of purchasing ironclads or potential commerce raiders was not feasible and it was terminated at the end of June 1863.

It is difficult to believe that they were unaware of the large commerce raider then being built on the Clyde, in Scotland, for Lieutenant George T. Sinclair. Born in Norfolk, Virginia, George Terry Sinclair also came from a family with a long naval tradition; six of his relatives were officers in the Confederate Navy and like James North, of whom he was an old friend, he had served in the U.S. Navy for many years. Major Anderson formed a poor opinion of him, though he was apparently well regarded by Secretary of the Navy Mallory. Sent to England in May 1862 as a naval purchasing agent, Sinclair's instructions were to consult Commander Bulloch about the design, as well as the funding, of a commerce raider, of which, when complete, he was to take command. Bulloch gave him details of the *Alabama*, but as he had no spare funds at that time, Sinclair was obliged to look elsewhere. With the help of Confederate commissioner James Mason, finance was arranged with William S. Lindsay, who agreed to accept cotton certificates worth £51,000 for the ship, also to be built by J. & G. Thomson. The contract was again arranged by Edgar Stringer and signed in August 1862.[17]

While their respective vessels were being built, Sinclair lodged with North near Glasgow, but in February 1863, while on a visit to London, he stayed at a house in Buckland Crescent, Belsize Park, belonging to the Rev. Francis W. Tremlett, a well-known Southern sympathizer. He wrote to North: "We have a grand dinner party here today, to all the Confederates. Chapman and Evans are here." Bulloch was also present on that occasion.[18]

Though it was completed, his ship, known as the *Canton* or *Pampero*, never reached the

Confederates. In November 1863, its seizure becoming ever more likely, Sinclair, who had also now been promoted to commander, was advised to leave the Glasgow area; the vessel was impounded by government officials the following month.[19] After being ordered to Paris to join Flag Officer Barron's staff, Sinclair traveled to Cherbourg in June 1864, where the engagement between the CSS *Alabama* and the USS *Kearsarge* was imminent, but his request to be allowed to join the *Alabama* for the battle was refused. Both he and North were ordered back to the Confederacy early in 1865.

Most of the Confederates who came to London during the Civil War were quite unknown. One exception was Commander Raphael Semmes, who arrived in April 1862 after relinquishing command of the CSS *Sumter*. The most famous Confederate naval officer of the war, Raphael Semmes was born in 1809 in Maryland, and joined the U.S. Navy in 1826. As well as serving in the Mexican War, he also found time during long leaves of absence to study law, and had reached the rank of commander by the time he resigned from the U.S. Navy in 1861 to offer his services to the Confederacy. After being sent north to buy naval supplies, he was given command of the *Sumter*, the Confederate Navy's first commerce raider.

Semmes was accompanied by Lieutenant John McIntosh Kell. Born at Darien, Georgia, in 1823, Kell, a graduate of the Naval Academy at Annapolis, had joined the U.S. Navy in 1841 and like Semmes had seen service in the Mexican War; he had also taken part in Commodore Perry's expedition to Japan in 1852–1854.

The two men now found rooms in Euston Square, "our windows looking out, even at this early season, upon well-grown and fragrant grasses, trees in leaf, and flowers in bloom." Semmes lost no time in calling on Commissioner James Mason, whom he found "a great favorite with everybody. In his company I saw much of the society of the English capital, and soon became satisfied that Mr Davis could not have intrusted the affairs of the Confederacy to better hands. English hearts had warmed towards him and his name was the sesame to open all English doors."[20] He learned from Mason that the *Florida* had sailed the previous month and that the *Alabama* would soon be launched, and subsequently had discussions with Bulloch and North. Semmes and Kell returned to the Confederacy in the latter part of May on board the *Melita*, one of Isaac, Campbell's steamers.

On his second visit in June 1864, after the loss of the CSS *Alabama*, Semmes, by now a captain, and accompanied as before by Lieutenant Kell, found himself a considerable celebrity. A group of naval officers at the Junior United Service Club in Charles II Street presented him with "a magnificent sword, which was manufactured to their order in the City of London," to replace the one lost when the *Alabama* was sunk. "To keep company with this sword, a noble English lady presented me with a mammoth Confederate flag, wrought with her own hands from the richest silk," he wrote.[21] He was also offered a public dinner by the Army & Navy Club in Pall Mall, an honor he declined. Kell went back to the Confederacy in early July, and Semmes, after a recuperative tour in Europe, began his own journey back to the Confederate States in October.

Another Confederate who was extremely well-known was Commander Matthew Fontaine Maury. Born near Fredericksburg, Virginia, in 1806, Matthew Maury had joined the U.S. Navy in 1825 and taken part in three long cruises, including that of the USS *Vincennes* on her famous four-year voyage around the world. After being crippled in a stagecoach accident in 1839, he had been restricted to shore duties and was subsequently appointed superintendent of what became the U.S. Naval Observatory and Hydrographic Office in Washington, D.C. He had already begun to make his name as a scientific author with his *New Theoretical*

and Practical Treatise on Navigation (1836), but it was as the founder of the new science of oceanography that he secured an international reputation, becoming the recipient of many foreign honors and awards. His *Physical Geography of the Sea* (1855), one of the most famous scientific textbooks of the nineteenth century, went through many editions and was translated into a number of languages. His great knowledge of the sea also helped in planning the laying of the first transatlantic cable.

At the start of the Civil War, as a commander in the Confederate States Navy, Maury was given responsibility for Virginia's harbor and river defenses. He had divided his time between superintending the construction of small wooden gunboats and experimenting with electric torpedoes (floating mines) before being ordered to England in September 1862 on special service, partly as a spokesman for the Confederate cause.[22] It was also, recalled James Bulloch, "to investigate the subject of submarine defences, and he gave much time to researches into electricity, the manufacture and use of gun-cotton, torpedoes, magnetic explosives and insulated wire. In addition, he had general authority to buy and despatch a vessel to cruise against the commerce of the United States whenever he thought the attempt practicable."[23]

It was October 9 before Commander Maury finally left for England, accompanied by his son, 13-year-old Matthew, Jr., and Midshipman James Morris Morgan, who had been at the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis when the war broke out. From Charleston, they traveled via Bermuda and Halifax, Nova Scotia, and finally reached Liverpool in the steamer *Arabia* on November 23, 1862. After several days, during which he met Commander Bulloch, who was to pay his salary and expenses, Commander Maury, his son and Midshipman Morgan proceeded to London.

"When we reached London I found that a house in Sackville Street had already been engaged for the commodore, who kindly invited me to be his guest," recalled Midshipman Morgan.[24] The rooms in Sackville Street cost about £10 a week and Matthew, Jr., in a letter to his mother and sisters, later described their maid, somewhat unkindly: "Pa calls her the donkey engine because she is so small and darts about so quick and like a little engine."[25]

Maury had been to London several times before — most recently in 1860 — and he conferred with Commissioner Mason about Confederate recognition and purchasing activities. In addition, there were visits from friends like Lord Wrottesley, a former president of the Royal Astronomical Society, Rear Admiral Robert Fitzroy, the inventor of the Fitzroy barometer, Sir Henry Holland, the eminent physician, and Captain Marin H. Jansen, of the Royal Netherlands Navy. Maury, it seemed, was more appreciated in Europe than he was in America: "All day long there would be in front of the house a string of carriages with coronets on their doors, while their owners were paying their respects to the celebrated Lieutenant Maury."[26]

At the beginning of February 1863 Lieutenant William Lowndes Maury, a distant cousin of Commander Maury, arrived in London with $1.5 million in cotton certificates, and authorization to buy and equip a commerce raider. The *Japan*, an iron-propeller steamer being built in Scotland, had already been selected on Commander Maury's behalf by Captain Jansen; in March 1863 she was purchased for him by Thomas Bold, another cousin, in conjunction with the banking firm of J. Henry Schroder. The outfitting of the ship was supervised at great personal risk by Captain Jansen, who was a serving Dutch naval officer, and in April 1863, off the coast of France, the vessel was commissioned as the CSS *Georgia*.

After brief spells of duty in Liverpool and Paris, Midshipman Morgan was ordered to return to London and await instructions at the Westminster Palace Hotel. "On the 4th of April, 1863," he recalled, "I received an order to go to a house in Little St James's Street and

Premises in New Bond Street where Maury lodged in 1863. (Author's photograph)

inquire for a 'Mr. Grigson,' who would give me further instructions. When I found the house the door was opened by a pleasant-faced, middle-aged woman who seemed much amused when I asked for 'Mr. Grigson.' She replied, laughing, 'You will find them in there,' pointing to a door. From her language I inferred that the mysterious Mr. Grigson was not so singular a man after all; evidently there must be more than one of him."[27]

Among the assembled naval officers, Morgan found Lieutenants Robert T. Chapman and William E. Evans, who had both served on the CSS *Sumter.* They had arrived in London the previous August, lodging in Bury Street, but following the murder of an acting midshipman in the *Sumter* in October 1862, Chapman had been ordered back to Gibraltar to take temporary command of the ship.

Morgan was instructed to go back to his hotel, get his belongings and return to Little St. James's Street. Then, in company with his fellow officers, he took the train "for a little seaport about an hour's ride from London" (Newhaven, Sussex), to meet his future captain, Lieutenant William L. Maury, and join the steamer *Alar,* which would rendezvous with the *Georgia.*[28] Although she remained at sea for seven months and captured or destroyed a number of American merchant ships, lack of sail power and the consequent need for frequent recoaling rendered the *Georgia* unsuitable as a cruiser and in May 1864 she was taken to Liverpool, decommissioned and sold.

Meanwhile, the search for ships went on. In May 1863 Commander Maury went to France to negotiate for a twin-turreted ironclad, but it was decided not to proceed with this, and in July he ordered Lieutenant William F. Carter "to visit the ship yards on

Maury's first ship, the CSS *Georgia*, which proved unsatisfactory as a commerce raider. (*Illustrated London News*)

the Thames, examine the vessels there for sale, and report such as may be suitable for our purposes."[29]

In November 1863, as a replacement for the *Georgia*, Maury arranged to buy an ex–Royal Navy wooden gunboat called HMS *Victor*. The purchase, also with cotton certificates, was made by the firm of Gordon Coleman & Company, acting as agents for Thomas Bold, but the vessel was to prove even less successful than the *Georgia*. After an initial refit at Sheerness Dockyard, where she was known as the *Scylla*, she quietly departed on November 24, towed by a tug, and headed for Calais for further necessary repairs. At sea she was commissioned as the CSS *Rappahannock*, under the command of Lieutenant William P.A. Campbell and later of Lieutenant Charles M. Fauntleroy. After she had arrived at Calais, the French authorities refused to let her leave, and she was obliged to remain there as a depot ship; to her officers she became known as the "Confederate White Elephant." Her crew was discharged and her officers detached at the end of March 1865 and she was sold four months later.

One of the officers assigned to the *Rappahannock* was Assistant Paymaster Douglas French Forrest. The son of Captain French Forrest, Head of the Bureau of Orders and Detail in the Navy Department, he was born in Baltimore in 1837 and had spent a year in the Confederate Army before transferring to the Navy and receiving his commission. In May 1863 he was sent abroad, and arrived in London at the end of July in company with several other naval officers. He spent the first two nights at the Berners Hotel in Berners Street, "a very quiet house, staid & respectable ... Very nice room, regularly English — no gilt, all solid, substantial, pure bed linens ... & the never failing bed-curtains."[30] In his first couple of days in

The CSS *Rappahannock*, Maury's second ship, which got no further than Calais. (*Illustrated London News*)

London, Forrest made several calls, including one on Commissioner Mason, who "rec[eive]d us kindly & gave us every aid & offer of aid." He also found time to visit Madame Tussaud's Waxworks on Baker Street, and the Princess's Theater on Oxford Street for a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*, which failed to impress—"indifferent theatre, very moderate acting"—though he was amused by the women who came around selling soda water, lemonade, bottled ale and stout during the intermissions.

Following a brief visit to Liverpool, Forrest spent a further ten days in London in the early part of August. After three nights, again probably at the Berners Hotel, he and his companions moved to lodgings in New Bond Street, premises occupied at street level by a tailor. "I've a small room in the upper story but it's neat & pleasant & our mess, consisting of the Senacs, Graves, Morris & myself have a nice sitting room for our company. Our first dinner was plain but substantial," he recorded.[31]

While awaiting orders, much of his time was spent in sightseeing: the Zoological Gardens, the Old Bailey, the Monument, Westminster Abbey, the Burlington Arcade and several of the London parks. One of his acquaintances, Lieutenant Charles L. Hobson, who had come to London with Captain Crenshaw earlier that year, and was now involved in blockade-running, accompanied him on a visit to the Bank of England, "a rare privilege."[32] Another novelty was a ride on the underground Metropolitan Railway, which had opened at the beginning of that year. He also saw something of the nightlife of the metropolis, with visits to two music halls—the London Pavilion, on Tichborne Street, which he entered only after being persuaded that it was "perfectly respectable," and Evans' Music-and-Supper Rooms in King Street, Covent Garden, where he tried to have "Dixie" sung, to annoy a Federal naval officer who was present, and Cremorne Gardens at Chelsea. On August 12 Douglas Forrest departed for Scotland.

By late November 1863 he was in Calais awaiting the arrival of the *Rappahannock*. No sooner had it arrived than he was sent back to London "to see Mr. Maury & get money etc." On this occasion he stayed at the Grosvenor Hotel, by Victoria Station, "one of the finest in London." Commander Maury, he found, was out of town, but he called on Major Huse at Isaac, Campbell's offices in Jermyn Street, and Zachariah Pearson, "who is largely concerned in the fitting out of our ship," and who was lodging in Hereford Road, Bayswater. On subsequent visits to London, in February and April 1864, he stayed at the Tavistock Hotel in Covent Garden, "a miserable concern for all its reputation," and at Morley's Hotel in Trafalgar Square.

The *Rappahannock*, which had already been the subject of news reports when the British authorities failed to prevent her leaving Sheerness, was to become even better known to the public as the focus of two trials involving the attempted recruitment of men to serve in her.[33] The first involved John Seymour, a shipping agent and roominghouse keeper, of Wellclose Square, Whitechapel, who was known to his associates as "John the Greek." On July 14, 1864, he pleaded guilty at the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, to a violation of the Foreign Enlistment Act, by attempting to recruit a number of seamen and firemen "for a ship in Calais" (the *Rappahannock*). Probably because he was acting on instructions from the shipping broker Gordon Coleman, Seymour was discharged, on condition that he refrain from repeating the offense.

Seymour was not the only boardinghouse keeper engaged in this activity. According to his deposition made on December 2, 1863, William Wynn, of Lower Berners Street, Stepney, procured eleven seamen for "a ship to run the blockade." The seamen went to London Bridge

Station to meet a man calling himself "Captain Brown," where tickets for Calais were purchased for them and about twenty-eight others. After an overnight stay at Dover, the seamen crossed to Calais, where they went onboard "a ship then called the *Rappahannock,*" where they were told by the captain: "You are now going privateering, the same as the *Alabama* and the *Florida.* You men are going to fight for money, and I am going to fight for glory." Within three days, unhappy at the arrangements, twenty-one of the men had been allowed to leave and were sent back to London.[34] The remainder were discharged in August 1864.

The case against William Rumble, the chief inspector of machinery afloat at Sheerness Dockyard, who was an Admiralty official, was rather more serious. Not only had he been involved in the refit of the *Rappahannock,* both there and at Calais, he had also engaged in recruiting activities. Indeed, it was viewed so seriously by the U.S. minister that he made a representation to the British government about it.

The preliminary hearing took place at the Court of Queen's Bench, Westminster, on April 25, 1864, and resumed on December 5, 1864, and February 1, 3, and 4, 1865. During the proceedings it appeared that, although the registered owner was Gordon Coleman, the real owner was actually Zachariah Pearson of Hull, "the partner of Coleman (and a bankrupt to the amount of some £600,000 during the past summer)" as a result of his involvement in blockade-running. "Mr. Pearson who does not deny that he has sent the Confederates ships — of what kind he does not specify — complains piteously that while the Federals robbed him of the ships, the Confederates refused to pay for them."[35]

At the beginning of the trial, Charles Francis Adams made a remarkably accurate prediction of the outcome: "It is ... rather doubtful whether Mr. Rumble, though unquestionably guilty of all and more than all that is charged, will be convicted."[36] William Rumble was seen by the court as "the tool of others" and was indeed acquitted. As a result of this trial, Adams felt that the United States could expect no justice from British courts for prosecutions brought under the Foreign Enlistment Act. "Their rebel sympathies got the better of their oaths," Benjamin Moran noted disgustedly in his journal. Though acquitted, Rumble was placed on half pay, "as an officer in whom [their lordships] can no longer place any confidence."

In April 1863 a volunteer navy — a modified version of privateering — was authorized by the Confederate Congress. The man behind this idea was Bernard Janin Sage, who came from Connecticut, but had later settled in New Orleans, where he studied law and also became the owner of a sugar plantation. He now set about finding investors in Richmond to form the Virginia Volunteer Navy Company, then in 1864, now a master in the Confederate Navy assigned to special duty, traveled to England in a fruitless attempt to raise enough money to purchase a ship for the company. He was still in London in September of that year, when he wrote to Commander Maury about the misfortunes of another volunteer navy company in Tennessee.

The Virginia Volunteer Navy Company, meanwhile, had chosen its own purchasing agent in the person of Lieutenant Edward C. Stiles, C.S.N., who was commissioned a commander and given leave-of-absence to go to Europe to buy a steamer. The vessel chosen, the *Hawk*, "one of the finest steamers of her class to be found in England, perfectly strengthened and thoroughly fitted in every respect, for immediate advance against the enemy," had been built on the Clyde in 1863, and was owned by Thomas Begbie.[37] After changing hands, she was modified, with strengthened decking, increased storage for coal, and additional living quarters, and sailed from Glasgow to London in April 1864. The Federals were very aware of her presence in Victoria Docks, and there is a note of exasperation in the dispatch about her which

Freeman Morse sent to Charles Francis Adams in June: "Owing to the extreme prudence and reticence of those who direct and execute rebel operations in this country, and the skill in evading the laws which three years' experience has taught them, I have found it quite impossible to procure such legal evidence as is here required for her detention."[38] By the time that was written, the *Hawk* had left for Bermuda, under the command of Lieutenant Knox.

The *Hawk* was bought partly on credit, and until the debt was discharged, Commander Stiles and a colleague, Assistant Paymaster Daniel Talley, agreed to remain in England. As no funds had arrived from Richmond by the autumn of 1864, Stiles turned for assistance to Commissioner Mason and Commander Bulloch, but none was available from those quarters. After several months lying idle in Bermuda, the *Hawk* returned to London about the end of 1864, by which time Commander Robert B. Pegram, C.S.N., former captain of the CSS *Nashville*, had also arrived there. On his instructions, the ship was put up for auction in January 1865 and sold. His debts settled, Commander Stiles and his fellow officers returned to the Confederacy, only to be captured when they attempted to land on the Louisiana coast. Commander Pegram abandoned any attempt to buy another steamer.

Many of the vessels offered to the Confederate Navy Department during the war were referred to Commander Bulloch for further investigation. Some of the offers came from speculators looking for a quick profit, while others were from "honest men, really desirous to do the South a service, but having no technical knowledge of ships, and no faculty for estimating the essential requirements of a Confederate cruiser."[39] The latter included two large, outdated and overpriced paddle steamers from the Indian navy, a number of redundant steamers belonging to the banking house of Overend, Gurney & Company laid up in the London docks, which would have been very costly to operate, and vessels from foreign navies, which turned out to be defective or otherwise unsuitable. There was an offer from a firm of English shipbuilders to build another *Alabama*, which was subsequently withdrawn, as well as another from a foreign banker to buy an ironclad frigate and deliver her at sea to anyone appointed by Bulloch to receive her; this was also withdrawn, perhaps because of the financial conditions attached.[40]

The most senior Confederate officer to visit London during the Civil War was Samuel Barron. Born in Hampton, Virginia, in 1809, he had had more than forty years' service in the U.S. Navy. After secession he had been placed in charge of the naval defenses of Virginia and North Carolina, and then been a prisoner-of-war for eleven months before being exchanged. His substantive rank was captain, but with the temporary one of commodore, and the impressive-sounding title of Flag Officer Commanding Confederate States Naval Forces in Europe, he was now being sent to take command of the ships being built for the Confederacy in Britain and France. Accompanied by Lieutenant William C. Whittle, Jr., he left Richmond at the end of August 1863 and from Wilmington traveled to Bermuda, where there was a wait of ten days before he could join the British steamer *Florida*. Both the weather and the food onboard were bad, and the "unpleasant passage" to England took more than three weeks. Barron finally reached Liverpool on October 12, and following a visit to Glasgow to inspect the two Confederate ships under construction on the Clyde, arrived in London four days later. After a week, during which he stayed at the Burlington Hotel in Cork Street, he left for Paris and set up his headquarters in the Rue Drouot, where he was to remain until the early part of 1865.

Flag Officer Barron's assignment to Europe, however, was to prove an empty one. The ships which he was to command were all seized or sold, and even the rams built at Bordeaux

for Commander Bulloch were acquired by foreign navies. One of these, however, was repurchased from Denmark, to become, in January 1865, the CSS *Stonewall*. It was to be commanded by Captain Thomas Jefferson Page, a Virginian who had originally been sent to Europe to command one of the Laird rams, then to relieve Captain Semmes on the *Alabama*, though in the event he had done neither. A London-built blockade-runner, the *City of Richmond*, belonging to Captain Crenshaw, was lent to Commander Bulloch to carry the crew, who were from the *Rappahannock* and the *Florida,* to a rendezvous with the *Stonewall* off the French coast.[41] The *City of Richmond*, commanded by Lieutenant Hunter Davidson, left Greenhithe, on the Thames, on January 11, 1865, and met the *Stonewall* thirteen days later. The only Confederate ironclad ever to put to sea, the war had ended by the time it finally reached Cuba in early May.

On February 28, 1865, Flag Officer Barron relinquished his command as senior Confederate naval officer in Europe, and on April 3, together with Commanders North, Sinclair, Pegram and Barney (the former captain of the *Florida*), Lieutenant Holcombe, Assistant Paymaster Forrest and Midshipman Dyke from the *Rappahannock*, he left Southampton in the steamer *Tasmanian*, en route for Havana and the Confederacy.

Commander Maury, who had latterly concentrated chiefly on his torpedo experiments, both in London and at Bowdon, near Manchester, where his son was in school, sending torpedo supplies and equipment back to Richmond in August and October 1864, also attempted to return to the Confederacy in the closing weeks of the war. He was probably not sorry to be leaving; he had regarded his wartime duties in England as a form of banishment by enemies in high places, in particular Jefferson Davis and Stephen Mallory, to keep him from any further role in Confederate affairs at home.

Before his departure, a dinner in his honor was planned, and a circular dated March 30, 1865, was issued by the honorary secretary of the testimonial fund.[42] The dinner was to be held on April 26. Six days later, on May 2, 1865, together with his son, he left for Havana. When he arrived on May 22 he found the war was over; waiting there was the CSS *Stonewall*, which had surrendered to the Spanish authorities, and Commodore Barron and his party, who had arrived a month previously, officers in a navy which no longer existed. Dispatching his son to New York, Maury departed for Mexico.

The Confederacy's attempts to procure ships in Britain had only limited success, and most of that was attributable to one man, the resourceful Commander Bulloch. The commerce raiders built or purchased by him — the *Florida*, the *Alabama* and the *Shenandoah* — did at least put to sea to do the job for which they were intended, and the vessels he had constructed in London — the *Louisa Ann Fanny* and the *Mary Augusta* — were completed, though the Confederates never took delivery of the latter; given the political implications, the seizure of the Laird rams built at Birkenhead was a foregone conclusion. The ironclads constructed on the Clyde for Commanders North and Sinclair were sold abroad or impounded, while the two vessels acquired by Commander Maury as commerce raiders — the *Georgia* and the *Rappahannock* — proved unsuitable or downright disastrous.[43]

6

The Spying Game

A system of espionage of the most extensive and searching character has been for some time going on in England, and every move of a warlike character has been immediately reported to the Government of the United States.

—*Morning Chronicle*, December 1861

The activities of Confederates, in both London and elsewhere, were already under observation by the middle of 1861. Henry Shelton Sanford, the newly appointed U.S. minister to Belgium, who had been made responsible for the Federal secret service in Europe, was soon writing to Secretary of State William H. Seward, asking for more agents to be sent to "aid in routing up this nest of secessionists ... London & Paris are the keys of the position & ... I do hope you will provide sufficient secret service funds when Congress meets."[1] Every Confederate purchasing agent, he thought, should be shadowed night and day by one or more Federal agents.

In June 1861, with the assistance of Freeman H. Morse, the United States consul in London, Sanford engaged the services of Ignatius Paul Pollaky, who had a "private continental inquiry office" near the Mansion House in London. Though Pollaky seemed to be "just the man," Morse admitted that he knew nothing about Pollaky, "& there may be some risk in dealing with him. But it is a 'risky business' anyway & I think we had better engage him at once."[2]

According to his own newspaper advertisements, Pollaky had been employed for some years by Charles Frederick Field, usually known as "Inspector Field of the Detective Force," during which time he had been entrusted with "the most delicate and confidential inquiries in this country and abroad."[3] Field, who had joined the Metropolitan Police when it was established in 1829, was the most famous British police officer of his day, chiefly because of his appearance in Charles Dickens' magazine *Household Words*, and when he left the force in 1852 he set up his own private inquiry office.[4]

Once engaged, Pollaky lost no time in setting up a surveillance system, which he claimed, would "leave no room for any further improvement." Known Confederates were pointed out to his agents; the rendezvous of Confederates in London were watched, and daily reports made of their comings and goings; warehouses, where goods waiting to be shipped through the blockade might be stored, were placed under observation; postmen were bribed to supply details of postmarks on letters delivered to Confederates, with a view to identifying ports where ships might be preparing to run the blockade; and the telegraph offices were watched.

PRIVATE INQUIRY OFFICE, established 1852,

20, Devereux-court, Temple, under the direction of CHARLES FREDERICK FIELD (late chief Inspector of the Detective Police of the Metropolis). Confidential inquiries made for noblemen, gentlemen, solicitors, railway and insurance companies. Evidence collected in divorce and other cases. This office is unconnected with the police.

PRIVATE CONTINENTAL INQUIRY OFFICE.

--- Mr. POLLAKY, formerly superintendent of the foreign department in Mr. Field's office, and who has been entrusted during the last 12 years with the most delicate and confidential inquiries in this country and abroad, has OPENED the above ESTABLISHMENT with the view of protecting the interests of the British public in its social, legal, and commercial relations with foreigners. Inquiries of every description, which do not come within the province of the regular police authorities can be made through this office on any part of the continent. Offices at 14, George-street, Mansion-house, E. C.

Ignatius P. Pollaky, who was engaged in 1861 to spy on the Confederates, learned his craft with the famous "Inspector Field of the Detective Force." (*Times*, 23 January 1862)

In addition, one of the clerks in Isaac, Campbell's office was paid to provide details of contracts with the Confederate government.

In September the resourceful and zealous Sanford suggested an even more ambitious surveillance operation to Seward: officials of the steamship companies and clerks of the main business houses might be bribed to provide details of transactions with the Confederates, and a contact at Lloyd's marine insurance office could supply useful information about ships sailing to Confederate ports. They might then either be seized, or delayed by court action; if that proved impossible, details could at least be sent to the Federal blockading squadrons, so they might be intercepted. It was even proposed that an entire blockade-runner loaded with war materials could be purchased from its owner, thus depriving the Confederates of a quantity of arms and ammunition. It would all cost a great deal of money.

Early in October Pollaky's men traced crates of guns from warehouses in London to the Scottish port of Greenock. Large amounts of arms, ammunition and military equipment had been transported there by freighter, and were being loaded on board the steamer *Fingal*. "I fortunately observed *the cases*. There is no mistake about them as in addition to the marks ... they also have a card on each *Isaac, Campbell & Co*.... depend upon it, I will keep a bright look out on them," reported one of the detectives.[5] It proved impossible, however, to detain the *Fingal*, and she sailed from Greenock on October 9, bound for Savannah.

The following month Sanford was annoyed to discover that Charles Francis Adams and Freeman Morse had in the meantime set up their own surveillance operation and complained

about this to William H. Seward.[6] Adams, who considered Sanford a meddler who was encroaching on his domain, also protested to Washington about the unsatisfactory double system that now prevailed. As a result, it was decided that Sanford's responsibilities should be restricted to mainland Europe, and by January 1862 his arrangements with Pollaky had been terminated. At the end of that month, Benjamin Moran, who appears to have had little faith in Ignatius Pollaky, referring to him dismissively as "a German Jew ... who is acting as a detective, and whom S[anford] was so silly as to employ," nonetheless met with him and was presented with his bill for work done for both Henry Sanford and also Freeman Morse.[7]

From then on, operations in London were under the day-to-day control of Freeman Morse, who had taken over as U.S. consul in London in May 1861. Freeman Harlow Morse, a former congressman from Maine, was to play an increasingly important part in Federal espionage activities in London. As the war progressed, his workload at the consulate in Gracechurch Street increased so much that he found it necesssary to ask for the appointment of a deputy consul to assist him; his chief clerk, Joshua Nunn, was recommended for the post and appointed in April 1863.

Federal surveillance work was also considerably enhanced about this time as a result of the visit of John M. Forbes and William H. Aspinwall, who had been sent to England to attempt to buy up Confederate ironclads and commerce raiders. They recommended that for espionage purposes Morse and his Liverpool counterpart, Thomas H. Dudley, should divide the country between them, Morse having overall responsibility for the South of England and the Midlands, and Dudley for the North and Scotland, and also made additional money available for surveillance work from their own funds.[8]

There was an enormous amount of correspondence with the State Department in Washington, much of it concerned with ships thought to be carrying war supplies for the Confederates. "The iron screw steamer *Gladiator* has been purchased by the Confederates and is now in the Thames loading with arms and ammunition, and those who control her here say she *can and will run the blockade*...," Morse reported to Secretary of State Seward on November 1, 1861.[9] The following day he went to have a look at the ship: "I have just returned from a short trip down the river to see the Confederate steamer *Gladiator* ... She will take out a large quantity of Enfield rifles, besides ammunition, clothing, &c."[10] The *Gladiator* sailed on November 10 with a cargo which included more than 22,000 Enfield rifles.

Towards the end of January 1862, intelligence concerning another vessel was sent to Washington:

> The steamer *Economist* is now loading with Enfield rifles, blankets, socks, army cloths, made-up clothing etc ... She is loading in ... the Thames, a few miles below London Bridge ... The *Economist* is managed here by I[saac], Campbell & Co. This house has acted as agents for the rebels in most of their transactions here ... I do not think there is a question about her cargo being destined for the South and as she is perhaps the largest steamer yet sent out by the insurgents and their friends here it must be valuable, but especially so to the rebels.[11]

The *Economist* left London on January 30, 1862, and within a few days of her departure Morse was informed that yet another steamer, the *Southwick*, was in the Thames, loading with a similar cargo. The information came from a man called Thomas H. Chase, whom Morse occasionally refers to as "my chief agent." He was also sometimes called Captain Chase, and his familiarity with nautical matters — he was adept at supplying details and sketches of ships under investigation — suggests he was probably a former merchant seaman. With an assistant

The U.S. legation, Upper Portland Place (now Portland Place), where Minister Charles Francis Adams received many reports of Confederate activity in London. (Author's photograph)

he traveled down the river and through the docks every day and made frequent visits to the shipyards.

There were to be reports on many more ships. In March 1862, for instance, 200 cases of Enfield rifles were reported as "shipped on board the *Minna* within the last three days," while "the side-wheel steamer *Pacific* continues taking in cargo of a similar description to that going into the steamer *Minna*. I learn that 5,000 Enfield rifles are expected to be shipped on her."[12] The *Minna*, it was discovered, carried tea, coffee, blankets, leather, boots and shoes, swords, knapsacks, gunpowder, saltpeter and revolvers, as well as at least 8,580 rifles.

The *Princess Royal*, which cleared London on December 8, 1862, carried quantities of semimilitary equipment supplied by William S. Lindsay & Company, it was reported, but she was captured while trying to enter Charleston harbor the following month. The *Harriet Pinckney,* destined for Bermuda, was observed in May 1863 loading in the Thames with rifles, artillery and carbines; when she returned to England the following September she carried a number of passengers, among them the Confederate spy and emissary, Mrs. Rose Greenhow.

In a report on ships loading in the Thames in June 1863, Chase observed that "the clothing is coming up from more directions than usual — Manchester, Leeds, Dewsbury, York, etc and by different routes, viz, Great Northern Railway, North Western, and also by the old-fashioned canal boats direct from Manchester."[13]

Occasionally Chase reported on matters unconnected with shipping, such as the public meeting held near Fitzroy Square in November 1862 which was attended by some four hundred people, all of them seemingly respectable. At it, the conduct of the press, especially the *Times*, was condemned, and hopes were expressed that the U.S. government would prevail.[14]

He was one of several men whose services were paid for out of the Federal secret service account and who reported to Consul Morse. There was also J.G. Bunting, who spent a considerable amount of time in Calais observing the *Rappahannock*, and the man who usually signed himself "G" (C.W. Geddes), who enjoyed the confidence of Confederates in both London and Paris. "He is still considered by most or all of them who know him as one of their number and they speak as unreservedly to him about their doings as they do to each other," Morse observed in a note accompanying a report from him in July 1864.[15] "I ... get an occasional *inside view*," he had commented in an earlier letter, and it is evident from other remarks in the consular dispatches that more than one confidant of leading Confederates in London was passing information to the U.S. consulate, presumably in return for money. No wonder Commander North remarked to "G", during a visit to Paris in July 1864: "We have almost given up in despair ever being able to do anything in England, the Federals have so many spies and they are so active that it is impossible to do anything, no matter how secret we may act, or how few we have engaged in it."[16] For once, it was a realistic assessment of the situation.

Information came to the Federals from other sources, too, though it was not always very reliable. Occasionally it was from firms who had dealings with the Confederates, such as Bennett & Wake, ship and insurance brokers, who sent details to the U.S. consulate in late 1862, though some doubts were expressed as to the authenticity of the letter.[17] There was also the inevitable defector, or supposed defector, and as Benjamin Moran found, there was no shortage of people willing to sell information, both genuine and bogus.

One such was John Magoffin, supposedly a captain in the Confederate Army, who in July 1864 came to the U.S. consulate to take the oath of allegiance and give information about rebel sympathizers in the United States. This turned out to be of dubious value, and its bearer was later thought to have reverted to his original allegiance. Dealings with W.F. Gray, a Virginian long resident in Texas, and a Union sympathizer, proved equally unsatisfactory for the Federals. He claimed to have the confidence of many Confederate agents, and on the strength of that obtained money from the London consulate in January 1864; he was later found to have done the same thing at U.S. consulates in France, Germany and Italy.

Particularly notorious was "the infamous traitor," Clarence R. Yonge, who had been dismissed from his post of assistant paymaster on the CSS *Alabama*. In April 1863, having arrived in London, he gave information to the U.S. minister about his previous duties as private secretary to Commander Bulloch, as well as providing details about the two Laird rams and the *Alexandra*, a ship being built for Fraser, Trenholm as a present for the Confederate government. As a crown witness in the trial in June 1863, at the Court of Exchequer, Westminster, which followed the seizure of the *Alexandra*, Yonge was completely discredited, being referred to on one occasion as "this specimen of humanity," and the court found in favor of the defendants.

Morse received many reports about a warehouse at St. Bride's Wharf, Wapping, where goods supplied by Sinclair, Hamilton were believed to be stored. These were eventually removed by Pickford's vans and taken by barge to the *Hawk*, a steamer owned by Thomas Begbie, and thought to be intended as a privateer. She had come from Glasgow, where she had been under observation, and after arriving near the mouth of the Thames about April 19, 1864, had remained there for some three weeks before proceeding to Victoria Docks. However, Morse admitted, in a letter to Charles Francis Adams, "owing to the extreme prudence and reticence of those who direct and execute rebel operations in this country, and the skill

in evading the laws which three years' experience has taught them, I have found it quite impossible to procure such legal evidence as is here required for her detention."[18]

Various alterations had been made to the vessel before she left the Clyde. "These alterations and her equipment and fittings," reported Morse, "were done by the direction of Captain Bulloch, of the so-called Confederate Navy. This Captain Bulloch visited her several times while in the process of completion and ... made a thorough examination of her and directed various alterations to be made ... Bulloch was undoubtedly the chief superintendent and director in the purchase and fitting out of the *Hawk* ... yet she stands registered in Mr Begbie's name ... until she can be placed safely in Confederate hands."[19]

As a result of Morse's intelligence, Adams registered a complaint with the British Foreign Office, and the *Hawk* was examined by customs officers, but nothing unusual was found. The "officers had no difficulty in going over every part of the ship, and ... in so doing, they saw nothing whatever to arouse any suspicion of the vessel; she appeared to be a very fast merchant ship ... not fitted for war purposes, her iron plates being so thin and light," Adams was told.[20] Her cargo consisted of iron, bar steel and "divers articles of merchandise." In spite of this, Morse concluded, "I am satisfied that she belongs to the so-called Confederate government, and that said government intends to use her for purposes of war, or for committing depredations against the commerce of the United States."[21] The *Hawk* left Victoria Docks on June 13, 1864 and, after anchoring in the Thames off Woolwich, sailed for Bermuda two days later.

As early as July 1862 Morse had reported to Washington: "Rifles in considerable quantities have been sent this week from here to Liverpool. Three hundred cases, with 20 in each case, have gone down within three days." A week later he added: "About 700 cases of Enfield rifles containing 20 in each case have gone from the London Armoury and Barnett's establishment within a week or ten days past to Liverpool to be shipped from there for the Confederates."[22] This may have been the beginning of a trend, because in September 1864 he remarked: "For the last two or three months the rebels seem nearly to have abandoned this port as a place from whence to forward supplies. Even the rifles manufactured here for them have lately been sent to Liverpool to forward from that port."[23]

The Federals took a keen interest in arrivals from the Confederacy. One Confederate who was singled out for special attention was James Bulloch, whose supposedly secret mission was known about almost before he arrived at Liverpool. He was astonished to discover that full details of his assignment had appeared in a New York newspaper which had now reached England, and he found himself under surveillance from the outset. "This man is here and his movements are observed," Consul Morse reported to Secretary of State Seward on July 19, 1861.[24] Seward was told by Henry Sanford that he had "doubled the force upon Bulloch's surveillance ... He is the most dangerous man the South have here and fully up to his business. I am disbursing at the rate of £150 a month on this one man which will give you an idea of the importance I attach to his movements."[25] Adams thought, quite correctly, that Bulloch was one of the most efficient agents the Confederacy had in Europe.

It was not just in Liverpool that Bulloch was a marked man. On one occasion, towards the end of the war, he remarked that he thought it best not to go to London, "as I am so well known there." In his memoirs he recalled: "The consular agents of the United States had already begun to practise an inquisitive system of espionage, and it was soon manifest that the movements of those who were supposed to be agents of the Confederate Government were closely and vigilantly watched."[26]

Bulloch commented on this several times in letters to the Confederate Navy Department, remarking, for instance, in November 1863:

> The extent to which the system of bribery and spying has been and continues to be practised by the agents of the United States in Europe is scarcely credible. The servants of gentlemen supposed to have Southern sympathies are tampered with, confidential clerks, and even the messengers from telegraph offices, are bribed to betray their trust, and I have lately been informed that the English and French Post Offices, hitherto considered immaculate, are now scarcely safe modes of communication...[27]

He returned to this theme the following February:

> The spies of the United States are numerous, active and unscrupulous. They invade the privacy of families, tamper with the confidential clerks of merchants, and have succeeded in converting a portion of the police of this country into secret agents of the United States, who have practised a prying watchfulness over the movements and business of individuals ... which has excited the disgust and openly expressed indignation of many prominent Englishmen...[28]

Sanford's description of Bulloch as "the most dangerous man the South have here" was not an exaggeration. His strategically placed agents included a "mole" in the Foreign Office, thought to have been a certain Victor Buckley. Adams had seen a note from Buckley to Caleb Huse, warning him of danger to his "protégé" (the *Alabama*) when there was a likelihood of its being impounded by the British authorities, and in his diary Adams noted: "This Victor Buckley is a clerk in the Foreign Office."[29]

Naval purchasing agent Cdr. James D. Bulloch was singled out for special attention by the Federals and eventually became reluctant to come to London because he was so well-known there. (*Battles and Leaders of the Civil War*)

Another Confederate agent who was "closely and vigilantly watched" was Major Edward Anderson. For some time he had no idea he was under surveillance, until one morning one of the Isaac brothers came over to his lodgings and asked him if he knew he was being watched. Through the window Mr. Isaac then pointed out a rough-looking man standing on the corner of the street; he was one of the detectives employed by Charles Francis Adams, the U.S. minister. "These men are indefatigable in their attentions," Anderson noted in his diary, "following me specially wherever I go, even into the shops in cases where I have purchases of the most trivial kind to make."[30]

Anderson went out into Jermyn Street to take a closer look

at his "shadow," "a plain, countrified-looking man, roughly clad & by no means bearing about him the appearance of a detective officer."[31] He was to see him again many times during his stay in London, in many different disguises. "I never failed however to recognize my shadow. Assisting him were one or two others, employed in like manner in the pay of the American minister."[32]

Later, Anderson discovered that "a well dressed man" (one of Adams' detectives) had made an unsuccessful attempt to obtain a copy of a telegram he had recently sent from the telegraph office in St. James's Street, and that he had offered a telegraph boy a bribe to open one addressed to him. Although Anderson instructed the boy to accept the bribe and employed a plainclothes policeman to watch the telegram being handed over, his ploy failed, the Federal detective probably recognizing the plainclothes police officer.[33]

When he left his lodgings in Jermyn Street for the last time on October 2 to catch the Liverpool train, Anderson was followed to Euston station. As soon as his luggage had been put on board his hansom cab and he got in, he saw his shadow run to the corner of St. James's Street and jump into another one which he had ready waiting for him. As he passed out of Jermyn Street into St. James's Street, Anderson saw his shadow seated in his cab, which trailed him as far as the railway station, then carried on past it, suggesting that the detective had merely satisfied himself that he was leaving for Liverpool. However, inside Euston station, as Anderson was counting his change after buying his railway ticket, he happened to turn around and who should be there, standing within a foot of him, but "my friend of Jermyn St." That was to be his final encounter with this particular shadow, but another detective followed him onto the train, to watch him during his remaining days in Liverpool before he joined the *Fingal* at Holyhead.[34]

Even on the Continent, Confederate agents were not free from the attentions of the Federals. When Captain Huse went to Hamburg to superintend the loading of ten batteries of field artillery purchased in Vienna, onboard the *Bahama*, a steamer belonging to Fraser, Trenholm, he found he was being watched by "spies sent from London by the United States minister, as well as by the United States consulate in Hamburg."[35] That, coupled with the fact that the ship was not large enough to accommodate all the batteries, and that it also seemed likely that it would be seized, caused him, after taking legal advice, to decide to abort that particular mission. He was fortunate in finding a ready buyer for his artillery in the person of Captain Alexander Blakely of the Blakely Cannon Company.

It was not just leading figures like Commander Bulloch, Major Anderson and Major Huse who were under observation; minor players were also being watched, and Morse reported on two of these in March 1864:

> A Mr. Archer from Virginia is ... here. He is an engineer in the rebel navy and has come to look into the construction of ships of war ... and to purchase machinery for the Tredegar iron works at Richmond. He has gone to Sheffield to examine the machinery for rolling armor plates. A man by the name of Talley who is connected with the Tredegar works is with him.[36]

Archer and Talley were to cause Consul Morse further annoyance a year later when it was discovered that they, along with Lieutenant John McGill of the Virginia Volunteer Navy, had obtained British passports in order to return to the United States.

Federal surveillance of Confederate activities in London — whether of ships loading with war supplies, vessels being built in the shipyards, or the movements of Southern agents — was thorough and well-organized, though it had no dramatic results as it did at Liverpool, with

the seizure of the Laird rams and the *Alexandra*. The Federals were unable to prevent the departure of the *Sea King* (the future CSS *Shenandoah*) or the *Louisa Ann Fanny*, but much information about cargoes intended for the South was sent to Washington and passed to the blockading squadrons. At the same time, Confederate agents involved in procurement and purchasing activities found their work increasingly hampered by the attentions of Federal spies.

7

The Cotton Loan

The loan is attracting much attention, and it is certain that it will be readily placed.
—*Economist*, March 21, 1863

To raise more money to pay for the arms and supplies being purchased in Europe by the Confederate government, a twenty-year foreign loan, based on cotton, was proposed in the autumn of 1862. The proposal is believed to have originated with a man called Felix Carteret, a former French civil servant with Confederate connections, who put the idea to Emile Erlanger, the German-born head of a Paris banking house, with branches in Frankfort and Amsterdam, and he in turn discussed it with John Slidell, the Confederate commissioner in Paris.

Erlanger was a confidant of Napoleon III, and Slidell thought that political as well as financial advantages might result from such a loan. He wrote about it to his colleague James Mason in London, pointing out that Erlangers' was "one of the richest ... banking houses in Europe, having extensive business relations throughout France and free access to some very important men about the Court. They will ... exert themselves in our favor and enlist ... persons who will be politically useful."[1]

Mason was not so enthusiastic; he had been considering another scheme for a loan from William S. Lindsay & Company, shipowners and insurance brokers, which appeared to offer more favorable terms.[2] In the event, however, the matter was referred to Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin in December 1862, and after intense discussions in Richmond, London and Paris, agreement was reached, and the Seven Per Cent Cotton Loan, or Erlanger Loan, was authorized by secret act of Congress on January 29, 1863.

Bonds to the value of £3 million would be issued.[3] They would carry 7 percent interest, payable half-yearly, but the real attraction for investors was that they could also be exchanged for cotton at a fixed price of sixpence per pound, at sixty days' notice, at any time up to six months after a treaty of peace between the belligerents had been concluded. Every six months, starting on March 1, 1864, one-fortieth of the bonds would be drawn by lot and redeemed at face value, by means of a sinking fund, with the intention of extinguishing the loan in twenty years. Investors would pay for the bonds in eight installments, and Erlanger would pay the money raised to the Confederate government in the same way.

John K. Gilliat & Company had been asked to act as English agents for the loan, but had declined to do so, and J. Henry Schroder & Company, one of the leading merchant

banks in London, was appointed instead. Schroder's was an Anglo-German concern, originally founded in 1818 as the London branch of a Hamburg firm of merchants; there was also a Liverpool branch, established in 1840 to provide finance for the cotton trade. Acting for Erlanger was the old established firm of Freshfields & Newman, who had been solicitors to the Bank of England since 1743, while Crowder, Maynard, Son & Lawford represented Schroder's. Negotiations were conducted chiefly by John Slidell and Treasury Department agent, Colin McRae; others involved included James Mason, Henry Hotze and the firm of Fraser, Trenholm.

James Spence, who had been the Confederacy's financial agent in Europe since October 1862, and who would later be replaced by McRae, was not involved in the negotiations. He had been unimpressed by the conditions of the loan, which he thought a very hard bargain, and that far better terms might have been procured from "an old-established banking house" — perhaps a reference to John K. Gilliat or William S. Lindsay.[4] His criticisms and suggested amendments to the terms of the loan were not appreciated by Erlanger or Slidell, who both resented his interference.

Rumors about the Confederate Cotton Loan began to circulate in London financial circles in February 1863, though the exact details were not yet known. When they were, they caused a sensation. On March 19, 1863, the bonds went on sale in London, Amsterdam, Paris, Frankfurt and Liverpool, and subscriptions were open for three days. In London and Amsterdam they were handled by Schroder's, in Paris and Frankfurt by Erlanger, and in Liverpool by Fraser, Trenholm. Working in conjunction with Schroder's in London were the bankers Jones, Loyd & Company and the brokers Laurence, Son & Pearce.

The loan proved to be heavily oversubscribed; many of the buyers and would-be buyers had London addresses. "The Confederate Loan has constituted the sole topic of conversation today in the Stock Exchange," commented the *Times* on the first day of trading.[5] Some others, however, were less enthusiastic. The Stock Exchange had declined to give it official recognition, and a member of the London banking house of Rothschild, writing to their agent in New York, commented: "The Confederate Loan was of so speculative a nature that it was very likely to attract all wild speculators ... It was brought out by foreigners, and we do not hear of any respectable people having anything to do with it ... We ourselves have been quite neutral and have had nothing to do with it."[6]

"It may appear somewhat startling that the Confederates should be able to borrow money in Europe, while the Federal Government has been unable to obtain a shilling from that usually liberal and enterprising quarter," observed the *Economist*. "But the terms of the loan are peculiar, and at first look attractive, as proposals involving a gambling element often do; and they merit full consideration." It assured its readers that the Confederate States would have enough cotton to pay all the subscribers, should they so demand, but was unwilling to offer an opinion on the chances of getting the cotton across the Atlantic while the war was still in progress, and thought the likelihood of the South being defeated "so slight that, of itself, it need not deter any man," just as it considered the possibility of it repudiating the debt and evading payment, after the establishment of its independence, most unlikely.[7]

Noting that the legality of the loan had been questioned, the *Economist* reminded its readers that the Corporation of the City of London had lent money to the Greek insurgents at the time of their War of Independence (1821–1827), and concluded: "If the greatest Corporation in England may subscribe in aid of rebellion, unquestionably mere individuals may be so bold as to lend to rebels."[8] Fears that the loan would have an unfavorable effect on the

7 PER CENT COTTON LOAN
OF THE
Confederate States of America.
FOR 3 MILLIONS STERLING OR 75 MILLIONS FRANCS.

27.6.63

Series A

№ 777

£1000

F25000

40,000 lbs. COTTON

THE CONFEDERATE STATES OF AMERICA are indebted to the Holder of this Bond in the Sum of One Thousand Pounds Sterling, with Interest at the rate of Seven per Cent. per Annum, payable on the First Day of March and the First Day of September in each Year, in Paris, London, Amsterdam, or Frankfort °/M against delivery of the corresponding Coupon, until redemption of the Principal.

THIS BOND forms part of an issue of Seventy-five Millions of Francs, equal to Three Million Pounds Sterling, with Coupons attached till first September, 1883, inclusive, and redeemable at par in the course of twenty years by means of half-yearly drawings, the first of which takes place first March, 1864, the last first September, 1883.

At each drawing, one-fortieth part of the amount unredeemed by Cotton as indicated below is to be drawn; and all Bonds then drawn will be repaid at the option of the holder, in Paris, London, Amsterdam, or Frankfort °/M.

The Holder of the Bond, however, will have the option of converting the same at its nominal amount into Cotton, at the rate of sixpence sterling per pound—say 40,000 lbs. of Cotton in exchange for a Bond of £1000—at any time not later than six months after the ratification of a Treaty of Peace between the present belligerents. Notice of the intention of converting Bonds into Cotton to be given to the representatives of the Government in Paris or London, and sixty days after such notice the Cotton will be delivered, if peace, at the ports of Charleston, Savannah, Mobile, or New Orleans; if war, at a point in the interior within 10 miles of a railroad or stream navigable to the ocean. The delivery will be made free of all charges and duties, except the existing export duty of one-eighth of a cent per pound. The quality of the Cotton to be the standard of New Orleans middling. If any Cotton is of superior or inferior quality, the difference in value shall be settled by two Brokers, one to be appointed by the Government, the other by the Bondholder: whenever these two Brokers cannot agree on the value, an Umpire is to be chosen, whose decision shall be final.

The said issue and the above conditions are authorised by an Act of Congress, approved 29th January, 1863, a certified copy of which is deposited with Messrs. Fruhinfields & Newman, in London, the Solicitors to the Contractors, and the faith of the Confederate States is pledged accordingly.

In Witness whereof, the Agent for the Loan of the Confederate States in Paris, duly authorised, has set his hand, and affixed the Seal of the Treasury Department, in Paris, the first day of June, in the year of Our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty-three.

CONTRACTORS.

AGENTS TO THE CONTRACTORS IN LONDON.

AGENT FOR THE LOAN.

(Countersigned.)

COMMISSIONER.

LES ÉTATS CONFÉDÉRÉS D'AMÉRIQUE doivent au Porteur de cette Obligation la somme de Mille Livres Sterling ou Vingt-Cinq Mille Francs, portant intérêt à raison de Sept pour Cent l'an, payable le premier Mars et le premier Septembre de chaque année à Paris, Londres, Amsterdam et Francfort s/M, contre le Coupon respectif jusqu'à remboursement du Capital.

CETTE OBLIGATION fait partie d'une émission de Soixante-et-Quinze Millions de Francs, égale à Trois Millions de Livres Sterling, avec Coupons jusqu'au premier Septembre 1883 inclus, et remboursable au pair dans l'espace de vingt années moyennant des tirages semestriels, dont le premier aura lieu le premier Mars 1864, et le dernier le premier Septembre 1883.

Chaque tirage comprendra la quarantième partie du capital non-remboursé selon le mode indiqué ci-après, et chaque Obligation sortie sera remboursée au choix du Porteur à Paris, Londres, Amsterdam et Francfort s/M.

Le Porteur de l'Obligation aura le droit de réclamer le remboursement du montant nominal en Coton, au prix de sixpence sterling par livre de Coton, soit 40,000 livres par Obligation de £1000 (Frs. 25,000), et ceci, en tout temps, jusqu'aux six mois qui suivront la ratification d'un Traité de Paix entre les belligérants. La déclaration de convertir l'Obligation en Coton devra être faite aux représentants du Gouvernement à Paris ou à Londres, et soixante jours après le Coton sera délivré, en cas de paix, dans les ports de Charleston, Savannah, Mobile ou de la Nouvelle-Orléans, et, en cas de guerre, dans l'intérieur du pays, à une distance de dix milles au plus d'un chemin de fer ou d'une rivière navigable jusqu'à la mer. La livraison sera faite libre de tous frais et impôts, à l'exception du droit d'exportation actuellement en vigueur de ⅛ cent américain par livre. La qualité du Coton devra être le type de "New Orleans middling." Si tout ou partie du Coton est de qualité supérieure ou inférieure, la différence en valeur sera réglée par deux Courtiers, l'un désigné par le Gouvernement et l'autre par le Porteur de l'Obligation. Dans le cas où ces deux Courtiers ne pourraient s'accorder, un Arbitre sera choisi et sa décision sera définitive.

Ladite émission et les conditions ci-dessus indiquées sont autorisées par un Acte du Congrès approuvé le 29 Janvier 1863, dont une copie légalisée est déposée chez Messrs. Fruhinfields & Newman, à Londres, Solicitors des Contractants: en conséquence les États Confédérés sont engagés.

En Foi de quoi, l'Agent pour l'Emprunt des États Confédérés à Paris, dûment autorisé, a signé et apposé le Sceau du Trésor à Paris, le premier Juin l'an mil huit cent soixante-et-trois.

On 1st SEPTEMBER, 1863, a further Sum of £35 will be paid by Messrs. J. Henry Schröder & Co., London; or Frs. 875 by Messrs. Emile Erlanger & Co., Paris; or the equivalents at the Exchange of the day by Mr. Raphael Erlanger, Frankfort o/M, and Messrs. B. H. Schröder & Co., Amsterdam; together with the principal Sum of £1000, or Frs. 25,000, on surrender of this BOND and WARRANT.

J. HENRY SCHRODER & Co

EMILE ERLANGER & Co

A bond-holder's certificate for the Seven Per Cent Cotton Loan. (C. Narbeth, R. Hendy & C. Stocker, *Collecting Paper Money and Bonds*)

money market, with a drain on bullion, were also thought to be unfounded: "It is probable that most of the loan will be spent here in paying outstanding debts, and in purchasing new warlike stores and arms for the Confederate States."[9]

"Last night Mason ... and Erlanger had a great carnival at Morley's Hotel, at the expense of the English dupes who have taken up the Loan," wrote Benjamin Moran caustically in his journal on March 26.[10] His comment was to prove remarkably prophetic, as events were soon to demonstrate.

By early April the price of the bonds had fallen, and to sustain the confidence of investors, as well as the credibility of the loan, it was agreed that Erlanger should buy back some of the bonds, using loan money. As a result of this rescue operation, prices recovered somewhat, but fell dramatically when news of Lee's defeat at Gettysburg and the surrender of Vicksburg reached Europe in the second half of July 1863. "If the battle of Gettysburg had been won by the Confederates," remarked the *Times*, "the loan ... would probably have experienced a rise nearly as great as the fall now witnessed ... Those who now suffer, therefore, are not to be reproached for want of sagacity, however much they may have exhibited a want of caution. The example furnished is simply a confirmation of the fearful uncertainties that must beset all investments that depend upon military successes or reverses ... the sudden retreat of Lee and the simultaneous fall of Vicksburg ... constituting an accumulation of disaster rarely paralleled."[11]

After this, the value of the bonds fluctuated considerably, reaching one of their lowest points in December 1863, when reports of the Confederate defeat at Chattanooga arrived.[12] Prices remained depressed until the spring of 1864, though hopes for Confederate independence were still high among English investors. The market had recovered by the summer, and was strengthened in August by rumors that peace negotiations were a probability, and further reinforced in September by news that General George B. McClellan had been chosen as the Democratic Party's presidential candidate on a peace ticket. At the beginning of that month the *Times* reported that nearly one-sixth of the entire loan had already been redeemed — £340,800 by cotton and £137,800 by the sinking fund.

Though prices fell back in October, they remained fairly steady until the beginning of March 1865, when optimism among bondholders received a serious blow with reports that Charleston had been evacuated. Then, on April 15, came news of the fall of Petersburg and Richmond: "The Confederate Loan during the earlier hours was totally unmarketable," reported the *Times*, though a low price was eventually established, but there were further falls in its value on successive days. The market was further affected when President Lincoln's assassination was reported in the *Times* on April 27. The last payment of interest and redemption of bonds was made on March 1, 1865, but they continued to be quoted on the London market at nominal prices as late as November.

Post-war attempts by subscribers to the Cotton Loan to recover some of their investments were to prove unsuccessful. Of the £3 million worth of bonds originally issued, some £581,000 had been exchanged for cotton certificates or redeemed by the sinking fund before the war ended, leaving approximately £2,419,000 in circulation. Erlanger and Schroder indicated that there was no money to pay any more interest, but the bondholders, encouraged by a decision of the vice-chancellor, Sir W. Page Wood, clung to the hope that sooner or later the U.S. government, or some of the former states of the Confederacy, would redeem the loan.[13] This was in spite of a statement by Secretary of State William H. Seward that there was no likelihood that any of the debt would be assumed or recognized by his government.[14]

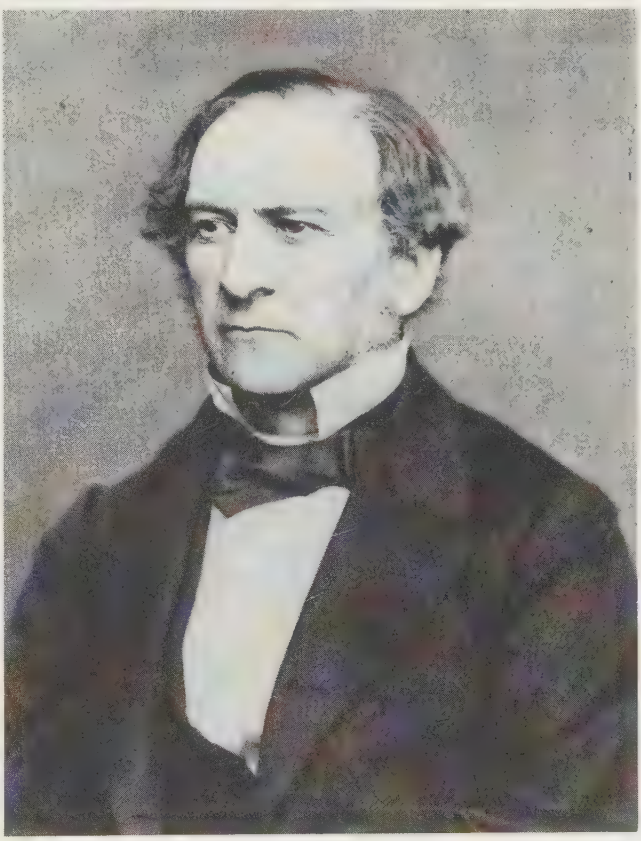
Meanwhile, the situation was further clouded by the publication, in various American and English newspapers, of a list of alleged bondholders. On September 30, 1865, the *Times* announced that a list of some of the English holders of the Confederate Cotton Loan had been published in the New York papers. That same day, copies of the *New York Times* containing the list reached London, and it was not long before it was being reprinted in the English press. The *Morning Star*, not noted for its Southern sympathies, published it on October 3:

The Rebel Loan
List of the English Victims

The New York papers of the 19th September have the following dispatch:

Many of the holders of the Confederate Cotton Loan in England avoided the recent meeting in London, evidently for fear of an exposure of their individual complicity in the ridiculous transaction. As the London journals therefore seem at a loss to know who the happy speculators are, they will be enlightened by the following list of some of the British subjects who have thus invested, with an estimate of the losses sustained by them respectively.

The list which followed contained some well-known names, including Isaac, Campbell & Company (£150,000), the Marquess of Bath (£50,000), John Laird, M.P. (£20,000), Alexander Collie & Partners (£20,000), Lord Wharncliffe (£5,000) and owner of the *Morning Post,* W.J. Rideout (£4,000). The most astonishing name was that of Chancellor of the Exchequer William E. Gladstone (£2,000), who telegraphed the *Morning Star*, stating that his name had been included in error and asking to have it removed. Gladstone said nothing further to the press about it, and though John Morley, his biographer, later considered it to be a malicious misrepresentation, contemporary observers like Dudley Mann and Lord Houghton both thought that he was indeed a subscriber.[15]



Chancellor of the Exchequer William E. Gladstone may also have been a subscriber to the Confederate Cotton Loan. (Author's collection)

The paper included a long, incredulous editorial and followed it with a scathing attack on John T. Delane (£10,000), the editor of the *Times*, and M.B. Sampson (£15,000), its city editor, whose names were also on the list. It singled out "Mr. James Spence, the Liverpool correspondent and prophet ... What a charming arrangement it was! The prophet with £50,000 opposite his name in the

books of the Loan, wrote letters from Liverpool depicting the hopes of the Confederacy in the most glowing colours." Other known Confederate supporters on the list who came in for abuse were Alexander Beresford Hope (£40,000), William S. Lindsay, M.P. (£20,000), William H. Gregory, M.P. (£4,000) and Lord Campbell (£1,000).[16]

Apart from the *Morning Star*, the attitude of the London papers was generally skeptical. The *Times* was suspicious from the start and declined to publish it, calling it "The Lying List," and even journals like the *Spectator*, which had supported the North, dismissed it as a forgery which had been planted on the Federal government, probably by a Confederate wanting to earn a reward and provoke W.H. Seward. The list had been passed to the New York press by the State Department and this had inevitably given it official status. "Yet," commented the *Daily News*, another pro–Northern paper:

> No American journal assumed any responsibility for its accuracy. None of them pretended to have spent any pains in verifying it. The New York journals did not even know what it was — whether it was a list of the original subscribers to the loan or of actual holders. Some of them wrote upon the latter supposition, though how the names of the holders of a stock that was frequently changing hands could be ascertained has never been suggested.[17]

The *Saturday Review* admitted: "Most likely it does include the names of some capitalists who have invested, and of course lost, in the Confederate Loan; but the principal persons concerned ... have denied that they ever held a shilling of the loan."[18] People whose names appeared on the list were indeed writing to the newspapers, denying all connection with it. Between October 4, 1865 and January 17, 1866, twenty-one individuals wrote to the *Times* to protest; the only one to admit having invested in the loan was William Lindsay, who commented (October 7, 1865) that "the small [£20,000!] investment I held in the Confederate Loan was made long after the loan was issued, and years after my opinion in regard to the War in America had been expressed in and out of Parliament." This gave the *Morning Star* ammunition for another attack:

Wealthy shipowner, Member of Parliament and Confederate supporter William S. Lindsay was one of the investors in the Cotton Loan. (*Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper*)

> Why, some of the men who are now as indignant when accused of having subscribed to the Confederate Loan as if they had been accused of ... burglary or murder — some of these very men used to rave and rhapsodise about the glory of the Confederate cause and invincibility of the Confederate arms only one little year ago ... It would have been accepted as a graceful compliment a twelvemonth back if a man ... were alluded to as a subscriber to the Southern loan — and now hint that such a man did such a thing and he foams over in the indignation of his denial.[19]

On December 9 the New York papers printed a second list of English subscribers to the loan, "some doubt having been expressed as to the authenticity of the list previously published," showing the number of bonds held, and whether their owners had received any interest on their investments. This was a very long list of approximately three hundred names, of whom some two-thirds turned out to have London addresses, and included titled persons, Members of Parliament, naval and military men, clergymen and a number of firms; about forty were known Confederate sympathizers. It was followed by "Personal Sketches of Some of the Rebel Bondholders," containing various biographical details.[20] Though the publication of this second "Lying List" was reported in the *Times*, it attracted less attention than its predecessor and seemingly went unnoticed by papers like the *Morning Star*.[21]

By this time some information about the origins of the list had started to come to light, via the *Times'* New York correspondent. According to William H. Seward, it had been obtained from Confederate agents in Paris: "The Confederates are poor now, and are willing to sell all their secrets. Besides ... we are entitled to their papers." Shown the list, "foolscap sheets, fastened together by a piece of blue riband in the corner," the correspondent recognized the handwriting of John Bigelow, the U.S. minister in Paris. "Of this ... there is not the slightest doubt ... I think it right to add that, in my belief, Mr Seward was as much deceived as anyone by the imposture, and that Mr Bigelow is the person chiefly responsible for putting it in circulation."[22]

John Bigelow had been U.S. consul general in Paris during the war, involved in planning Federal surveillance and counterespionage activities, and U.S. minister in 1865–1866. In 1905 he published a book called *Lest We Forget. Gladstone, Morley and the Confederate Loan of 1863*, which still maintained that the "Lying List" was genuine, but presented a somewhat different version of the story. Some months after the war, Bigelow maintained, he was approached by a man called Dugald Forbes Campbell, who was a holder of Confederate bonds. Campbell, who was acting as attorney for the firm of Isaac, Campbell in the *Springbok* affair, offered to supply Bigelow with lists of the principal subscribers to the Confederate Loan, as well as the members of the Southern Independence Association of London. His offer was taken up, but the responsibility for giving the list of subscribers to the loan to the public, Bigelow wrote, was destined not to devolve upon him. Before he could forward the list to Washington, another copy of it had been obtained and published by the New York papers, and subsequently reached London.[23]

The commencement in 1866 of negotiations by the U.S. government for compensation for the damage done to her merchant shipping by the *Alabama* resulted in a counterclaim by Confederate bondholders, which the *Morning Star* described as "certainly the most wonderful step ever yet adopted by those unfortunate gentlemen."[24] The fact that the cotton stockpiled in connection with the loan had been forcibly seized by the Federal government seemed to reinforce their case, which was supported by the opinion of no less a person than Sir Robert Collier, the former solicitor-general, though there seem to have been no further developments.

The unfortunate bondholders were to be sadly disappointed, though their efforts to

obtain compensation were to continue, on and off, for many years. As Judah Benjamin observed in a letter to a correspondent in New York as late as 1881: "If anything can ever be recovered by the bondholders, it can only be done through government action in the United States, and you can judge better than I if there is the remotest hope of any such action."[25]

Various attempts have been made to calculate how much money the Confederate government actually received from the Cotton Loan. One estimate, based on surviving records, is £1,759,894 or $8,535,486.[26] Whatever the final amount, the real losers were not the Confederate States but the speculators who invested in the loan and found that, on the defeat of the South, their bonds were just worthless bits of paper. The extent of Emile Erlanger's profits seems uncertain, though it is generally agreed that they were considerable. According to a report in the *Richmond Sentinel* in 1864, they amounted to 13.5 million francs (about £540,000).[27] J. Henry Schroder made a more modest, but still handsome, profit of £37,637.

Was the Confederate Cotton Loan a success? Writing to Secretary of the Treasury Christopher Memminger, less than three months after it was launched, Fraser, Trenholm were already of the opinion that it was "more successful as a political demonstration than as a source of revenue"; some forty years later John C. Schwab (1901) also thought that, while the loan itself was perhaps unsuccessful as a source of revenue, it had political significance, "a moral recognition of the Confederacy by the commercial world"; while more recently Judith F. Gentry (1970) has stated that "the Erlanger loan must be considered a success."[28]

8

Business with the Southern States

There is a numerous class of enterprising mercantile men and speculators here who are always on the watch for trading and money making. They are energetic, have great wealth at their command and are not at all particular as to the kind of trade they engage in [provided] that it bring a handsome return. They appear to think it is an Englishman's right to trade where and with whom they please, whatever may be the state of the countries with which they desire to trade.

—Freeman Morse, April 24, 1863

British businessmen were not slow to see the opportunities which the American Civil War presented. The Proclamation of Neutrality issued in May 1861, after the establishment of the Federal blockade of Southern ports, recognized both the United States and the Confederate States as belligerents. Though there was a warning against assisting either side, British firms soon found they could deal with them with impunity. It was the Confederacy which had most need of British manufactured goods and there was no shortage of people willing to supply them. Not all were entirely honest and substandard goods at inflated prices were not unknown.

At the beginning of the war, the Confederacy's prime need was for armaments. The South's manufacturing capability was limited: it was able to produce a certain amount of gunpowder, but a great deal of it had to be imported and, though some small arms were made there, most came from abroad. London was an important center of gun making, and housed such firms as John E. Barnett & Sons, the London Armory Company, Benjamin Beasley, Robert Adams, Thomas Bissell and Charles W. Lancaster, all of whom supplied weapons to the Confederates.

One of the most important of these was the London Armory Company in Bermondsey, on the south bank of the Thames. Founded in 1856 to supplement the output of the Royal Small Arms Factory at Enfield, Middlesex, the London Armory Company had imported "costly and elaborate machinery ... direct from America." They were, proclaimed their advertisements, "wholesale manufacturers of firearms and contractors to Her Majesty's War Department," and, in particular, "sole manufacturers of Adams' Patent Revolvers, which have obtained a world-wide celebrity," and which, two years later, they were producing at the rate of three hundred a week. Robert Adams, who had been a partner in the firm of Deane, Adams &

Deane, had first patented his five-chamber, self-cocking, percussion revolver in 1851, and when that firm was dissolved in 1856, Adams sold his patents to the London Armory Company and became their first manager. They also manufactured Enfield rifles, as well as Kerr rifles and revolvers, designed by James Kerr, who was foreman of the gun factory.[1] Through their contacts with Captain Huse, the London Armory Company was to become the leading supplier of small arms to the Confederacy.

Robert Adams left the London Armory Company in 1858, and taking over Deane, Adams & Deane's former premises in King William Street, he set up on his own as a gun, rifle and pistol manufacturer. One of "Adams' Revolving Pistols, made and sold by the patentee only," was presented to General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson and another to General Robert E. Lee; a letter of thanks from Lee, dated October 30, 1863, was brought to London by Colonel Josiah Gorgas, head of the Ordnance Bureau, in January 1864.[2] When the London Armory Company moved to Victoria Park Mills in Hackney in 1863, Robert Adams took over their Bermondsey factory, but went bankrupt two years later.

Another London manufacturer was Charles W. Lancaster, who had a shop and factory in Mayfair. Between 1850 and 1869 he registered a number of firearms patents, including ones for an oval-bored barrel, and was also patentee of the British Lancaster short rifle. In the 1860s he claimed to be the "inventor and maker of the first central fire breech-loading gun."[3]

A number of firms whose factories were in the North of England also had offices in London. They included the rival firms of Whitworth & Company of Manchester and Armstrong & Company of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, as well as Greenwood & Batley of Leeds. Joseph Whitworth, engineer and machine tool manufacturer, had spent some years working in London before setting up on his own in Manchester in 1833 as a toolmaker. In the 1850s, he began to conduct experiments for the War Office and produced successful designs for both rifles and cannon, which he started making in 1858. By the time of the Civil War, the firm was famous for its long-range rifles equipped with telescopic sights, and in July 1861 two of these were bought by Major Anderson as samples and sent to Colonel Gorgas in Richmond for his consideration. As a result, in the autumn of 1861, Major Anderson and Captain Huse were instructed to place an order for a consignment of them. Whitworths was equally renowned for its field guns, which included both breechloaders and muzzle-loaders.

In 1847 William George Armstrong had founded a company at Newcastle to produce hydraulic machinery, but in 1855, at the time of the Crimean War, he developed a superior field gun. Armstrong's breechloading gun was accepted by the War Office in 1858, and the following year its designer was appointed superintendent of the Royal Gun Factory at Woolwich Arsenal, as well as being knighted. A separate ordnance company, set up to manufacture both breechloaders and muzzle-loaders for the British government, as well as for export, was merged with the original engineering firm in 1863. Armstrong guns were not cheap, ranging in price from £120 for a six-pounder to £650 for a 100-pounder. A number of them were imported by the Confederates.

Greenwood & Batley, "constructors of special tools for making rifles, rifled artillery and ammunition," had been established in 1856 by Thomas Greenwood and John Batley, two former partners of Peter Fairbairn, a Leeds manufacturer of heavy machine tools. Among their earliest customers were the Royal Small Arms factory at Enfield, Middlesex, and the Birmingham Small Arms Company, and they soon acquired an excellent reputation, going on to supply many arsenals in Europe and beyond. In June 1863 they were visited by James Henry Burton, superintendent of armories in the Confederacy. Before the war, Burton had spent

some years at the Harpers Ferry Armory, then worked at Enfield as the chief engineer. He had been instrumental in the building of the Macon Armory, Georgia, in 1862, and was now authorized by Colonel Gorgas to return to England to buy much-needed machinery for it. On his arrival there, he conferred with James Mason and Major Huse, who was in Paris, before visiting Greenwood & Batley, with whom he placed an order for machinery for the manufacture of a rifle-musket.[4] There were problems with the funding of this order, but Fraser, Trenholm came to the rescue, and Burton was able to return to the Confederacy at the beginning of September.

The *Trent* incident resulted in a ban on the export of armaments, and within days the *Times* was bemoaning the "injurious effect" on ordnance manufacturers. Captain Alexander T. Blakely, formerly of the Royal Artillery, and manufacturer at his Southwark works of the highly regarded, muzzle-loading Blakely gun, "for which he had orders from different foreign governments," was particularly singled out, "in view of the many guns of large calibre ... nearly ready for delivery ... besides numerous smaller guns ... just the thing for a merchant ship to be armed with."[5] Before 1864, when Captain Blakely was able to expand his operation, his guns were also made under license by other manufacturers as well as by the original patentee. Captain Huse is known to have bought at least nine of them.

The ban on exports, in fact, proved to be short-lived and, with the resolution of the crisis surrounding the *Trent* incident, it was lifted within seven weeks. "The revocation of the order prohibiting the exportation of arms and munitions of war ... will probably renew the activity of the Confederate emissaries in forwarding supplies to the insurgents," wrote U.S. minister Charles Francis Adams towards the end of January 1862.[6] As if to confirm this, Secretary of State William H. Seward, writing to him in June of that year, referred to a captured report by Caleb Huse which listed "purchases of arms, munitions of war, and military supplies which have been shipped by him in England," and "the real abuses of neutrality which have been committed in Great Britain in the very face of Her Majesty's government."[7] "The Blakely Cannon Co. pretend they have some cannon for Peru and Hayti, and ... want a licence for their exemption from seizure by our cruisers," noted Benjamin Moran in his journal in November 1862. "This is a trick ... these guns are for the rebels. They have furnished them more ordnance than any other concern in England...."[8] Two giant, muzzle-loading Blakely guns, each weighing twenty-seven tons and costing more than £11,000, were imported by the state of South Carolina in 1863 for the defense of Charleston, but were not very successful, one of them bursting when fired for the first time.

Fort Fisher, at the mouth of the Cape Fear River in North Carolina, was defended by Blakely guns, as well as a 150-pounder Armstrong and a battery of six Whitworths presented by British merchants. They were not the only things found when the fort was finally captured by Federal forces in January 1865. There were also some Abel fuses, named after their inventor, Professor Frederick Abel, who was director of ordnance at Woolwich Arsenal in London and the chief official authority on explosives. Abel fuses were used for exploding charges of gunpowder and their discovery caused a furor: they had, alleged U.S. consul Freeman Morse, been "bought through English agents directly from the government arsenal at Woolwich" for rebel agents.[9] Their appearance at Fort Fisher seemed to be a particularly blatant breach of neutrality, and the matter was deemed so important it was referred to General Ulysses S. Grant himself, and by him to the secretary of state, who wrote the U.S. minister in London, asking him to take it up with the British foreign secretary.

In his report Professor Abel firmly denied that any of the fuses had come from Woolwich

Arsenal. He went on to explain that William Ladd, a man who was to play an important part in the practical application of electricity in the 1860s, had been authorized to manufacture and sell the fuses, but that none had knowingly been sold to the Confederates. However, he admitted, "I need hardly point out that it would be impossible for Mr Ladd to guard against supplying Confederate agents at second or third hand with my fuses, as is proved by the discovery in Fort Fisher of some of these, which, from their nature, must have been manufactured about two years and a half ago."[10]

Later it transpired that behind the whole affair was a man called Taliaffero P. Shaffner, an American inventor known to both Freeman Morse and Benjamin Moran. The latter, who referred to him disparagingly as a "scamp" and a "trickster," noted in his diary in May 1865 that Shaffner had accused Professor Abel of selling his fuses to the rebels as an act of revenge, after he had failed to obtain the formula for the fuses to sell to the Federal government.[11]

The firm of Thomas & Charles Hood of Blackfriars, "contractors for iron ordnance and munitions of war," sold cannon to the Confederate Navy. In July and August 1863 they were corresponding with Commander North about gunsights, shells and fuses, and in June 1864 he sent them an order which included: "10 x 68-pounder guns; 1,680 x 8" naval shells; 400 shell boxes; 50 spare fuses; 18 rammers and staffs; 14 patent sponges and staffs; 12 gunners' shoulder belts and haversacks; 30 ships' hatchets; 84 rounds 8" grapeshot; 84 shrapnel shells, 8"; and 10 sliding carriages for 68-pounders."[12]

In May 1864 the prize medal-winning firm of Negretti & Zambra supplied equipment to the Signal Bureau, which had been established in 1862 as part of the Confederate War Department. Insulated wire, made by the firm of Stephen W. Silver & Company and originally intended for the electric telegraph, could be adapted for use with torpedoes (electrically discharged floating mines). Commander Maury had a particular interest in this, and a report was sent to Washington in November 1864 by Consul Morse:

> Silver, at his works at Silvertown, has already manufactured and delivered to Fraser, Trenholm & Co from 300 to 400 miles of wire insulated by india rubber, and has an order from them for more. A manufacturer has also made and delivered to them 12 electric batteries and a great many fuses to go with the same. The batteries were delivered between three and four weeks ago, and he has *six* more that will be ready for delivery in about two weeks. Maury has contracted directly with the same man for 20,000 fuses.[13]

In August 1862, in a paragraph headed "English Cannon in the South," the *London American* quoted a report in the *Richmond Enquirer* that twenty-two pieces of Russian artillery, captured in the Crimean War, had been presented to the Confederate government by a group of British merchants and taken over in the CSS *Nashville*. Their arrival at Macon, Georgia, was reported in the paper, which went on to say that thirty-eight more pieces were expected at the same place.[14]

This remarkably generous act was perhaps intended to foster business relations between Britain and the Confederacy. As a further move in that direction, the London Confederate States Commercial League was formed in September 1863. Meetings were to be held every Wednesday in St. Mildred's Court, Poultry; perhaps significantly, the honorary secretary, James Yeomans, was a member of a firm of wholesale small arms and sword manufacturers.[15] There were long advertisements for it in the *Index* between October and December 1863, but no further mention after that, suggesting it failed from lack of support.

There was also the proposal, about the same time, to establish the Confederate States Exchange Rooms:

> The want of some rallying point at which the friends of the Confederate cause and those interested in business with the Southern States might meet, exchange views, and discuss matters of common concern, has been long and severely felt in this metropolis. It is proposed to supply this want by opening in some central and convenient locality a set of rooms, to be called "The Confederate States Exchange Rooms" ... Arrangements will be made to ensure a regular supply of late Southern papers ... The principal American journals will be kept on hand...[16]

John Hopkins at the *Index* office in Bouverie Street was to be the temporary secretary, but again nothing more was heard of the project after the initial announcement in October 1863.

Confederate army and naval officers who visited London could order uniforms from firms like Goody & Jones, who advertised in the *Index*:

> GOODY & JONES, MILITARY AND NAVAL OUTFITTERS
> AND ACCOUTREMENT MANUFACTURERS, 40 PALL MALL
>
> Begs to inform officers of both Services, and Gentlemen, that theirs is the only Establishment at which the Confederate Grey Cloth can be obtained, having already made a great number of outfits according to the Regulations issued by the War Department of the Confederate States.[17]

Although some buttons were made in the South, particularly in Richmond, large numbers were imported from England. One of the leading London makers was Firmin & Sons, "wholesale army and navy button manufacturers," whose origins went back to 1677. Assistant Paymaster Forrest recorded a visit to their offices and showroom in the Strand in April 1864.[18] Infantry and cavalry buttons were also supplied by Isaac, Campbell & Company.

In February 1864 Turner Bros, Hyde & Company, a London firm which had taken over Isaac, Campbell's old factory at Northampton, were advertising their boots and shoes in "American shapes and styles" in the *Index*, while as late as January 1865 William Wilson & Sons, "export boot merchants," were announcing "boots manufactured as worn in the Confederate States of America."[19]

In the early months of the war Confederate postage stamps were being printed by the Richmond firm of Hoyer & Ludwig, but the results, though acceptable, were not outstanding. Consequently, in October 1861, Postmaster General John H. Reagan asked Major Benjamin F. Ficklin, in London on Treasury Department business, to find a source of stamps, stamp-making equipment and materials. He approached Thomas De La Rue & Company, of Bunhill Row, Finsbury, printers of playing cards, visiting cards, railway tickets and, more recently, banknotes and stamps for the British and foreign governments. The firm had been established in 1837 and though it had suffered financial setbacks in its early days, was now highly successful. Its founder had retired in 1859, and it was now being run by his two sons, Warren and William Frederick De La Rue.

An order was placed with them for a one-cent orange stamp, showing the Southern statesman, John C. Calhoun, and a five-cent blue, bearing a portrait of President Jefferson Davis; both stamps were designed by the French-born artist, Jean Ferdinand Joubert de la Ferté, and were supplied unperforated and ungummed.[20]

In February 1862 the first consignment from De La Rue, consisting of 5 million five-cent blue stamps, together with a supply of glazed postage paper and printing ink and a

The former premises in Pall Mall of Goody & Jones, military and naval outfitters, allegedly "the only Establishment at which the Confederate Grey Cloth [could] be obtained." (Author's photograph)

perforating machine, was dispatched in the blockade-runner *Bermuda*, whose cargo also included tea, coffee, drugs, surgical instruments, saddlery, cutlery engraved "Jeff Davis, Our First President, the Right Man in the Right Place," artillery pieces, shells, small arms and saltpeter. Additional postal stationery was sent in the CSS *Nashville*, which left Southampton the same month. The *Bermuda*, which had successfully transported Major Huse's first arms shipment the previous year, was to be unlucky this time: it was captured by the USS *Mercedita* off the Bahamas in April 1862, while en route for Nassau, and those stamps not thrown overboard were pulped by the Federals.

In spite of this initial setback, large quantities of stamps, as well as printing plates, presses, ink and paper were subsequently supplied by De La Rue and brought through the blockade. Not everything went smoothly: in June 1863 the firm recorded that a printing press obtained in March 1862 and probably sent out in the blockade-runner *Giraffe* in November, had been "accepted and subsequently declined" by the Confederate Post Office Department, "so that this item of value in 1862 becomes a loss in 1863." Major Ficklin, it was noted, was "to sell it for our account."[21]

In March 1863 Major Ficklin was joined in London by another Confederate agent, Major J.A. Weston, and both men seem to have enjoyed a close, and at times unusual, business relationship with De La Rue. For Ficklin, for instance, the firm obtained twelve copies of James Spence's *American Union* in February 1862, and the following month purchased, through their Paris agents, 180 pairs of ladies' kid gloves (presumably a private business speculation), and their account books show that they also lent him money on occasion, in various amounts from £5 upwards. For Weston, they supplied whiskey and copies of the *Index*. They also purchased a canteen of cutlery for General Pierre G.T. Beauregard, though whether as a present or on request is not clear.

There was also a need for skilled engravers, lithographers and printers for the Confederate treasury note printing works at Charleston. These were recruited by Major Ficklin from Samuel Straker & Sons of Bishopsgate, a firm of printers, lithographers and stationers which had been established about 1820. The terms offered were generous: $20 a week in gold and between £40 and £60 to cover the expenses of the journey.[22]

Major Ficklin's dealings with Samuel Straker seem to have been rather less happy than those with De La Rue. Mr. Straker complained bitterly to the Confederate government about the major, who "served me very shabbily and ungentlemanlike. I had many interviews with him and gave him all necessary information; furnished him with a list of requirements, compromising myself with several workmen and put myself to many inconveniences. He admitted my price being proper and correct and led me to believe that he would give me his order, but having got out of me all he could, he then entrusted the order with another house" (De La Rue).[23] Straker's letter was being carried in the *Bermuda* when she was captured, and so never reached the eyes of the Confederate government.

By the beginning of 1863, even the most common, everyday necessities were in short supply in the Confederacy. They included ink, candles, matches, pins and needles, cutlery and soap, as well as basic foodstuffs such as tea, coffee, bacon, canned meat, biscuits and salt, which were all brought in through the blockade, while medicines and medical equipment were in constant demand.

Bibles, which before the war had been printed mostly in the North, were among the more unexpected imports. In August 1862 the Rev. Moses D. Hoge, who had been a volunteer chaplain to Confederate soldiers in Richmond, ran the blockade from Charleston with a letter from

the Bible Society of the Confederate States, requesting help from the British and Foreign Bible Society in London. As a result, 10,000 Bibles, 50,000 New Testaments and a large quantity of miscellaneous religious books were eventually supplied, the first consignment on interest-free credit. They were forwarded via Fraser, Trenholm in Liverpool for transshipment to the Confederate States and distribution among Southern soldiers. This was particularly important in the light of the religious revivals which swept the armies of the Confederacy in 1863 and 1864.[24]

The Great Seal of the Confederacy was authorized by Congress in April 1863 and the following month Secretary of State Judah Benjamin instructed Commissioner James Mason to have it made in London. Accordingly, he asked Dublin-born John H. Foley, a leading sculptor, and Joseph S. Wyon, "Chief Engraver of Her Majesty's Seals," to design and produce it. Made of silver with an ivory handle, it shows the equestrian statue of George Washington, which stands in Richmond, encircled by a wreath of the main agricultural products of the Confederacy; the Latin motto, *Deo Vindice*, means "God our Defender," and the date, 22 February 1862, is that of Jefferson Davis's inauguration, as well as being Washington's birthday.

The Great Seal, together with the iron press for making impressions, and a supply of wax and other necessary materials, was carried from London to Richmond by Lieutenant Robert T. Chapman, C.S.N., in August 1864. He traveled in a blockade-runner via Halifax, Nova Scotia, and Bermuda, where the iron press had to be left because of its weight, and where it apparently still remains. After Richmond was evacuated in April 1865, the Great Seal passed through several hands, until in 1912 it was presented to the Museum of the Confederacy, where it now resides.

In April 1863 James Mason sent the secretary of state "a box containing the model of a railroad with its appropriate car," together with "all the explanatory papers connected with it, which I hope will make its structure and use sufficiently intelligible." The inventor of this new type of railroad, which used guide wheels and wooden rails, was William Prosser, who had not only registered several patents in connection with it, but in 1845 had built a full-scale trial version on Wimbledon Common, at a cost of "some six or seven thousand pounds." On the two occasions he had attempted to construct an actual working line, in England and Ireland, however, he had been bought off by rival interests. Mason met Mr. Prosser, "a very intelligent man ... thoroughly versed in mechanics," and clearly felt his invention was worth a trial. Although the railroads in the South were in a sorry state, partly because of the desperate shortage of iron, nothing further was heard of "Prosser's patent railway guide wheels" and their wooden rails.[25]

Fraser, Trenholm & Company, a branch of a wealthy Charleston importing and exporting firm, had been established in Liverpool since at least 1853. During the Civil War they acted as the Confederacy's overseas bankers or depositories, but remained Liverpool-based, apparently never finding it necessary to have a London office. Another financial institution with Confederate links was John K. Gilliat & Company of Crosby Square, an old London firm with pre-war connections in the Southern states. James Mason referred to them as "my bankers," and at one stage they advanced the Confederate government £150,000, with cotton bonds as collateral.

Several firms in London traded in Confederate and state bonds. They included M. Kramer ("Dealer in Confederate securities"); Thomas Bensusan ("The 6, 7, and 8 per cent bonds purchased or sold"); Joseph Buckley ("Goods purchased payable in Confederate bonds"); and J.

H. Ashbridge & Company, a Liverpool firm with a London office, which dealt in bonds issued by South Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee and Georgia.[26] Joseph Buckley's advertisement, in November 1864, suggests that few in England at that time realized how close to collapse the Confederacy really was.

Forged Confederate bonds also made their appearance. In June 1864 the *Times* reported that a large quantity of $100 bonds had been sent from New York to London and put into circulation, and that samples shown to an engraver of genuine ones were pronounced to be counterfeit.[27]

As well as dabbling in blockade-running themselves, the banking house of Overend, Gurney & Company, in Lombard Street, lent money to shipbuilder James Ash to enable him to build more blockade-runners, and sold several vessels on credit to shipowner Zachariah Pearson, who also became heavily involved in blockade-running, though in his case with disastrous consequences.[28]

There were at least two proposals for a Confederate bank in Europe. In 1863 it was reported that "Mr Soutter of Virginia ... who is engaged in blockade-running ... intends (it is said) to establish a Confederate Bank with branches in [the] States of [the] Confederacy." In June of the following year a similar scheme, with a capital of £10 million was proposed by a group of English and French bankers and sent to Christopher Memminger, the secretary of the treasury. Memminger's successor, George A. Trenholm, was sent further details in December 1864.[29] Plans to raise a further foreign loan of £15 million, based on this proposal, were overtaken by events in the early part of 1865.

As a result of the Confederate Cotton Loan, several companies were formed to bring out cotton through the blockade. These included the Albion Trading Company, the European Trading Company, the Mercantile Trading Company and the Universal Trading Company. The Albion Trading Company owned the *Ivanhoe*, the *Lady Sterling*, the *Marmion* and the *Talisman*, the first two of which were operated for them by Thomas Stirling Begbie. The European Trading Company was established in October 1863 by J. Henry Schroder, Emile Erlanger and H. O. Brewer, a Mobile businessman who had helped Henry Hotze establish the *Index*; their steamers included the *Denbigh*, which made a large number of runs between Mobile and Havana. The Mercantile Trading Company, formed by Edgar Stringer and Edward Pembroke, of the firm of William S. Lindsay & Company, owned the *Atalanta*, the *Charlotte* and the *Juno*. Of these, the *Atalanta* was the most successful; the careers of the other two were brief. The Universal Trading Company owned the *Helen* and the *North Heath*, which were also operated by Thomas Begbie.

In addition, there was the Atlantic Trading Company, "formed for the purchase of first-class paddle-wheel steamers, of light draught, great speed, and an average capacity of 800 bales of cotton, which forms the basis of the *business to be transacted*" (blockade-running), with a capital of £200,000 in £100 shares, with power of increasing to £500,000. The promoters were Isaac, Campbell, and T. & J. Johnston and George Wigg, both of Liverpool. Wigg, formerly of Nassau, was an experienced blockade-running agent who had been a cotton merchant in New Orleans before the war, and had worked with both the Albion Trading Company and the European Trading Company. Arrangements were put in hand with Colin McRae "to carry in merchandise, and to bring out on the return journey full cargoes of cotton." The company planned to have five steamers in operation, starting in April 1864, and a copy of its prospectus, which came into the hands of U.S. minister Charles Francis Adams, indicated the remarkable profits that might be expected — perhaps as much as £750,000 for five trips.[30]

The offices in Lombard Street of Overend, Gurney & Company, who lent money to London shipbuilders for the construction of blockade-runners and were themselves involved in the traffic. (*Illustrated Times*)

Though many of the blockade-runners were built in Scotland and the North of England, some were constructed in London, where shipbuilding was still an important industry. Writing in 1862, Charles Capper, who was manager of the Victoria Docks, commented:

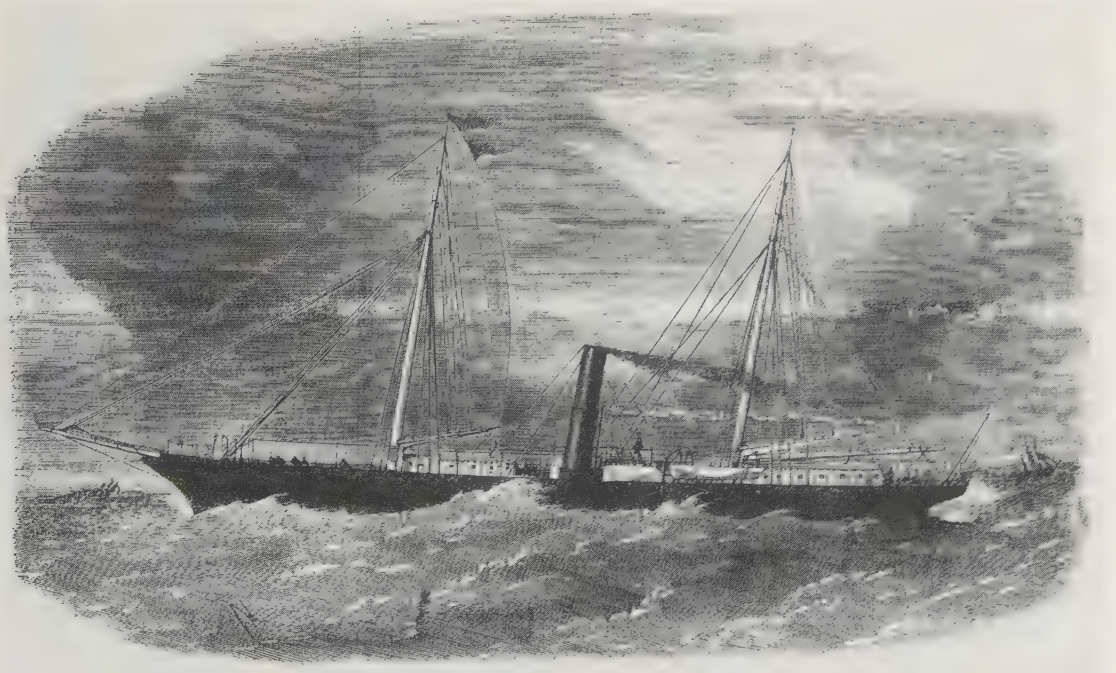
> There are a considerable number of building yards upon the Thames, at which first-class vessels are built; and the trade of shipbuilding has been increasing of late years in consequence of iron

> vessels having come more and more into use, and the skilled labour always to be obtained in London making the Thames very available for the construction of these vessels. At the present time there are more iron than wooden vessels constructed on the river...[31]

John & William Dudgeon, engineers and boilermakers, had begun making marine machinery at the Sun Ironworks at Millwall, but between 1859 and 1862 they also established a shipyard at Cubitt Town, where they eventually employed a workforce of some 1,500 men. Here, according to their own account, written just after the war, they constructed twelve twin-screw steamers as blockade-runners between 1862 and 1865. Some of their steamers made a dozen runs, though the average was five.[32] One of them, the *Flora*, built in 1862, caused a sensation at her trials, being described by the *Illustrated London News* as "the fastest screw steam-ship afloat," being capable of fourteen knots. She was highly successful and made the Dudgeons' reputation; her twin screws made her highly maneuverable and she was soon snapped up by Alexander Collie for blockade-running.

Another vessel, the *Edith*, launched in March 1864, was built for Alexander Collie. Sold to the Confederate Navy in September 1864, she was commissioned as the CSS *Chickamauga*, commanded by Lieutenant John Wilkinson. As a commerce raider, she accounted for seven U.S. merchantmen, but was burnt by her crew in the Cape Fear River in February 1865, after the fall of Wilmington.

The *Atalanta*, designed by Captain T.E. Symonds, R.N., for the London, Chatham & Dover Railway and launched at the same time, was purchased by Edgar Stringer and Edward Pembroke as a blockade-runner for their Mercantile Trading Company. In July 1864 she was sold to the Confederate Navy for conversion into a commerce raider and commissioned as



The *Flora*, built in London by John & William Dudgeon, was snapped up by Alexander Collie for use as a blockade-runner. (*Illustrated London News*)

the CSS *Tallahassee*. The *Illustrated London News* described the ship as "a most efficient instrument of maritime warfare" and in August 1864, in the space of ten days, it captured or destroyed no fewer than thirty-three U.S. merchant ships. Renamed the CSS *Olustee*, she destroyed another six ships in November, before being converted back into a blockade-runner called the *Chameleon*. She was seized on her return to Liverpool in April 1865 and subsequently turned over to the U.S. government.

In 1862, James Ash, who had been a naval architect for the important shipbuilding firms of C.J. Mare and the Thames Ironworks, also established an extensive yard at Cubitt Town. It had the most impressive set of offices and works of any of the Thames shipyards, and here he built vessels for the P. & O. Company, as well as a sumptuous yacht for its chairman. A blockade-runner he built for Edgar Stringer was called the *Nutfield*, and, when she was launched in September 1863, it was alleged that "this splendid iron screw steam-vessel" was intended for use as a passenger steamer in Australia, though it is unlikely that many actually believed this.[33] In the event, her career was brief, and she was destroyed on her first attempt to run the blockade in February 1864.

The *Lady Sterling* was built by John Scott Russell at Blackwall in 1864; she was captured on her second attempt to run the blockade in October of that year.[34] The firm also had a shipyard at Northfleet, some twenty-five miles downriver, where vessels could be repaired away from prying eyes. The *Index*, built at Deptford for Alexander Collie in 1863, possibly by Charles Lungley, proved to be too slow, and was retired from blockade-running after only six trips.[35] On the other hand, the *Syren*, built at Greenwich in the same year, ran the blockade no fewer than thirty-three times before being captured early in 1865, a record apparently unmatched by any other vessel.

The purpose for which these vessels were being built was an open secret, and there was no lack of people eager to supply information to the Federals in return for a reward. Benjamin Moran recorded one such instance in January 1863, when "a half-frantic Irishman

The CSS *Tallahassee*, which started life as the London-built blockade-runner *Atalanta*. (*Illustrated London News*)

in shabby clothes came in in a hurried manner and for a consideration wanted to supply the particulars of a blockade breaker fitting out in the West India Docks."[36]

To bring out government cotton under the terms of the New Plan, Colin McRae needed to acquire a number of steamers, and in April 1864 he began negotiations with the Mercantile Trading Company. These proved fruitless, and in July Fraser, Trenholm agreed to provide eight vessels, to be built on Merseyside. In addition, the banking firm of John K. Gilliat undertook to have six more steamers built for the Confederate government, also on Merseyside. They were to be delivered by December 1864, though in the event the war had ended before they were finished.

Until the Fraser, Trenholm and John K. Gilliat vessels were ready, McRae arranged for Alexander Collie to supply four steamers. The ones chosen, the *Condor*, *Falcon*, *Flamingo* and *Ptarmigan*, were large and powerful sidewheelers, recently built on the River Clyde and thought to be the best blockade-runners afloat.

Alexander Collie & Company were one of the largest owners of blockade-runners. Originally based in Manchester, the firm soon found Liverpool to be a more convenient location once blockade-running started; they also had a London office in Austin Friars and later in Leadenhall Street. At one time or another they owned, or had an interest in, more than twenty vessels, some of which were operated for them by other firms. Huge profits could be made out of blockade-running, and in 1864 Alexander Collie himself bought a house in Kensington Palace Gardens, then as now a private road lined with opulent mansions, and once known as "Millionaires' Row." Collie paid £25,000 for it, which was a bargain as it had originally cost between £45,000 and £50,000 when it was built twenty years before. In addition, its new owner spent several thousand pounds on alterations which were carried out by the celebrated architect Matthew Digby Wyatt, including a new breakfast room and a billiard room decorated in the "Moorish" taste.[37]

Like Alexander Collie, Isaac, Campbell & Company were also major operators of blockade-runners. In the summer of 1862 one of their representatives arrived at Nassau with the stated intention of taking over the blockade-running business there, boasting that they had been responsible for all the Confederates' successes to date. One of Isaac, Campbell's steamers was the *Melita*. She sailed for Nassau in May 1862, with a cargo which included rifles, gunpowder, knapsacks, cavalry swords, shoes, bayonet scabbards and saddles, destined for transshipment to the Confederacy; also on board were Commander Raphael Semmes and Lieutenant John Kell, formerly of the CSS *Sumter*.

The firm also owned the cargo in the *Springbok*, a small sailing ship belonging to a man called Thomas May, which was under charter to Thomas Begbie. This included army blankets and clothing, army and navy footwear, buttons, samples of cavalry swords and rifle bayonets, and saltpeter. The ship left London for Nassau in December 1862, but the following February was captured some 150 to 200 miles east of there. Whether her cargo was intended for sale at Nassau or for transshipment to a Confederate port was a matter of opinion. The ship was impounded for the duration, but after the war the seizure of the vessel, but not the cargo, was ruled illegal, and she was returned to her owner.[38]

In addition to this misfortune, Thomas Begbie lost five of his own vessels when they were captured in 1862 and 1863. However, his steamer, the *Harriet Pinckney*, named after the wife of Caleb Huse, did make a successful run from London to Bermuda in 1862 with a cargo which included rifles, cannon and torpedoes; it was sold the following year to Samuel Isaac, of Isaac, Campbell.

Zachariah C. Pearson & Company of Hull and London, whose owner was a highly successful merchant, shipowner and prominent local citizen — he had twice been mayor of Hull — also found blockade-running could be a far from profitable undertaking. Between May and August 1862, no fewer than six of Pearson's steamers — three of which had been bought on credit — were captured by the Federals, and a seventh, the *Modern Greece*, ran aground off the North Carolina coast and was destroyed. He had already lost two vessels in the Baltic the previous year, and another ship, the *Indian Empire*, was destroyed by fire in the Thames when being moved from one dock to another. In August 1862 he stopped payment, and the following month was declared bankrupt, with debts and liabilities of more than £600,000.

Bankruptcy proceedings, which began in July 1863 and continued until April 1864, were reported in the *Times*, and included a list of people and firms with whom Pearson was involved.[39] One of them was the Hull shipbuilder Martin Samuelson, who was owed some £25,000. In February 1864, Samuelson, who is known to have built at least one blockade-runner, and was described during the hearings as having "a 'little interest' in the consignments," nevertheless wrote an indignant letter to the *Times*, denying his involvement in blockade-running or any other Confederate speculation.[40] Among Pearson's assets was the steamer *Merrimac*, which had been purchased by the Ordnance Bureau, but for which he had never received payment from the Confederate government, and which was subsequently sold by the mortgagees, Overend, Gurney.

Pile, Spence & Company of West Hartlepool were part owners, as well as builders, of the steamer *Lloyd* (later the *Sea Queen*), which left London in April 1862 with a cargo later said to have been worth £1 million, and was successfully run into Charleston. They also purchased the *Peterhoff* from Zachariah Pearson. In February 1863 this steamer became the focus of a diplomatic row when it was captured off St. Thomas in the West Indies, on suspicion of being a blockade-runner, while en route for Matamoras, in Mexico. Whether she was or not, she was also carrying mail, and her seizure caused a considerable furor; the situation was defused when the mail bags were returned, unopened, to the British consul in New York.

Given the money to be made out of trade with the Confederacy, it was almost inevitable that there should be rivalry and animosity between some of the firms involved. Alexander Collie complained that the Isaac brothers treated his clerks with disdain; at the same time, there was no love lost between him and Edgar Stringer. "As for Mr Stringer," he remarked to Lord Wharncliffe, writing to him after the war, "I heeded him as little as the buzz of a mosquito. He meant mischief, but had neither power nor influence to effect it."[41]

Firms who dealt with the Confederacy did so in the belief that, in the unlikely event of the South being defeated, the Federal government would take over any outstanding debts; they were to be sadly disappointed. The Fourteenth Amendment to the American Constitution, passed in June 1866, repudiated any debts or liabilities "contracted for the purpose of supporting the insurrection or rebellion against the United States."

Commission merchants like Isaac, Campbell, who had latterly been willing to accept payment in Confederate bonds, were largely ruined as a result, while shipbuilders like James Ash, who had borrowed heavily from the banking house of Overend, Gurney in order to expand, was forced to close down when the latter failed in 1866. Even the canny Alexander Collie, who had been a major operator of blockade-runners, had to sell his remaining steamers at a heavy loss.

Once the Confederacy was defeated, firms which had once been only too happy to supply it with whatever it required, and had made handsome profits in the process, hastened to

deny all connections with it. Merchants like Charles W. & Wentworth Gray wanted readers of the *Times* to know that they "were never interested to the extent of one shilling either as owners of blockade-runners or as shippers of goods for the South."[42]

Though London was not the main port for blockade-running, which has been called "the lifeline of the Confederacy," the leading firms engaged in it had offices there, and many of the weapons and supplies the Confederates so desperately needed were either made or obtained there. And as a leading financial center, it provided the infrastructure for the launch of the Cotton Loan, which was vital for the continuation of purchasing operations in Britain.

9

Artistic Reflections, Literary Echoes

The name of America five years ago called up to the ordinary English mind nothing but a vague cluster of associations, compounded of Mrs Trollope, "Martin Chuzzlewit" and "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

—Leslie Stephen, *The Times on the American War* (1865)

Leslie Stephen's statement is somewhat exaggerated. The writings of popular authors like Frances Trollope (*Domestic Manners of the Americans*) and Charles Dickens (*American Notes* and *Martin Chuzzlewit*) had already helped make the British public more aware of America, but the Civil War focused additional attention on it, and, sheet music, magazine articles, books and particularly in London, plays, panoramas, exhibitions of paintings and photographs all reflect this.

In addition, plays like Tom Taylor's *Our American Cousin* and the many dramatized versions of Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin* were already familiar to British audiences, and events across the Atlantic undoubtedly increased the appeal of ones with an American theme. It was not unusual for new plays to refer to current events, and several were written and produced in the early 1860s as a result of the Civil War. They were usually part of a double or triple bill, and one or two of them ran for four or five weeks, a fairly long time by the standards of the day.

One of the earliest examples was a one-act farce called *A Southerner Just Arrived*, by the actor-dramatist Horace Wigan, which was performed at the Olympic Theatre, Wych Street, from November 3 through December 6, 1862. Though the war is there in the background—"Great news, most encouraging intelligence ... the Federal General something or other ... I can't read his name ... has gloriously defeated the Confederate General ... something else ... I can't read his name either"—it is peripheral to the absurd plot, which concerns a planter from South Carolina (Jabez Julep, the "Southerner" of the title, played by Horace Wigan) who arrives at the home of a gullible Manchester abolitionist in pursuit of a runaway slave. An example of situation comedy, involving mistaken identities, it included a specially written song, beginning:

I was born in Carolina, that's a long way off you know,
And there I suffered all you've read in Mrs Beecher Stowe.

The Alabama: A Nautical Extravaganza, apparently a reworking of an earlier piece called *Her Majesty's Sloop Spitfire*, was produced at the Theater Royal, Drury Lane (March 7–19, 1864); then, coupled with Shakespeare's *Henry IV, part I*, it returned for a further five-day run (March 28–April 1). It was written by John Maddison Morton, a prolific playwright who was famous as the author of *Box and Cox* (once described as "the most popular play ever written"), and used the ship as a backdrop for a one-act romantic comedy. Its three scenes are set in the Confederate Arms, Havana, in a cabin, and on the quarterdeck of the CSS *Alabama*. Scene three concludes with a "spectacle"—an engagement with the "Fighting *Philadelphia*, a Federal war steamer"—a curious premonition of the *Alabama's* own encounter with the *Kearsarge* later that year. A well-known burlesque actress called Lydia Thompson played the female lead of Phoebe, "in which character," it was announced, "she will dance her celebrated sailor's hornpipe." While the audience was watching Mr. Morton's extravaganza, the real *Alabama* was still at sea; less than three months later, she would be lying on the seabed off Cherbourg.

Colin Henry Hazlewood's two-act drama, *The Confederate's Daughter; or, the Tyrant of New Orleans*, was the only one of these three plays to portray actual historical figures and events. Set in and around New Orleans in 1862, at the time of Major General Benjamin Butler's military governorship, it concerns the adventures of Frances Herbert, "the Confederate's daughter" (whose father has been executed by General Butler), Lieutenant Travers, C.S.A., her sweetheart, and Pompey, "a faithful black." It ends with Butler being relieved of his command at the end of that year, while the heroine's closing speech, on being told of plans to go to England—"And when you do, bear this in mind, that the flag of liberty which was first raised there still waves triumphant in Albion's Isle, ever ready to shelter within its folds an African's son or a Confederate's daughter"—no doubt brought rousing cheers from the audience at the Britannia Theater, Hoxton, where it ran from August 7 through September 9, 1865. Confederate journalist John R. Thompson went to see it during its third week and noted in his diary: "The villain, as General Butler, was almost as great a scoundrel as the original."[1]

Other plays which reflected increased public interest in life and events across the Atlantic included *Down South; or, Life in the Cotton Fields,* a farce by an unknown author, "in which the Alabama Minstrels will appear," which had a successful run at the Royal Victoria Theater, Waterloo Road (the Old Vic), from June 19 through July 15, 1865; and *Cora; or, The Slaves of the South*, a three-act drama by George Augustus Conquest, which was first performed at the Grecian Theater, City Road, on June 26, 1865.

On March 11, 1863, a new entertainment called *Federals and Confederates* opened at the Polygraphic Hall, King William Street, Strand, and ran until May 6. Presented every evening (except Saturdays) at 8:0, and Wednesdays and Saturdays at 3:0, it played to "crowded houses" and was described as a "highly instructive narrative of the present state of affairs in America, with pictorial and musical illustrations." It was advertised in both the *London American* and the *Index*. Its author was Henri Drayton, an American opera singer and minor dramatist, who before the war had sung in England and on the Continent. Some of the songs were by Henry Russell, one of the best-known singers and songwriters of his time, and included "Sunny Days Will Come Again," with lyrics by Edwin Ransford, though many were composed and written by Drayton himself, who also provided sketches to illustrate the show.[2]

Although the *Times* was impressed with the production, describing it as "exceedingly well put together," *Federals and Confederates* did not present an impartial view of the war, and the reviewer left his readers in no doubt about where its sympathies lay:

HENRI DRAYTON. ----- Polygraphic-hall, King William-street, Strand. --- HENRI DRAYTON has the honour to announce his PICTORIAL and MUSICAL ENTERTAINMENT entitled "Federals and Confederates," at the above Hall, THIS and EVERY EVENING (Saturday excepted), at 8: and Wednesday and Saturday, at 3. Tickets of Cramer and Co.'s, Regent-street; Chappell's, New Bond-street; and at the Hall. Admission 1s., 2s., and 3s.

> Mr Henri Drayton ... gives an "entertainment," in the strict sense of the word, ... narrating by means of song, anecdote, piano and picture, his recent experiences in America. Of his predilections he makes no secret, and the serious object of *Federals and Confederates* ... is to prove that the Confederates are all right and the Federals are all wrong ... "Dixie's Land" with the proper Secession words, honoured with an encore ... seems to indicate that the audience are not only pleased with the tune itself and the execution of the vocalist, but also with the sentiment embodied...[3]

Was Mr. Drayton merely giving the audience what he thought it wanted, or was his show, as the *Times* seems to suggest, actually a form of Confederate propaganda, presented as entertainment? There is no evidence to connect it with propagandists like Henry Hotze, but its possibilities would certainly not have escaped him.

Madame Tussaud's waxworks, located on Baker Street since 1835, was one of the sights of London. It had had "a full-length portrait model of Mr Lincoln" since November 1861, and in January 1862 the proprietors announced that they had recently added "the effigies of ... the notorious 'ambassadors,' Mason and Slidell." These were joined in August 1863 by "a model of [Major] General McClellan, in military uniform, late Commander-in-Chief of the Federal Army."[4] Assistant Paymaster Douglas Forrest records an amusing incident concerning a colleague, Lieutenant Charles King, Jr., who visited Madame Tussaud's in naval uniform. While intently examining a wax figure in the Chamber of Horrors, he was mistaken for one of them by a lady visitor, who looked in vain for his number; "King was a *very* hard-looking figure in his Confederate rig," he adds.[5] In June 1865 Tussaud's introduced "a full-length portrait model of John Wilkes Booth, the Assassin, taken from a likeness presented by himself to Mrs. Stratton, the wife of General Tom Thumb," and added "the late Presidents Lincoln and Davis" the following month. The figure of Lincoln was presumably an updated version from that of 1861.[6]

Panoramas had been a popular form of entertainment for many years, but by the early 1860s they had lost much of their appeal for London audiences, partly as a result of the growth of illustrated weekly magazines, with their topical engravings. Nevertheless, in March 1863, readers of the *Illustrated London News* were told that "M. Gompertz's New Panorama of the War in America, printed principally from his own sketches, will shortly be submitted to the public."[7]

Later that year another Civil War panorama was presented at the St. James's Hall, Piccadilly. "Civil War in America — Church's Historical Panorama" opened on November 9, and with "descriptive lecture and music" could be seen every evening at 8:0 and on Saturdays at 3:0. "This magnificent work of art," claimed its presenters, "portrays with life-like fidelity (from original sketches and photographs taken on the spot) the principal battles, sieges and naval engagements, illustrating historically and impartially the Civil War."[8]

CIVIL WAR in AMERICA. --- CHURCH's

HISTORICAL PANORAMA now OPEN every evening, at 8 o'clock, and Saturday morning at 3 o'clock, at St. James's-hall, with Descriptive Lecture and Music. This magnificent work of art pourtrays with life-like fidelity (from original sketches and photographs taken on the spot) the principal Battles, Sieges, and Naval Engagements, illustrating historically and impartially the civil war. Stalls, 3s. ; area, 2s. ; gallery, 1s. Tickets at Austin's ticket-office.

"Federals and Confederates," at the Polygraphic Hall, King William Street, Strand, and "Civil War in America — Church's Historical Panorama," at the St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, could both be seen in London in 1863. (*Times*, 11 March 1863 and 17 November 1863)

A detailed advertisement in the *Times* on the day it opened indicates a remarkably ambitious presentation, with thirty-seven scenes in three sections, which included the bombardment of Fort Sumter, the engagement between the *Monitor* and the *Merrimack* and the battle of Fredericksburg.[9] "In the battle-pieces, which are necessarily numerous," reported the *Times*, "a great deal of character and much skill in composition is displayed ... Far inferior to the battle-pieces are the landscapes, and again inferior to these are certain humorous pictures of life ... However ... as a work of art the 'Historical Panorama' ... will bear an interest of its own as a pictorial illustration of the sanguinary contest about which everybody talks and reads."[10] To sustain public interest, additional pictures, "with a new and highly interesting lecture," were announced in December. It appears to have closed in the middle of January 1864.

Photographers soon found that there was a ready market for Civil War portraits. In January 1862, McLean, Melhuish and Haes, in the Haymarket, were advertising "CIVIL WAR IN AMERICA — CARD PORTRAITS of all the CELEBRITIES, including President Lincoln, President Davis, Captain Wilkes [of the USS *San Jacinto*], Messrs. Mason, Slidell, &c."[11] The demand for these continued throughout the war, with Alfred W. Bennett of Bishopsgate offering "Cartes de Visite of American Celebrities, Federal and Confederate Statesmen and Generals" at one shilling each in August 1864.[12]

Some photographers seem to have specialized in Confederate celebrities, as the following announcement in December 1863 indicates:

> A series of very fine PHOTOGRAPHIC PORTRAITS, principally taken in camp within the last nine months, including Jefferson Davis, Generals Stonewall Jackson (photographed ten days previous to his death), R.E. Lee, Beauregard, Longstreet, Johnston, Bragg, A.P. Hill, Stuart, Ewell, Buckner, Price, Hood, Morgan, Kirby Smith, Fitzhugh Lee, etc are now published ... by MR WALKER, Photographer, 3 Pembridge Villas, Bayswater, of whom they may be obtained ... and from MESSRS MARION & SON, 23 Soho Square.[13]

A year later, photographer Henry Francis, in Great Russell Street, "opposite the British Museum," had for sale "A BEAUTIFUL PORTRAIT OF JEFF DAVIS, our FIRST PRESIDENT ... Also the twenty-three OFFICERS of the Confederate ship ALABAMA..."[14]

"Our First President" was also the subject of a large folio lithograph by Thomas Koppel,

published in 1865 by Victor De La Rue, of Chandos Street, Covent Garden, presumably just before the final collapse of the Confederacy. Though described as being "From the Latest Photograph now in Possession of the Family," it was actually based on a pre-war portrait, and was probably intended for European rather than Confederate consumption, given the state of affairs in the South by then. Lithographs of Generals "Stonewall" Jackson and Joseph E. Johnston were issued by G. W. Bacon & Company, of Paternoster Row (who were also map publishers) and Day & Son, of Lincoln's Inn Fields, "lithographers to the Queen"; both were drawn from very out-of-date photographs. The war was already over when "A handsome steel engraving" of General Robert E. Lee, "from a portrait ... taken at Richmond, C.S.A., in October last," was announced as being "now ready" by Saunders, Otley of Brook Street, Mayfair in May 1865.[15]

Anyone wanting more than just a photograph or print could visit Thomas Revell's Fine Art Gallery in Leadenhall Street, where "STONEWALL JACKSON and other celebrated Confederate Generals. Authentic PORTRAITS, painted from life by B. F. Reinhardt [sic], Esq." were to be seen in June 1863.[16] Not just anyone could gain access: admission was by "address card" (visiting card) only. The generals represented included Robert E. Lee, Joseph E. Johnston, Pierre G. T. Beauregard, and for good measure, Jefferson Davis. Benjamin F. Reinhart was a Pennsylvania-born artist who exhibited at the Royal Academy, and as he spent the Civil War in London, his description "painted from life" should read, "painted from photographs."

Although more than seventy Confederate generals were killed in action or mortally wounded during the Civil War, none received more tributes than Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson, who was a victim of what we now call friendly fire. His accidental wounding by his own men at the battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863, and subsequent death a few days later from pneumonia, seemed to strike a particular chord with the British public. "Even on this side of the ocean," remarked the *Times*, "the gallant soldier's fate will everywhere be heard of with pity and sympathy," and it called him "one of the most consumate Generals that this century has produced." The paper went on to compare his death with that of Nelson at Trafalgar: "The national feeling of England recorded the victory of Trafalgar as dearly purchased by the death of Nelson. A similar feeling pervades the South for the loss of 'Stonewall' Jackson. The South will be exceptionally fortunate if it find another man with all the qualities and capacities General Jackson possessed."[17]

Americans living in London could not fail to notice the public mood. "Stonewall Jackson is dead of wounds. The British people are as sensibly affected by this last news as if the disaster were their own," an astonished Benjamin Moran recorded in his journal.[18] Henry Hotze expressed a similar view, in a letter to Secretary of State Judah Benjamin:

> The death of Jackson has elicited a feeling the depth and power, if not the very existence, of which had wholly escaped my observation before, a feeling altogether incommensurate to anything ever manifested on any previous event of the war. I am quite prepared to believe, what I am assured on all sides, that the death of no foreigner has ever so moved the popular heart ... The Press but inadequately expresses popular emotion which appears to be shared by all classes.[19]

On June 4, 1863, the *Index* announced: "It is proposed to raise a subscription in England for the erection in the Confederate States of A BRITISH MONUMENT to this gallant man." A committee of sixteen prominent Confederate sympathizers was formed to manage the "British Jackson Monumental Fund," with Alexander Beresford Hope as treasurer and William

Gregory, M.P., as secretary and an account for it was opened at Coutts Bank in the Strand. Its prospectus spoke admiringly of Jackson's fame, which had won the respect of his enemies as well as the admiration of the Old World, but it was careful to point out that subscriptions to the statue would not, of course, imply any bias in the great struggle taking place across the Atlantic. The eminent, Irish-born sculptor John H. Foley, R.A., whose most famous work is the figure of the Prince Consort on the Albert Memorial in Hyde Park, and who also designed the Great Seal of the Confederacy, was commissioned to make the statue, which would be based on a recent photograph.

The staff of the *Index* contributed ten guineas and the donations received each week were published in its columns; by the end of August 1863, more than £600 had already been subscribed. According to the records of the "Stonewall Jackson Memorial Account" at Coutts Bank, 114 named individuals, two firms and a few anonymous donors contributed to it, mostly during the second half of 1863. The most generous donations came from James Spence, Alexander Collie and J. Henry Schroder, who each gave £50.

In July 1865, in reply to an enquiry from a subscriber, Alexander Beresford Hope was able to report in the *Index* that sufficient money had now been raised, and that "Mr Foley is at work, with the confident expectation of a very successful result" at his studio in Osnaburgh Street, near Regent's Park. In spite of this optimistic statement, there were to be many more delays, caused by the sculptor's desire for perfection, other commissions competing for his time, and increasing ill health, and Jackson's statue was not completed until a few months before the sculptor's own death in 1874. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy in London the following year, before being shipped to Richmond, where it was erected in the grounds of the Capitol in October 1875, "in the hundredth year of the Commonwealth" (of Virginia). The bronze statue, signed by Foley, shows Jackson standing, uniformed and hatless, holding his sword; an inscription on the plinth records that it was "presented by English gentlemen as a tribute of admiration."

In view of the continuing public interest, a photographer announced in April 1864 the publication, by private subscription, of a photograph of the fallen general:

> LIEUTENANT-GENERAL STONEWALL JACKSON
> THE ONLY AUTHENTIC AND FAITHFUL LIKENESS YET PUBLISHED
>
> MESSRS. W. WALKER & SONS, 64 MARGARET ST, CAVENDISH SQ ... have lately been furnished by the Hon. J.M. Mason, of the Confederate States, with the only original likeness of the late lamented General Thomas Jefferson [sic] Jackson, photographed from life a week before the General received his fatal wound ... This portrait remains emphatically as The Likeness of the illustrious General. It has been seen and highly approved by many Southern Gentlemen who knew the General personally.[20]

Half of the net profits from the sale of the photographs, it was stated, were to go to the Southern Prisoners' Relief Fund, which had been set up to improve the lot of Confederate prisoners of war "in the Federal American States."

Another scheme to raise money for this was the reproduction of a bust of President Jefferson Davis, in a limited edition of 500 (quarter size), available in four versions — plaster; enameled plaster; *à l'ivoire* (wax and plaster); and marble — to order:

> The only Bust extant ... modelled by Volk, at Richmond ... has been kindly lent by the owner for reproduction for the benefit of the Southern Prisoners' Relief Fund ... The Bust may be seen at the studio of James Redfern, 29 Clipstone St., Fitzroy Sq. ... and at the *Index* office.[21]

Large numbers of songs were written and published in the South during the war and some of these were reprinted by London music publishers to satisfy popular demand. As Colonel Peyton later recalled: "Music dealers got out rapidly, Southern songs, set to music, and dedicated to Confederate exiles in Europe. Young ladies were taught to sing and play them, and everywhere was heard 'Dixie,' 'Bonnie Blue Flag,' 'Down among the Cotton,' 'My Maryland,' &c."[22]

Songs for the piano, as well as marches, quadrilles, polkas and quicksteps, all with Confederate themes, were published by firms like Boosey & Sons, Brewer & Company, Cramer, Beale & Wood and Joseph Williams, and advertised in weekly magazines like the *Illustrated London News*. Thomas Boosey & Sons, musical instrument makers, music sellers and publishers, who were established in 1816, and still exist as Boosey & Hawkes, brought out Victor Colline's "Maryland Quadrille" (1864) and George Forbe's "Maryland: A Confederate March for the Piano" (1864), as well as *Twelve Songs of the American War*, which contained six Confederate pieces, including "Old King Cotton" and "A Battle Hymn."

Cramer, Beale & Wood, music and musical instrument sellers and publishers, who had started in 1844 as Cramer, Beale & Chappell, and are now known as Cramer Music, published James Randall's "Maryland, My Maryland," which competed with Daniel Emmett's "Dixie" and Harry Macarthy's "Bonnie Blue Flag" as the Confederate national anthem. They also brought out "War Song of Dixie" (1862), written by Frederick Buckley, a member of the minstrel group known as Buckley's Serenaders, "with an illuminated frontispiece showing the Confederate flag and standard."

Joseph Williams, who had taken over his mother's music-printing business in 1844, published Henry Farmer's "Dixie's Land Polka" (1861) and Henri F. Hemy's "The Picket of the Potomac" (1864): "The beautiful and touching words of this song were found in the pocket of one of the Confederate volunteers who died in the camp on the Potomac from a rifle wound while on picket duty," claimed the publisher, who continued in business until at least 1954.[23] Another firm, Hopwood & Crew, advertised "Dixey's Land Gallop" (1861), by Charles Coote, Jr., and "The Boy of the Rappahannock" (1865), by Charles Blamphim, as well as those songs quoted by Colonel Peyton.

General Robert E. Lee rarely featured in songs, though his portrait appears on the cover of Carl Weiner's "Confederate War March," published by J. Jewell towards the end of 1864. "Stonewall" Jackson, on the other hand, was the inspiration for a number of pieces of music, not least after his death in 1863. Joseph Williams issued "The General Jackson Schottische" ("as played by the 600 performers at the Brass Band Contest, Crystal Palace") in 1862 and Foster & King brought out "The Stonewall Jackson Quadrille" in the same year. Charles Blamphim's "Death of Stonewall Jackson" was published by Samuel Brewer & Company in 1864; illustrated with the general's portrait, it is not surprising to learn that this was "sung by all the leading vocalists with rapturous applause."

As well as these reprinted pieces, at least two Confederate songs were published in London.[24] "A Confederate Raid" and "Our Queen Varine" were written by 'EM', an unidentified Southerner living in England, and brought out by Christopher Lonsdale, who had been in business on his own as a music seller and publisher since 1834, though the firm, previously known as Birchall, Lonsdale and Mills, dated back to c.1811.

"A Confederate Raid," dedicated to "General J. E. B. Stuart of the Confederate Cavalry," was the shorter of the two:

Then hurrah for Stuart, hurrah!
And his bold cavaliers of the West,
'Tis his twentieth raid, hurrah!
No rest for brave Stuart, no rest!

"Our Queen Varine" was dedicated to "Varina, wife of the President of the Confederate States of America":

Here's to the fair and brilliant one,
Who by his side is seen
Long may she be,
Long may we see
Varine our Queen!
Our Queen, Varine!

Copies of the two songs were deposited in what is now the British Library in March and July 1864. "A Confederate Raid" was perhaps written about the beginning of 1864, fairly late in Stuart's career as a cavalry leader, and would have been published two months before his death, following his wounding at Yellow Tavern in May 1864. It is difficult, however, to imagine a song like "Our Queen Varine" being published as late as July 1864; the adulatory and overly optimistic sentiments suggest a much earlier date — perhaps the spring or summer of 1861, when Confederate nationalism was in full flow — long before disillusionment with Davis and his leadership had set in. The colored cover, showing the earliest version of the first Confederate national flag, the "Stars and Bars," with seven stars (adopted in March 1861), and reused for the second song, tends to reinforce this idea.

Although maps and atlases published by American firms like J.T. Lloyd were available in England — they included *Lloyd's Great Coloured Military Map of the Southern Confederacy* ("engraved on steel for the use of the War Department") and *Lloyd's American Railroad Map, showing the Whole Seat of War,* both issued in 1861— London map publishers also responded to public interest in events across the Atlantic.

Most of the Civil War maps published appeared in the first two years of the conflict. Some showed the boundary of the seceded states, or the area and extent of the "free and slaveholding states," others the seat of war in America. They were produced for a public which was initially unfamiliar with the geography of the war, though by 1864 the *Times* could remark: "The country between the Rappahannock and the Potomac [i.e., between Fredericksburg and Washington] has become as familiar [to] the English public as the space between St Paul's and South Kensington."[25]

G.W. Bacon & Company of Paternoster Row, who described themselves as "American Map Publishers and Importers" and were the London agents for the American mapmaking firm of J.H. Colton, issued a *New Army Map of the Seat of War in Virginia* (1862), which showed the battlefields and fortifications near the Potomac. James Wyld, whose Great Globe had been such a prominent feature of Leicester Square throughout the 1850s, published a number of military maps of the war, including several editions of one of the Southern states, showing forts, harbors and military positions. H.G. Clarke, a bookseller and publisher in the Strand, issued *Woolley's New Map of the Seat of War in the Confederate States of America*, possibly in 1861. There seem to have been very few maps of individual battles, probably because the ones which appeared in magazines like the *Illustrated London News* made them largely unnecessary, though G.W. Bacon did issue one of the battle of

Fredericksburg, as well as his *Map shewing the entire Field of Operations under Grant, Sherman and Thomas* (1865).[26]

Articles about the Civil War, many of them sympathetic to the South, began to appear in the weekly and monthly magazines published in London. They were usually unsigned, as was the practice of the time, and some of the accounts of the Confederacy were based on recent, first-hand experience, particularly ones written by serving army officers, who had gone there as unofficial observers or military tourists.

The *Illustrated London News*, which had begun publication in 1842, was the first and one of the most successful of the new illustrated weekly magazines, a pioneer in pictorial journalism. Its emphasis was on current affairs and in the spring of 1861, after the start of the Civil War, it sent a representative to America in the person of Frank Vizetelly, an experienced special correspondent who had already covered wars in Austria, Italy and Sicily. He began by reporting from the Northern side, but lack of cooperation from the Federal authorities caused him to go South in the summer of 1862.

He became a great admirer of the Army of Northern Virginia, with "its wonderful endurance ... its utter disregard for hardships," and made little attempt to hide his support for the Confederacy. Regardless of whether the *Illustrated London News* itself was hoping for a Southern victory, many of its readers probably were. With his taste for amateur theatricals and charades, this gregarious journalist was popular wherever he went. His sketches and reports sometimes failed to get through the blockade, and pirated ones occasionally appeared in Northern papers. Vizetelly returned to London three times during the war, on each occasion bringing with him collections of drawings made during the previous months. The only foreign artist–correspondent in the Confederacy, he accompanied President Davis and his party during part of their flight from Richmond, and his drawings of the "Last Days of the Confederate Government" (July 22, 1865) are a unique record of that event.

In December 1861 a favorable review of James Spence's book, *The American Union*, appeared in the widely-read weekly magazine, *All the Year Round*. Its founder and editor, Charles Dickens, was no admirer of the South, but his magazine did feature a couple of articles of Confederate interest: "The Diary of a Confederate Boy" (May 17, 1862) dealt with the early months of the war, about the time of First Manassas, and "A Waif from Dixie" (October 29, 1864) was based on the contents of Confederate newspapers from Mobile.

The humorous weekly *Punch*, which had been founded a year before the *Illustrated London News*, responded to the formation of the Confederate States of America by referring to them disparagingly as "confederates in the crime of upholding slavery" (March 9, 1861), but after the commencement of hostilities, it began to adopt a more ambivalent attitude, condemning both sides for what it saw as their stupidity:

> Yankee Doodles, oh, you noodles!
> Why prolong this idle strife? (September 28, 1861)

By the end of 1861, as a result of the blockade and the *Trent* affair, *Punch* was becoming increasingly anti–Northern and beginning to prophesy the defeat of the North. Nevertheless, it was still firmly opposed to slavery, which it regarded as doomed. When it was reported in 1862 that plantation bells were being donated to be melted down for cannon, it cautioned its readers:

> But pause on that last gift, can good come of cannon cast
> From the bells that waked the slaves to their heavy, hopeless toil? (April 26, 1862).

VERY PROBABLE.

Lord Punch. "THAT WAS JEFF DAVIS, PAM! DON'T YOU RECOGNISE HIM?"
Lord Pam. "HM! WELL, NOT EXACTLY—MAY HAVE TO DO SO SOME OF THESE DAYS."

As late as August 1864 it was still thought that Confederate recognition was a possibility, as this *Punch* cartoon by John Tenniel seems to suggest.

In spite of its guarded, pro–Southern stance, it advised the people of Southampton not to welcome the Southern Commissioners Mason and Slidell openly when they arrived there, lest it be seen as "a declaration on the part of the people of England for the Confederate side" (January 18, 1862), advice which appears to have been heeded. It also published a poem called "The Tuscarora" (February 8, 1862), occasioned by the unwelcome presence at Southampton of both the CSS *Nashville* and the USS *Tuscarora*.

Latterly, it seemed to allow wishful thinking to cloud its judgment, with cartoons such as "Very Probable" (August 27, 1864), suggesting that recognition of the Confederacy was still a possibility, and "The American Juggernaut" (September 3, 1864), showing Union troops being crushed by a huge Southern gun-carriage, at a time when Grant had Lee bottled up in Petersburg, Sherman had taken Atlanta and Sheridan was starting to drive Early out of the Shenandoah Valley. There were also cartoons on the contentious subject of black troops in the Confederate Army, "The Black Conscription" (September 26, 1863) and "The Black Draft" (November 19, 1864).

The verses accompanying its cartoon of Lee's surrender admitted that it had often "misread the chances of the fight" (April 29, 1865), and *Punch's* editor conceded privately that "we have been a bit mistaken" when, after ridiculing Lincoln for four years, the magazine was obliged to do a lightning *volte-face*, after news of his assassination reached London.

The *Fortnightly Review* began publication the year the war ended, and was unusual for its time in that its articles were signed. "The Last Six Days of Secessia," an account of Lee's retreat to Appomattox, which appeared in the issue of August 15, 1865, was written by Francis Lawley, who had covered the war for the *Times*. Noted for his pro–Confederate reports, he was in Richmond when it fell, and apparently followed Lee's retreating army, the only journalist to do so.

A well-respected literary monthly which had been established as long ago as 1817, *Blackwood's Magazine* published a number of articles by British visitors to the Confederacy. "A Month with the Rebels," by the Hon. Robert Bourke, an Irish barrister who was the brother of the Earl of Mayo, appeared in December 1861. Its mockery of Northern newspapers, in particular the *New York Herald*, "a paper which all Americans read, most abuse, and none believe," left readers in no doubt where its author's sympathies lay. Bourke was favorably impressed by what he saw during his travels in the autumn of 1861, and thought that "The perfect unanimity throughout the whole South in the belief that their cause is just, strikes the stranger as one of the most formidable symptons which the Union has to fear." Like many, he hoped that, once the Confederate States had been admitted into "the family of nations," European influences would bring about the emancipation of the slaves. Apparently at the request of propagandist Edwin De Leon, the same author also contributed a eulogistic piece about Jefferson Davis, "one of the few great men that this war has produced," to the September 1862 issue of the magazine.

Edward Seymour arrived in the Confederate capital at the end of June 1862, just as the Seven Days' Battles were about to start. He described them in "Ten Days in Richmond" (October 1862), and in particular the battle of Gaines' Mill, then went on to discuss the state of public opinion in the South. As far as he was concerned, "Separation is now not a question of right, or even of expediency, but a simple matter of fact. The people of the Confederate States are a separate nation." Seymour, who was Twelfth Duke of Somerset and First Lord of the Admiralty, was a privileged visitor and able to move around fairly freely.

Army officers like Lieutenant Colonel Garnet Wolseley, who had served in the Second

Burma War, the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny and the China War, and was assistant quartermaster general in Canada, took a professional interest in events. In the North, Wolseley found that his English appearance and speech aroused suspicion and that "we are all considered as rebel sympathisers," a rather revealing comment. "A Month's Visit to the Confederate Headquarters" (January 1863) describes his visit in September and October 1862, during which time he saw the scenes of the recent Seven Days' Battles and was able to meet with both Lee and Jackson. He noted the confidence and loyalty they inspired in their men; some surprise was expressed that England had not already recognized the Confederacy, particularly "after M'Clellan's failure before Richmond."

Edward Hamley, who was professor of military history at the Royal Military College, Sandhurst, contributed an article called "Our Rancorous 'Cousins'" (November 1863). This denounced the attitude of the Federal government and press as one of "shameless impudence" while "glorying *ad nauseam* in the success of their own effort to throw off their allegiance to Great Britain [in the War of Independence] they have never ceased to denounce the secession of the Sovereign States of the South as 'a wicked and unnatural rebellion.'" Like many of his brother officers, Hamley was full of admiration for "the gallant deeds of the Southern armies and generals, the noble devotion of the Southern people."

A number of articles which were published in *Blackwood's* during or shortly after the war subsequently reappeared in book form. These included "The Battle of Gettysburg and the Campaign in Pennsylvania: extract from the Diary of an English Officer present with the Confederate Army" (September 1863), by Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Fremantle; "A Visit to the Cities and Camps of the Confederate States" (December 1864 — February 1865), by Captain Fitzgerald Ross; and "Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence" (September 1865 — June 1866), by Lieutenant Colonel Heros Von Borcke.

The *Cornhill Magazine*, another literary monthly, was a runaway success when it began publication in 1860. For the first two years, its editor was the famous novelist William M. Thackeray, and it also published several articles on the Civil War, again chiefly from a Southern standpoint. "The Cruise of the Confederate Ship 'Sumter' (From the Private Journal of an Officer)," by a journalist called Frank Drake, appeared in the August 1862 issue. Comparison with Raphael Semmes' *Memoirs of Service Afloat* shows it to be remarkably accurate, even including details not contained in that work.

When "How We Broke the Blockade" was published in October 1862, its author, Edwin De Leon, was the Confederate propaganda agent in Paris. At the time of his blockade-running adventure, in February 1862, he was returning home after serving as U.S. consul general in Egypt. He and his wife sailed from Southampton to Havana, where they joined a "long, low, black, rakish-looking steamer" called the *Victoria*, for their uncomfortable, and at times alarming, journey back to the Confederacy.

"A Run through the Southern States" (April 1863), by Lieutenant Colonel Henry Fletcher, of the Scots Fusilier Guards, gave an account of his often difficult journeys, mostly by train, through Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, the Carolinas and Virginia, in the last months of 1862. Fletcher, who later wrote a three-volume *History of the American War* (1865–1866) and himself rose to the rank of major general, met Generals Price, Van Dorn, Beauregard and Admiral Buchanan along the way, and visited Vicksburg, Mobile, where he saw the CSS *Florida*, and Charleston. He concluded "that no danger will ever frighten, or bribes of power induce, the States of the Confederacy to join again the Northern Union."

Frank Vizetelly of the *Illustrated London News* was in Charleston in 1863, and witnessed

the attack on Fort Sumter by Federal ironclads in April, the assault on Battery Wagner (Morris Island) by land and sea three months later and the bombardment of the city itself in August. These events were described in some detail in his article "Charleston under Fire" (July 1864).

In November 1864 the *Monthly Packet*, a periodical for young women, founded and for many years edited by the novelist Charlotte M. Yonge, began to publish a series of articles called "Home Life in a Confederate State." They were allegedly based on the journal of an Englishwoman who had gone to America at the beginning of 1861 to be a teacher at a plantation on the Georgia coast, and later had moved inland with her employers. The series stopped in December 1865, then resumed in August 1866 under a new title, "Extracts from the Journal of a Refugee in Georgia during the American War," when its author insisted that the earlier parts of her journal had not been intended for publication, but that her "zealous correspondent in England ... thought that a simple statement of facts would enlist the sympathies of the English people in [sic] behalf of the Southern Confederacy."[27] It continued intermittently until May 1867, when, still incomplete, it ceased altogether; no explanation for this was given. The journal covers the period March 1861—December 1864, and demonstrates a remarkable knowledge of conditions and events in wartime Georgia on the part of its anonymous author.

The *Quarterly Review*, another established and influential journal, had been founded by the famous publisher John Murray and that too published a number of articles about the war. "The Confederate Struggle and Recognition" (October 1862) has been attributed to Lord Robert Cecil, a member of the Southern lobby in Parliament, who wrote extensively for the magazine. He observed: "The Southerners have shown every characteristic that can mark an independent nation. They have made the costliest sacrifices that men can make to assure their freedom from a foreign rule, and they have fought for it with a gallantry that has not been surpassed in all the wars of liberation the world has seen."

An evaluation of "The Prospects of the Confederates," which appeared in the April 1864 issue, was by Robert Lawley, who summarized the difficulties facing the Confederates as "1. Insufficient supply of men, horses and food. 2. Jealousy between the armies of the Potomac [Northern Virginia] and Tennessee, and general dissatisfaction with President Davis and the Confederate Government." None was thought to be insurmountable. Some of the optimism may derive from his journalist brother, Francis Lawley, who is thought to have contributed to the article.

"The question naturally arises, what caused the failure of this great effort of the South to possess a government of its own?" asked James Spence, a leading British champion of Confederate independence, in "The Close of the American War" (July 1865). As well as "the great superiority of the North in numbers and resources ... their command of naval force ... soon felt in a country intersected by great rivers," and "that special weapon, the blockade"; there was also what he described as "excess of confidence ... lives of Southern soldiers were expended ... as if the supply were inexhaustible." (That was particularly true of generals like John Bell Hood.) The failure to recruit blacks into the Confederate army until it was too late was also thought to be a serious mistake, and "would have turned the scale in favour of the South," an opinion some military historians might question. He reiterated his belief that Confederate independence would have meant the end of slavery: it was "doubtless the real cause why the independence of the South was not recognized by the European powers." (Most historians would probably describe it as a contributory cause.)

These magazines all had a predominantly middle- and upper-class readership and by and

large reflected the views of their readers; they were also relatively expensive. The *Illustrated London News*, for instance, cost sixpence a copy, while the *Cornhill Magazine* was a shilling, nearly a third of a day's wages then for many workingmen. The abolition of the stamp duty on newspapers and magazines in 1855, followed by that on raw paper in 1861, resulted in a crop of weekly magazines, usually costing little more than a penny and often illustrated with cheap woodcuts, which aimed to provide both instruction and recreation for respectable working-class readers. They included the *London Journal, Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper,* the *London Reader, Once a Week* and the *Leisure Hour,* which all published articles on the Civil War, usually cobbled together from other sources by journalists who had probably never set foot in America, but presented convincingly, nonetheless. It has been pointed out that, on the whole, working-class journals were hostile to the North, certainly before the Emancipation Proclamation, and to some extent, after it as well.[28] Some evidence for this can certainly be seen in their tendency to devote more space to articles about Southern topics.

"The South American Confederation" [sic], which gave a biographical sketch of Jefferson Davis, and a summary of his address to the Confederate Congress, appeared in the *London Journal* as early as March 30, 1861, and the magazine continued to take an interest in events across the Atlantic. There were illustrated pieces about the *Merrimack* and her encounter with the *Monitor* (April 19, 1862), and several more chronicling the exploits of the *Sumter* (March 1, 1862), and the *Alabama* (December 13, 1862 and February 28, 1863). Subjects like the latter lent themselves easily to journalistic hyperbole, with descriptions of "the brave Captain Semmes, his gallant ship the Alabama, and his daring crew of—as the Americans style us—Britishers." The same magazine also published a detailed account of the New York draft riots (August 22, 1863) and a discussion of General Grant's plan to capture Richmond (May 21, 1864).

Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper published articles about the *Merrimack* (January 11, 1862), the *Arkansas* (October 18, 1862), and the *Alabama* (July 30, 1864), whose "fate, though terrible, was glorious ... a suitable termination to her daring and brilliant career." There were also pieces about Charleston (February 15, 1862 and April 16, 1864), and an excellent map of "The Seat of War in America" (December 20, 1862), which would have done credit to the *Illustrated London News*. These articles were not necessarily uncritical; the author of "Richmond, on the James River" (October 3, 1863), for instance, made his feelings about slavery very clear.

An article about the late-lamented "Stonewall" Jackson (June 13, 1863), in the *London Reader*, a similar publication to the *Journal*, caught the mood of the moment; there were also pieces about Charleston (June 6, 1863 and September 26, 1863), and Robert E. Lee (August 27, 1864), which described him, somewhat prematurely, as "The Confederate Commander-in-Chief," rather than commander of the Army of Northern Virginia. It was published at a stage in the war when it really did seem as if "the one will never submit, and the other, it is now evident, is wholly unable to conquer," and there were calls that the "bugbear of non-intervention should be flung aside, and words of friendly counsel strongly urged on both sides."

Once a Week published two articles on the subject of "The American Generals" (November 15 and 22, 1862), which gave brief details of the lives of the main Confederate and Federal commanders, while the *Leisure Hour* featured "The American Blockaded Ports" (April 16, 1864), written, it was claimed, by a British settler in Texas, and dealing chiefly with

Galveston, Wilmington and Charleston, and another piece on "American Generals" (June 25, 1864), which examined the careers of Jackson, Lee, McClellan and Grant.

Books by visitors to the South were also starting to appear. Samuel Phillips Day, the special correspondent of the *Morning Herald* from June through September 1861, was the author of *Down South: or, An Englishman's Experience at the Seat of the American War*, published by Hurst & Blackett in 1862. He spent most of his time in Richmond, and made no secret of his pro–Confederate sympathies, stating that "The Northern attempt to conquer the South is a labor equally as futile as that of Sisyphus [i.e., an endless, heart-breaking task] ... It is not only mere folly, but little short of sheer insanity, to think of over-running 750,000 square miles of territory, and subjugating the 9,500,000 people who now compose the eleven states of the Confederacy."[29]

Many of these books were published in 1863, when Confederate independence still seemed a possibility. The Rev. William Wyndham Malet's book, *An Errand to the South in the Summer of 1862,* was brought out by Richard Bentley & Son, a firm which had started in 1829 and was well-known for its multivolume novels, published for circulating libraries. Malet, a Hertfordshire clergyman, had traveled to South Carolina to visit his sister who was married to Captain Plowden C.J. Weston, a plantation owner serving with the Confederate Army. His readable account of a sometimes difficult trip, which lasted from May through November 1862, was based on a diary. While living in the South, he visited Richmond, where he met President and Mrs. Davis, and "Mr. Vizetelly, the accomplished sketcher for the *Illustrated London News*; he was lamenting over the loss of some sketches, from the bearer having to throw them with other papers into the Potomac, to avoid seizure by the enemy."[30] *An Errand to the South* is a rewarding account which would be worth reprinting.

Neither Samuel Day nor the Rev. William Malet found fault with slavery. That was not the case with William Howard Russell of the *Times*. As a representative of that opinion-forming newspaper, Russell was regarded as an important person on both sides of the Potomac, but succeeded in offending Northerners, with his outspoken account of the battle of Bull Run, and Southerners, with his denunciation of slavery. Unlike most English visitors to the Confederacy, Russell's name was already well-known there, since his reports on the Crimean War (1854–1856) had been reprinted in American newspapers. He spent three months in the South (April–June 1861) and was impressed by many of the civilian and military leaders he met. Ostensibly impartial, his sympathies, were really with the North, though like many he doubted that the Confederacy would ever be defeated. His experiences as special correspondent during the first year of the war were described in *My Diary North and South*, published by Bradbury & Evans.

Lieutenant Colonel Arthur James Lyon Fremantle's *Three Months in the Southern States: April—June 1863* was published by William Blackwood & Sons after extracts from it had appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*. The firm had first been established at Edinburgh in 1804 and had opened a London branch in 1840. Colonel Fremantle, an officer in the Coldstream Guards, traveled from Texas, through Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas, to Virginia, joined Lee's Army during its invasion of Pennsylvania, and was present as an observer, along with Fitzgerald Ross, at the battle of Gettysburg. As well as Generals Lee, Ewell and Longstreet, he met Johnston and Beauregard, and was impressed by them and their troops. It has been called "the best commentary on the wartime South by an English visitor," and Constance Harrison, the wife of Jefferson Davis's secretary, Burton Harrison, recalled how "its charming spirit and interesting presentment of the situation was greatly welcomed" when

copies of the book were brought through the blockade.[31] Two copies, inscribed to President Davis and Secretary of State Benjamin, were taken to Richmond by Commander Maury, who traveled there in February 1864.

Two Months in the Confederate States, including a Visit to New Orleans under the Domination of General Butler was also published by Richard Bentley. It was written by "An English Merchant," who has now been identified as William Carson Corsan, a member of the Sheffield firm of Corsan, Denton & Burdekin, hardware merchants and manufacturers. From October through December 1862, Corsan traveled, mostly by train, from New Orleans to Richmond, stopping off at various towns along the way, to investigate the financial status of his firm's customers and perhaps find some new business. The *Sun* thought that it provided "a most opportune peep into the Confederate States."[32]

George Alfred Lawrence, already a successful novelist, decided to go to America in 1863 and join the Confederate Army. Before he could do so, however, he was captured in Maryland and spent eight weeks in the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, where one of his fellow prisoners was Belle Boyd. *Border and Bastille*, an account of his misadventures published by Tinsley Brothers after his release and return to England later that year, was not a novel, though it has been described as fiction *manqué*.

English residents in the South also wrote of their experiences. The Rev T.D. Ozanne, an Episcopalian minister who had lived in Mississippi since 1841, decided to return to England in 1862. *The South as it is; or, Twenty-one Years' Experience in the Southern States of America*, was published the following year by Saunders, Otley & Company. The firm had been established in 1826 by Simon Saunders and Edward John Otley, and had been a successful publisher of nonfiction, drama, poetry and novels, though by the time of the Civil War neither of its founders was still alive and it was no longer in the front rank of London publishers. Ozanne's book is mostly a discourse on slavery, which he presents in a favorable light, the resources, government and social life of the South, and secession; only the last three chapters constitute a personal narrative, though these do include his spell as a wartime hospital chaplain, and a description of life in occupied New Orleans, while he was waiting for a steamer for New York. He too was convinced that the South could never be subdued.

After several appointments teaching the "ornamental branches" (i.e., polite accomplishments) in Virginia, Catherine Cooper Hopley, who had been in America since the late 1850s, became governess to the children of Governor John Milton of Florida. *Life in the South: from the Commencement of the War*, apparently written in the space of ten weeks after her return to England in the autumn of 1862, was brought out the following year by Chapman & Hall, who were also Dickens' publishers. She tried to give an "impartial account of the 'domestic institution'" (i.e., slavery), observing: "The most calamitous and unmerciful affliction that could befall both master and servant, would be the *sudden* emancipation of the slaves of the Southern States."[33] In Richmond she saw President Jefferson Davis, and Secretary of the Navy Stephen Mallory, who did not impress her, and also met journalist Samuel Day. She ended her well-observed account by inviting her readers "to regard with more leniency and justice the people of the Southern Confederacy."[34] Throughout her narrative she refers to herself as Sarah L. Jones, a pseudonym she also used in later publications.

Edward Fitzgerald Turton Ross, a "captain of hussars in the Imperial Austrian Army," spent eleven months in the South, from May 1863 to spring 1864, witnessed the battle of Gettysburg with Arthur Fremantle, and traveled in South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee and Alabama. All but the last four chapters of his *Visit to the Cities and Camps of the Confederate*

TWO MONTHS

IN

THE CONFEDERATE STATES,

INCLUDING

A VISIT TO NEW ORLEANS

UNDER

THE DOMINATION OF GENERAL BUTLER.

BY

AN ENGLISH MERCHANT.

LONDON:
RICHARD BENTLEY, NEW BURLINGTON STREET,
Publisher in Ordinary to Her Majesty.
1863.

Two Months in the Confederate States, an account of life in the Civil War South by an English businessman, was published in London in 1863.

States had previously appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* and the book itself was published by William Blackwood in May 1865. The timing, however, was unfortunate: there had been a large readership for earlier accounts of Confederate life, but with the defeat of the South, the subject had lost its appeal. "The present moment is hardly favourable to the success of a book which was written while the Confederate cause still seemed prosperous; and which ... throws no light on the circumstances which disappointed the hopes so long and so confidently entertained, and brought the final catastrophe to pass so much more suddenly and decisively than ordinary observers could have expected ... When the fate of the Southern people is finally decided ... books of this class will have another and more melancholy interest. But at this conjuncture we do not need them," said the *Saturday Review* discouragingly.[35] When Lieutenant Colonel Johann August Heinrich Heros Von Borcke, an aristocratic Prussian officer, who was "lately Chief of Staff to General J.E.B. Stuart," arrived in London in February 1865 on a mission for the Confederate government (the nature of which has not been ascertained), Fitzgerald Ross suggested to publisher William Blackwood that Von Borcke's diary might be turned into a book. *Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence* was translated, and in fact ghostwritten, by the journalist John Thompson, and first appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* before being published, with "Map of the Seat of War in Virginia," in 1866.[36] Von Borcke participated in many battles, from Seven Pines to the beginning of the Gettysburg campaign, when he was wounded; there are descriptions of Confederate camp life and he met various English observers, and correspondents like Frank Vizetelly and Francis Lawley.

The death of Stonewall Jackson in 1863 had created considerable public interest, and Chapman & Hall commissioned a short biography of him from Catherine Hopley. It came out later that year, and though it went through three editions, *Stonewall Jackson, late General of the Confederate States Army: a Biographical Sketch and an Outline of his Virginian Campaigns,* was not well received, one reviewer calling it "steeped in sentimentalism and short on scholarship."

Another subject of great public interest was the CSS *Alabama*, which, in the words of her captain, "attracted the attention of the book-makers — those cormorants ever on the look-out for a speculation." They were soon at work. A pamphlet entitled *The Cruise of the Alabama*, based on the journal of her boarding officer, George Townley Fullam, was published at Liverpool in 1863. This formed the basis of a long article in *All the Year Round*, and another edition was brought out by a London printer, Adolphe Schulze, under the title of *Our Cruise on the Confederate States War Steamer Alabama*.[37]

The Alabama and the Kearsarge. An Account of the Naval Engagement in the British Channel, on Sunday, June 19, 1864 was compiled by Frederick Milnes Edge, who had interviewed both Union and Confederate survivors in Cherbourg, as well as French eyewitnesses, and published by W. Ridgway. *The Career of the Alabama, No. 290. From July 29, 1862 to June 19, 1864* was also cobbled together from reports in the *Times, Standard* and *Daily News*, and rushed out by Dorrell & Son, a firm of booksellers and stationers.

The illustrated weeklies published drawings of the sinking of the *Alabama* by the *Kearsarge* and a reconstruction of it, painted by a naval artist called Captain J. W. Anderson, was photographed and published by Oxford Street photographer Frederic Jones as a carte-de-visite, entitled "Action off Cherbourg, 19th June 1864."[38]

Before the battle, Captain Semmes had given his journals for safe keeping to a representative of the firm of Saunders, Otley, who had also published *Ordnance Instructions* for the Confederate States Navy. He was now persuaded to allow the publication of extracts from

them, and *The Cruise of the Alabama and the Sumter. From the Private Journals and Other Papers of Commander R. Semmes, C.S.N., and Other Officers*, was out by the beginning of August. One of the first people to read it was Benjamin Moran: "Last night I bought and read the 'Cruise of the Alabama and Sumter, by Semmes' ... As a literary performance it is poor; but it contains certain facts that will be very useful some day against GB," he observed vindictively.[39]

Despite Moran's disparaging comments, it was a success, a second edition following within weeks, as well as a special "Confederate States edition" on thin paper, intended to be shipped through the blockade. It was reprinted in America (New York, 1864), and translated into French (Paris, 1864) and, somewhat surprisingly, into Dutch (Zwolle, 1865). An abridged edition called *The Log of the Alabama and the Sumter* was published in December 1864. In spite of all this, Semmes apparently made no money out of it, and later, in the preface to his *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869), made it clear he disapproved of it, calling it "a meagre and barren record." He claimed that its anonymous author, whoever he was, had neither the knowledge nor the experience to interpret his journals properly and do justice to the subject.

When Captain Semmes arrived in London in June 1864, Mrs. Rose Greenhow had been there for some months. Born in Maryland in 1817, Rose O'Neal Greenhow was a Washington political hostess with all the right connections. A widow with a reputation for intrigue, and known to some as "Rebel Rose," she was arrested and imprisoned for some months for operating a spy ring in the Federal capital. Deported to Richmond in 1862, in August of the following year Mrs. Greenhow was sent to Europe as an unofficial emissary for the Confederacy. With her youngest daughter and several other passengers from the Confederate States, she traveled, via Bermuda, in the steamer *Harriet Pinckney* and arrived at Falmouth, Cornwall, in September 1863.

She divided her time between London and Paris, writing and lecturing on behalf of the Southern cause, and also arranged for the publication of her book, *My Imprisonment and the First Year of Abolition Rule at Washington*. Published in November 1863 by Richard Bentley, who had already brought out two accounts of travel in the Confederate States, as well as the influential writings of James Spence, it was dedicated to "the brave soldiers who have fought and bled in this our glorious struggle for freedom." In spite of its rather uninspiring title, *My Imprisonment* enhanced its author's growing reputation, making her into a celebrity in both England and France, where she had a private audience with Emperor Napoleon III.

On her way to England, Rose Greenhow had encountered Georgiana Walker, the wife of Major Norman Walker, the Confederate agent in Bermuda. In December 1863 Mrs. Walker noted in her diary:

> I recd. a letter from Mrs. Greenhow. She has been wonderfully well received in England and her book is pronounced a "success." I do not wonder at that, for she is a very clever woman, and has the ability to show those Yankees up in their true character. She says a smart thing in her letter. She writes "I consider the cultivation of my good looks a duty which I owe to my country." She needs no cultivation of *beauty*, for Providence has blessed her with a high order of *that*. She is one of the most beautiful women I ever saw. She knows this and like a sensible woman, does not pretend to think the contrary.[40]

An imposing figure, theatrical in manner, and quick-witted, Rose Greenhow enjoyed the social and literary life of London, becoming a familiar figure at fashionable gatherings.

Both Mrs. Rose O. Greenhow and Mrs. Georgiana G. Walker lodged at this house in Sackville Street, Piccadilly, in 1864. (Author's photograph)

When she herself came to London, in July 1864, Mrs. Walker found herself living for a while in the same house in Sackville Street as Mrs. Greenhow, and observed:

> She has certainly had the *entrée* to the very highest society. The Lords & Ladies & Duchesses are her constant visitors, & her invitations to dinner parties & balls are innumerable. She is to dine with Lady Palmerston soon, & has gone thro the rounds of most of the others.[41]

One of her neighbors in Sackville Street was Commander Maury, and other Confederate associates included Henry Hotze and the Rev. Francis Tremlett. Lord Wharncliffe recalled a dinner conversation with her at Lady Chesterfield's house in Grosvenor Square, in a letter she was destined never to receive.[42]

In August 1864 Mrs. Greenhow joined the steamer *Condor* at Greenock, Scotland, to return to the Confederacy. One of Alexander Collie's blockade-runners, the *Condor,* was commanded by Captain William N.W. Hewett, an officer on leave from the Royal Navy, who used the alias Samuel P. Ridge. Off Fort Fisher, North Carolina, the vessel ran aground and Rose Greenhow was drowned while struggling to get ashore.

Although the event took place on October 1, it was not reported in the *Times* until November 5. One of those who knew of it before then was James Spence, who expressed his deep regrets in a letter to Lord Wharncliffe:

> I am sure you would feel as I did, deeply grieved at the tidings of Mrs Greenhow's death ... I believe she was drowned in getting on shore and the only one lost ... Poor thing — so bright and ... so cold now. None in this country ... will so much regret her sad fate. She had faults, and who has not, but she had great qualities far beyond the average ... I have known her to speak with an eloquence and power I have never heard the equal to in a woman.[43]

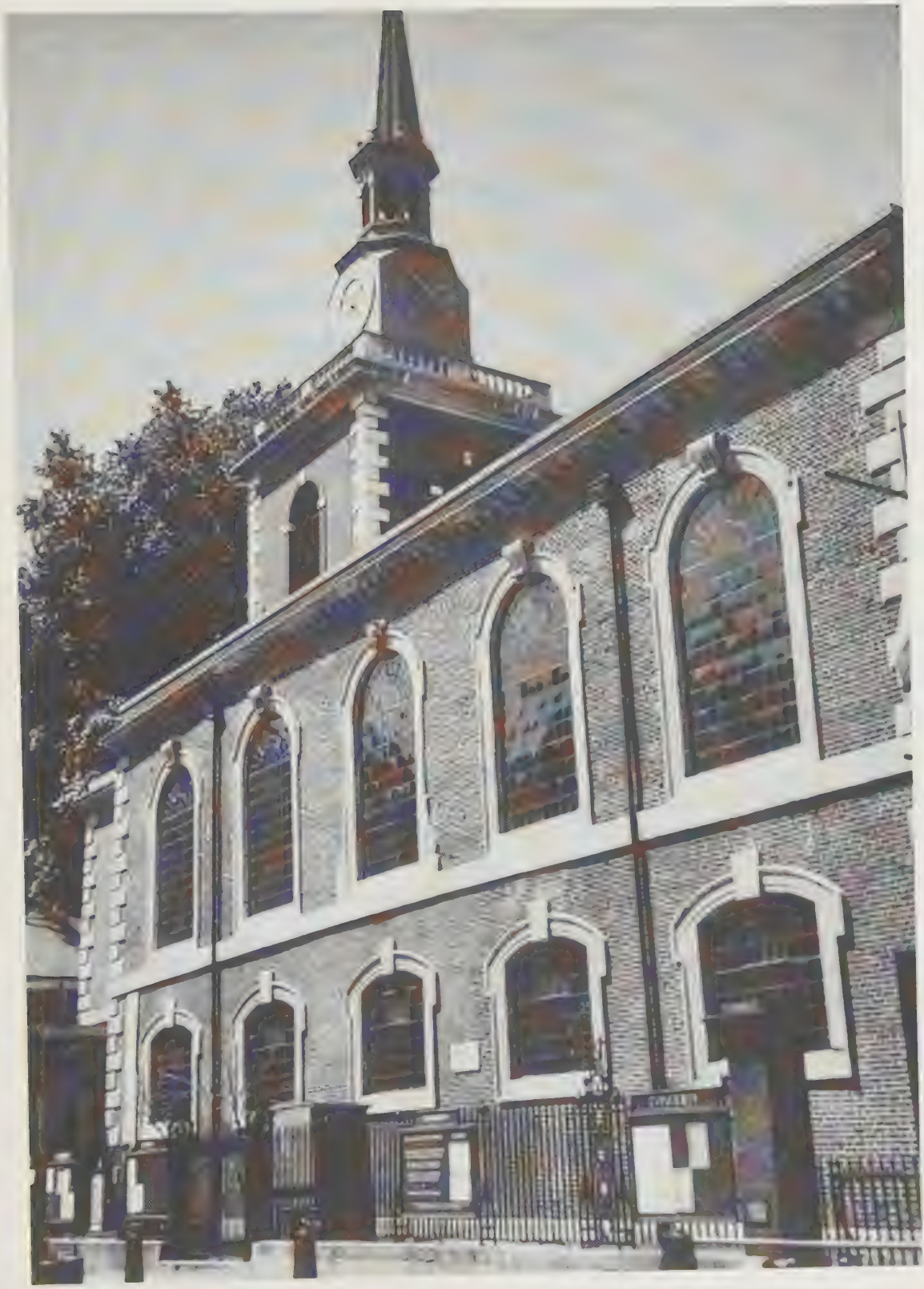
Alexander Collie's comment, written after the report of her death had appeared in the *Times*, was more matter-of-fact: "Mrs. Greenhow's fate is decided at last and we can lament her loss without laying blame on those who though near at hand were powerless to aid her."[44]

In the meantime, another well-known Confederate had appeared in London. Isabelle Boyd, better known as Belle Boyd, or, as French newspapers called her, "La Belle Rebelle," was a former spy and courier who had been imprisoned in the same Washington jail as Mrs. Greenhow. Sent to England in March 1864 with Confederate dispatches, the blockade-runner in which she was traveling was captured, and she was subsequently banished to Canada. When she finally reached London, she called on Henry Hotze to inform him that the dispatches she was carrying had been destroyed. Belle then surprised everyone by proceeding to marry a former Union naval officer, Samuel W. Hardinge, who had been involved in her capture.

The wedding took place on August 25, 1864 and the next day the *Morning Post* reported:

> A Confederate Wedding
>
> St James's Church, Piccadily was yesterday the scene of a romantic episode in the fratricidal war now raging on the American continent; as, at the altar of that sacred edifice, Miss Belle Boyd ... pledged her troth to Mr Sam Wylde Hardinge, formerly an officer in the Federal naval service.

The wedding guests included Major Caleb Huse, Henry Hotze, John L. O'Sullivan and James Williams. There was also Captain John Fearn, who after yet another abortive mission,



St. James's Church, Piccadilly, where Belle Boyd was married in November 1864. (Author's photograph)

this time to Mexico, was now back in London as a Confederate agent. After the ceremony, everyone adjourned to the Brunswick Hotel in Jermyn Street for the wedding breakfast.

On November 7, to Benjamin Moran's astonishment, Sam Hardinge appeared at the U.S. legation in Upper Portland Place, in search of a loan. Two days later he was there again and Moran thought it extremely impudent of him, after "associating with rebels and marrying a spy," to be begging for money.[45] Hardinge returned to the United States later that month, but was arrested and imprisoned until the following February.

With her husband in a Federal prison, Belle now found herself increasingly short of money, and turned to George Augustus Sala, a prolific, freelance journalist, who in 1863–1864 had covered the Civil War for the *Daily Telegraph*. Visiting her in her Jermyn Street lodgings, he found her, "not quite friendless, in this great wilderness of London, but, what is worse, absolutely destitute of that indispensable and all-prevailing friend—*money*." Sala, who was pro-Southern, drew attention to her predicament in a letter to the *Morning Herald*, "that able and consistent defender of the Southern cause," headed "A Word to Confederate Sympathizers."[46] Some assistance was forthcoming from friends and admirers, but it was only a temporary respite, and Belle now embarked on a memoir describing her wartime adventures. Sala announced her forthcoming work in his "Echoes of the Week" column in the *Illustrated London News:*

> That famous Amazon of Secessia, Belle Boyd, now Mrs Hardinge—and whose marriage to the gallant but susceptible lieutenant whom she converted ... to Southern proclivities was one of the fashionable events of last season—is in London, and proposes, it is said, to publish her memoirs as a Secesh partisan and aide-de-camp to Stonewall Jackson. These memoirs cannot fail to be very interesting. Belle Boyd ... has suffered captivity, exile and poverty for the cause which she believes to be the true one.[47]

Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison. Written by Herself, with an introduction by "A Friend of the South" (Sala), was advertised in the *Index* on May 25, 1865 as "now ready" by Saunders, Otley.[48] In his introduction Sala claimed that the work was entirely her own, "with the exception of a few suggestions in the shape of footnotes."

Whatever the extent of Sala's contribution, the book was not well received. The *Athenaeum* thought Belle's story revealed her hardness and vanity, and disapproved of her exploits; it was, the reviewer concluded, "a very dull book."[49] The *Spectator* condemned the "unladylike qualities and saucy tone" of the narrative; "few books," wrote the reviewer, "are likely to disenchant Englishmen more thoroughly with the Confederate cause than the memoirs before us."[50] Even the *Index* remarked: "It is not according very high praise to say that it is among the best of its kind that the American war has thrown upon a glutted market," then tempered that by going on to describe it as "pleasantly, and upon the whole modestly, written, in a style ... free from any serious objection."[51]

One of the first novelists to write about the Civil War was William Stephens Hayward, who in 1862 wrote what was to be the first in a series of novels dealing with the exploits of Captain George, a pro-Confederate English adventurer. In *Hunted to Death, or Life in two Hemispheres*, the hero meets with various adventures in New York before marrying a Creole beauty in New Orleans. By the time of the second novel, *The Black Angel: a Tale of the American Civil War* (1863), he is serving with the Confederate Army in Virginia and South Carolina in the early weeks of the war, and in *The Star of the South* (1864) he is a cavalry commander at First Manassas. *The Fiery Cross; a Tale of the Great American War*, the next

George Augustus Sala, who reported the Civil War for the *Daily Telegraph* and assisted Belle Boyd with her memoirs. (Author's collection)

novel in the series, which deals with the battle of Shiloh and the capture of New Orleans, did not appear until 1866, while the final one, *The Rebel Privateer; or the Last Cruise of the Black Angel,* which includes Lincoln's assassination, was not published until 1874. The first two novels in the series were published by Ward & Lock, the last three by Charles H. Clarke.

The Elopement: A Tale of the Confederate States of America (1863) was brought out by William Freeman, the first publisher of the *Index*. It was by "Miss L. Fairfax," a pseudonym which hid the identity of Celia Logan, an American journalist, novelist and dramatist, who came to Europe in 1858, married an artist called M.K. Kellog, and worked as a reader and editor for a London publishing house. The subtitle is rather misleading: most of the novel is set in pre-war America, much of it in the North, and only the last two chapters are concerned with the war itself. It is the story of the unfortunate Amanda, "a white negress" from Georgia, whose lover is killed at the first battle of Manassas, and who later, at New Orleans, throws herself into the Mississippi to save her virtue. "General Felun," the military governor there, is a thinly veiled portrait of Benjamin Butler.

Nothing seems to be known about Florence J. O'Connor, the author of *The Heroine of the Confederacy; or Truth and Justice* (Harrison, 1864), a literary curiosity, part novel, part historical narrative which incorporates official notices and correspondence. It is dedicated to Colonel Robert H. Barrow, C.S.A., "The Hero of Belmont" (an early, inconclusive engagement in Missouri), and illustrated with photographs of the author, Colonel Barrow and Lieutenant Beverley Kennon, C.S.N. The "heroine" is Natalie de Villerie, an orphan "who shone as a star of the first magnitude in every assembly," and background events include First Manassas, the *Trent* incident and the fall of New Orleans.

A number of other novels about the Civil War South, by authors like Ouida (Marie Louise de la Ramée), Benjamin Disraeli, R. D. Blackmore and Percy Greg (who had written for the *Index*), appeared in the 1870s and early 1880s. One American critic has commented on "the duration of this pro–Confederate tradition in English fiction," remarking, "it is surprising that so much sentiment and romance could be concentrated on a way of American life which before the war had attracted almost no attention from English novelists." Though "the wartime novels had ... only fictionalized the view of the war spread by *The Times*, the *Saturday Review* and most of the other influential journals of England," they were really continuing an anti–Yankee tradition which had started as far back as the 1830s.[52]

In the end, the cultural impact of the Civil War turned out to be fairly short-lived. It found its most enduring expression in the published accounts of life in the Confederate South written by observers like Arthur Fremantle, Fitzgerald Ross and William Russell, and its most visible one in John Foley's statue of Stonewall Jackson, erected at Richmond, Virginia, in 1875, with money collected in London from British sympathizers.

10

Support for the South?

A word or two of sympathy, that costs us not a penny,
We give the gallant Southerners, the few against the many,
We say their noble fortitude of final triumph presages,
And praise in Blackwood's Magazine *JEFF DAVIS and his Messages.*
—*Punch*, September 5, 1863

The humorous magazine *Punch* clearly thought that English support for the South did not run very deep. The extent of that support is still a matter of debate among historians, some of whom now think it was not just limited to the middle and upper classes, as was once supposed, but was more widely spread throughout the population.

There was a natural tendency by some Confederates, both during and after the war, to exaggerate the amount of support they thought they enjoyed. Caleb Huse believed that English sympathy for the South was universal and James Mason was also certain that the Confederacy enjoyed the entire support of those sections of society which had an opinion. In his memoirs, James Bulloch wrote: "Northern men often complained of the sympathy exhibited ... in England for the Confederate cause. I have reason to believe that at least five out of every seven in the middle and upper classes in England were favourable to the South...," though how he arrived at that estimate is impossible to say.[1]

Other Confederates saw things rather differently. In a letter written in January 1863, Matthew Maury remarked: "Many of our friends here have mistaken British admiration of Southern pluck and newspaper spite at Yankee insolence as Southern sympathy. No such thing. There is no love for the South here. In its American policy the British government fairly represents the British people."[2] A few months later Douglas Forrest noted in his diary: "There is a great deal of sympathy felt for us in England & there it ends. As a distinguished gentleman said the other day to me, 'England will aid us when her aid can avail us nothing & not before.'"[3]

On his return from England in January 1864, J.E. Ward of Georgia told Robert Kean, head of the Confederate Bureau of War, that he had met no Englishman who did not wish the Confederates success, but at the same time, none who wanted Great Britain to intervene.[4] After the war, John Peyton offered an equally skeptical view of support for the South, concluding, "They [the English] patted her on the back as the weaker of the two combatants ... not because they loved her, but because they disliked the Yankees," though he admitted, "Confederate flags, manufactured by wholesale, were at many houses hoisted

at dinner, over dishes of smoking roast beef, and hung gracefully from the walls of parlours and saloons."[5]

Like the Confederates, Northerners also sometimes exaggerated the extent of public sympathy for the South. In June 1862, Benjamin Moran observed despairingly, "British officials openly aid rebel sympathizers to violate the blockade, and the Queen's proclamation [of neutrality] ... It is clear ... that the entire British people ... have openly and shamefully aided the rebels while hypocritically professing neutrality."[6] The following month, the sight of well-dressed Britons celebrating recent "rebel successes" (probably the Seven Days' Battles) at Blanchard's restaurant in Soho enraged him.

"The late cessation of our progress has had the effect of encouraging the hopes of the people here who sympathize with the rebellion. I think there can now be little doubt that they constitute much the greater part of the active classes of this kingdom," remarked U.S. minister Charles Francis Adams to Secretary of State William H. Seward in July 1862. In December of that year, writing his son in the Union Army, he expressed the opinion that "the great body of the aristocracy and the wealthy commercial class are anxious to see the United States go to pieces." In another letter, written in September 1863, he elaborated on this theme, observing that while the aristocracy were very much against the United States, they did "little or nothing to sustain the rebellion," whereas "the commercial and moneyed people go a step further and furnish more or less of material aid."[7]

"All the mercantile & upper classes are entirely against the North," remarked U.S. agent John Forbes, in a sweeping generalization in March 1863, but added, "the emancipation movement is coming to our rescue, and the people are with us and ... the vicious London *Times* shakes to hear them."[8] Some ten years after the war the *New York Tribune* observed, "The public feeling in London [then] was almost universally in favour of the South."[9]

As the war continued, the level of support for the South fluctuated according to its military fortunes. In a dispatch to Washington in July 1862, Consul Freeman Morse wrote: "Our check, if it be not a reverse, before Richmond [the Seven Days' Battles] has caused increased activity among the rebel agents here, and given them and their numerous friends here great confidence in the early establishment of 'Southern Independence.'"[10]

"When Lee was known to be on his march," Morse observed in August 1863, "it excited very general interest here and a strong desire in influential circles for his success. This desire was openly proclaimed in chop houses, club rooms, railway carriages and in most places of resort for what is called here the better class of society."[11] The Confederate defeat at Gettysburg, together with the loss of Vicksburg, caused consternation. "The news of the check sustained by our forces at Gettysburg, coupled with the reported fall of Vicksburg, was so unexpected as to spread very general dismay not only among the active sympathizers of our cause, but even among those who take merely a selfish interest in the great struggle," reported Henry Hotze to Judah Benjamin, while Henry Adams, writing his brother, described, no doubt gleefully, how the salons of London were in tears when the surrender of Vicksburg became known.[12]

"Selfish interest" undoubtedly played an important part in the support which either side enjoyed. Even James Spence, whose efforts on behalf of the Confederacy resulted in the neglect of his own business, was not immune from this. In a letter to Judah Benjamin, Henry Hotze remarked that Spence "contends that while his espousal of our cause arises from sincere conviction ... he never pretended that he sought a financial connection with the Government without expectation of profit to himself as well as to us ... and he complained that he

is not only disappointed in his just expectation but a loser to a ruinous extent by reason of that connection."[13] He was subsequently compensated by the Confederate government for his losses.

Secession had been regarded by many English people as inevitable and irreversible; it was something the North should accept, and the war was therefore futile and unjustified. When it came, however, there was no lack of admiration for the South's military skills and gallantry, its bid for nationhood seen as a struggle for freedom, on a par with that previously witnessed in several European and South American countries. "The Confederates are doing their own work alone, nobly and successfully, and they have deserved and obtained the admiration and sympathy of the world," wrote banker John S. Gilliat to a correspondent in Richmond.[14]

Support for the South was not necessarily seen as an endorsement of slavery; indeed, once the South was independent and subject to European influences, many believed the "peculiar institution" would disappear. "It will surely depart as a result of Southern independence and the world's action upon it, as a taper will die out in the sunlight," predicted James Spence in one of his letters to the *Times*.[15]

Furthermore, as an advocate of free trade, the Confederacy was perceived as Britain's natural ally, as opposed to the Northern States, whose democratic system and growing economic power were viewed with dislike and apprehension. Few doubted that the South would achieve her independence, either on the battlefield or as the result of a negotiated settlement with a North grown weary of the struggle to force her back into the Union. Indeed, for much of the war, the possibility that the South might be defeated was not one which was regarded as worthy of serious consideration.

The thinking within some sections of the British government is illustrated by correspondence between Edmund Hammond, Permanent Under-Secretary at the Foreign Office, and Sir Austen Layard, M.P., Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. In mid–July 1862, after General McClellan's failure to capture Richmond during the Seven Days' Battles, the pro–Southern Hammond was of the opinion that the Confederacy had almost completely established its claim to recognition, but that the British should not interfere until "the Northern cause is more thoroughly degraded." Ten days later he was discussing the matter of funds for a mission to the Confederacy, which before long, it appeared, "we must be prepared to accredit." Yet he failed to grasp the importance of Lee's failure at Antietam and the significance of the prelimary Emancipation Proclamation, and by the end of October had to admit that the idea of recognizing the South had been abandoned because of "its inexpediency."[16]

The British Cabinet itself, uncertain of the outcome of Lee's invasion of Maryland in September 1862, had indeed paused in its deliberations over mediation in the war and recognition of the Confederacy, and then postponed the matter indefinitely. In the circumstances, Chancellor of the Exchequer William E. Gladstone's speech at Newcastle-on-Tyne on October 7, which gave the impression he was speaking for the government, was particularly unfortunate:

> We may have our own opinions about slavery; we may be for or against the South; but there is no doubt that Jefferson Davis and other leaders of the South have made an army; they are making, it appears, a navy; and they have made what is more than either — they have made a nation (loud cheers) ... We may anticipate with certainty the success of the Southern States so far as regards their separation from the North ["Hear, hear"].[17]

Prime Minister Lord Palmerston who pursued a policy of British neutrality throughout the Civil War. (Author's collection)

Although Lord Palmerston's Liberal government had adopted a policy of neutrality, there was considerable support for the Southern cause in Parliament. It was not a party political issue — individual members of Parliament in both Liberal and Conservative parties were sympathetic to the Confederacy. For instance, William Lindsay and John Roebuck, who were two of the principal spokesmen for the Southern lobby during the Civil War, were, respectively, a Liberal and a Conservative, while William Gregory was a Liberal-Conservative (i.e., a Conservative who usually voted with the Liberals).

Exaggerated claims were sometimes made about the extent of Confederate support in Parliament. Henry Hotze's statement that five-sixths of the House of Commons and all but two members of the House of Lords supported them was undoubtedly wishful thinking. Similarly, William Gregory, who should have known better, wrote in his autobiography: "The feelings of the upper-classes undoubtedly preponderated in favour of the South, so much so that when I said in a speech that the adherents of the North in the House of Commons might all be driven home in one omnibus, the remark was received with much cheering."[18]

Prominent pro–Southern members of the House of Commons included Lord Robert Cecil, William E. Duncombe, Sir James Fergusson, Thomas C. Haliburton, John L. Hopwood, Sir Edward Kerrison, John Laird, William S. Lindsay, George M.W. Peacocke, Frederick Peel, John A. Roebuck and James Whiteside. In the early part of the war, they were led by William H. Gregory, M.P. for County Galway, Ireland. Born in Dublin in 1816, William

Cambridge House, Piccadilly, Palmerston's London residence, was visited by a number of Confederates, including propagandist Edwin De Leon and Commissioner James Mason. (Author's photograph)

Henry Gregory had first been elected to Parliament in 1842 and, though he lost his seat in 1847, was reelected ten years later. His predilection for the Confederate cause seems to have been formed during a visit to America in 1859–1860.

In the House of Lords there was support for the South from men like the Marquess of Bath, Lord Campbell, Lord Eustace Cecil, the Earl of Donoughmore, the Marquess of Lothian and Lord Wharncliffe. Two of these were moved to express their feelings in print: Lord Campbell's speech to the House about Confederate recognition was published in 1863, while the Marquess of Lothian was the author of a pamphlet, *The Confederate Secession*, published the following year.

A number of members of Parliament visited the Confederacy during the war. Among them, in the autumn of 1861, was Crimean War veteran Sir James Fergusson, M.P. for Ayrshire, who was accompanied by the Hon. Robert Bourke (not yet an M.P.). While there, they watched a review of the Stonewall Brigade by Generals Joseph E. Johnston, Pierre G. T. Beauregard and Gustavus W. Smith. The future author Catherine Hopley, whom they encountered, was told that, contrary to what she might have heard, they were there in an unofficial capacity and that England would remain neutral. They were followed, in February 1863, by the Marquess of Hartington, M.P. for North Lancashire; in December 1864 by radical reformer George Thompson, the former M.P. for Tower Hamlets, whose particular parliamentary interests had included free trade and the extension of the ballot; and in January 1865 by Thomas L. Conolly, the Irish M.P. for Donegal, who arrived in the blockade-runner *Owl*, just in time to witness the collapse of the Confederacy, which he recorded in his diary.[19]

The main topics of parliamentary interest in the early months of the war were Confederate privateering and the treatment of British subjects living in the South. These were being "encouraged" to enlist as early as the summer of 1861 according to journalist William H. Russell, and the introduction of conscription in 1862 exacerbated the situation. Foreigners who did not have permanent residence in the Confederate States were exempt from military service, but this was a controversial ruling which was not always adhered to, and was further complicated by state laws often requiring militia service from all able-bodied white males in the appropriate age group. In July 1863 the House of Commons heard how Robert R. Belsham, an Englishman living in Alabama, had been dipped repeatedly in a tank of water because of his reluctance to join the Confederate Army.[20] British consuls in the Confederacy, who had remained in their posts after secession, attempted to safeguard the rights of British nationals, but this brought them into conflict with both state and Confederate authorities and probably contributed to the decision to expel them in October 1863.

Not until March 7, 1862 did the first major Civil War debate, on the effectiveness of the blockade, take place. It was introduced by William Gregory, who contended that it was a paper blockade, maintained by warships cruising up and down the coast, and not by ones lying off the main ports, and that many vessels had already successfully evaded it. Though the motion was supported by M.P.s like Sir James Fergusson, Lord Robert Cecil and William Lindsay, the government clearly had no intention of challenging the legality of the Federal blockade, which was tantamount to recognizing the South, and the motion was withdrawn without a division.

Henry Adams, son of the U.S. minister, who frequently attended the House of Commons, was present on this occasion, and heard Gregory make his speech: "It was listened to

as you would listen to a funeral eulogy. His attacks on us ... and on our blockade were cheered with just enough energy to show the animus that existed in a large proportion of the members, but his motion ... was tossed aside without a division," he wrote his brother, who was serving with the Union Army.[21]

Lindsay, who had supported Gregory's motion, was to introduce one of his own some four months later and on July 18, 1862 the matter of mediation came before the House. If only to save the cotton industry, England should intervene to stop the war, Lindsay argued. There was much opposition to this, and again the motion was withdrawn without coming to a vote.

By the beginning of 1863, leadership of the Southern lobby in the House of Commons had passed to William S. Lindsay and John A. Roebuck, Gregory having concluded that he could do nothing further for the Confederate cause. William Schaw Lindsay, who had been a member of Parliament since 1854 and currently represented Sunderland, was a self-made man. Born at Ayr, Scotland, in 1816 and orphaned at an early age, he started life as a merchant seaman, then in 1840 went into business at Hartlepool. Moving to London in 1845, he rose to become the head of William S. Lindsay & Company, one of the largest shipowning firms in the world.

John Arthur Roebuck was M.P. for Sheffield. Born in Madras, India, in 1802 and educated in Canada, he returned to England in 1824 and trained as a barrister. He first entered Parliament in 1832 and became well-known for his outspoken, radical views, rather priding himself on the nickname of "Tear 'Em," given him by *Punch* on account of his bulldoglike ferocity in debates. By the 1860s he was described as "a small man, shabbily dressed, leaning on a stick, his face careworn, his voice feeble; but not a man to be lightly encountered — one who ... is still able to withstand his foes, and to lend good aid to his friends."[22]

In his autobiography, Henry Adams recalled them both: "Lindsay, about whom the whole web of rebel interests clung — rams, cruisers, munitions, and Confederate loan; social introductions and parliamentary tactics"; and Roebuck, "an eccentric of eccentrics ... notorious for poor judgment and worse temper ... rather a comical personage -- a favorite subject for *Punch* to laugh at — with a bitter tongue and a mind enfeebled ... by ... egotism."[23]

On June 30, 1863, Roebuck introduced the debate on his motion: "That an humble address be presented to Her Majesty, praying that She will be graciously pleased to enter into negotiations with the Great Powers of Europe, for the purpose of obtaining their co-operation in the recognition of the independence of the Confederate States of America."[24] There was a long debate which was adjourned, and not concluded until July 13, but the motion never came to a vote.

As if to encourage the Great Powers, Roebuck and Lindsay took it upon themselves to request an audience with the Emperor Napoleon III. Afterwards, there was some confusion about what was actually said in the course of it, and this attempt at would-be diplomacy was not well received.

Sir John Trelawny, M.P. for Tavistock, Devon, noted in his diary:

> Roebuck ... moved his resolution proposing to take diplomatic steps towards recognition of the Confederate States in America. I read his speech which was deemed to be a clever one & amusing, but I do not think that he will have a great many followers ... Roebuck rather startled the House by his account of his interview with the Emperor of the French. Certainly, R. takes extraordinary steps. [John] Bright described him as being not an ambassador extraordinary, but *most* extraordinary — & insinuated inaccuracy in the version given of what passed.[25]

Though he was not now in favor of European intervention, Gladstone still believed that Southern independence would ultimately be achieved, and said so:

> We do not believe that the restoration of the American Union by force is attainable. I believe that the public opinion of this country is unanimous upon that subject — well, almost unanimous ... I do not think there is any real or serious grounds for doubt as to the issue of this contest.[26]

The result was described with malicious glee by Henry Adams, when writing to his brother:

> We too have had our excitements this week, as it was the time of the regular annual motion for recognition by the English copperheads. There was a hot debate in Parliament, but the Southern spokesman succeeded in tripping himself up ... So far as our affair is concerned, Mr. Roebuck has done us more good than all our friends.[27]

This was to be the last major debate on the Civil War in the House of Commons, although over the following months there were questions about the Laird rams, the Confederate cruisers, the CSS *Georgia*, and, as late as July 1864, yet another about mediation from William Lindsay.

At a more popular level, Gladstone's speech of June 30, 1863 was echoed a day or two later in an editorial in the *Illustrated Times*:

> The conviction that the Confederate States must sooner or later be recognized by the rest of the nations of the world is every day becoming stronger, and is but faintly disputed even by the most zealous friends of the North ... who have now generally abandoned the hope that the Federals will ever be able to restore the Union by force of arms.[28]

On the day Gladstone made his speech, Lee's forces were nearing the little Pennsylvania town of Gettysburg, while the *Illustrated Times* editorial appeared on the day that Vicksburg surrendered.

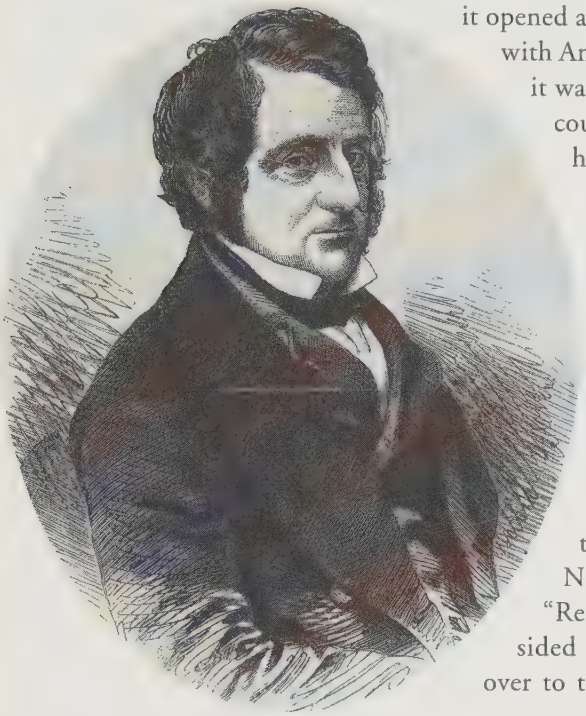
As late as January 1865, Alexander Collie, a hard-headed businessman and far from being an idealistic dreamer, wrote to Lord Wharncliffe, a prominent Confederate supporter:

> Bad news have [sic] reached us as regards military matters from the South ... but my faith in its ultimate triumph is as strong as it ever was. We ought to be prepared to hear of Wilmington and Charleston being captured, and of Richmond being evacuated, for events reach in that direction; but, in spite of all, the South will wear the North out and gain its independence.[29]

Many British visitors to the South had been convinced of this: Samuel Day, a journalist, Fitzgerald Ross, a professional soldier, and William Corsan, a businessman, were all certain the Confederacy would never be defeated and would achieve her independence in due course.

The Confederate States of America was already being seen by many as a de facto nation, and when a new reference work, *The Statesman's Yearbook*, began publication in 1864, its publishers, Macmillan & Company, devoted sixteen pages to it, giving details of its constitution and government, revenue and expenditure, population, trade and commerce — not because the firm was pro-Confederate, but simply for reasons of completeness. It featured in the next edition as well, but within months of publication, the Confederacy was already part of history.

Reuter's News Agency had been started in London in 1851 by the German journalist Paul Julius Reuter. It had grown rapidly, and by 1861 was worldwide in its coverage of financial and commercial news. Its headquarters were in Fleet Street, but at the start of the Civil War



John A. Roebuck, one of the Confederacy's most vehement and outspoken supporters in the House of Commons. (*Illustrated London News*)

it opened a second office near Finsbury Square to deal with American news. Towards the end of July 1861, it was visited by Dudley Mann, who was told it could use all the news from the Confederacy he was able to supply. There were allegations, then and later, that Reuter's was pro–Southern, something it strongly denied since its agents gathered news from both sides.

Benjamin Moran, however, was in no doubt he knew where Reuter's sympathies lay, noting in his journal in August 1861 that its telegrams always seemed to favor the South: "The German, Reuter ... has evidently been bought up by the rebels," he concluded. His comments in November were even more sweeping: "Reuter's telegrams of yesterday are all one-sided again. The slaveocracy have bought him over to their side, together with nearly the whole press of England."[30]

And the press, it is true, was not impartial. At the time of secession, leading newspapers had been fairly sympathetic to the North, but when it became clear that Lincoln's principal war aim was preserving the Union rather than freeing the slaves, press opinion shifted. This pro–Southern bias was reinforced by the Federal rout at First Manassas, when it began to look as if the Confederacy might indeed secure its independence. Nor was it greatly affected by the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which *Punch* derisively called "Abe Lincoln's Last Card," a public admission that the North's military tactics had failed.

"The English press is more Southern than the South itself," observed the German philosopher Karl Marx, then the London correspondent of the *New York Herald*, in November 1862. A year later, Major Edward Hamley came to much the same conclusion, remarking that "with a few not particularly respectable exceptions, the press here is favourable to the South." And writing just after the war, John Peyton also agreed that "the leading daily papers kept up a constant fire for the South."[31]

With many newspapers catering to a middle- and upper-class readership, there was a tendency on the part of editors to play down Northern successes and minimize Southern defeats. "So completely has the public become convinced of the correctness of the representations continually made in the London press of the desperate condition of our affairs, and of the triumphal progress of General Lee, that the expectation was almost universal to hear of his taking possession of Washington," wrote U.S. minister Charles Francis Adams to Secretary of State William H. Seward in July 1863.[32] When news of the surrender of Vicksburg was received that month, many newspaper editors at first refused to believe it.

At that time, the morning papers were usually regarded as more important and authoritative than the evening ones, and their editors were men of influence. Of the eight then

published in London — the *Daily News* (Thomas Walker), the *Daily Telegraph* (Edward Lawson), the *Morning Advertiser* (James Grant), the *Morning Herald* (Thomas Hamber), the *Morning Post* (Algernon Borthwick), the *Morning Star* (Samuel Lucas), the *Standard* (Thomas Hamber) and the *Times* (John Delane) — only the *Daily News* and the *Morning Star*, which *Punch* referred to disparagingly as the "London New York Herald," supported the North, and even their proprietors, alleged Benjamin Moran, were "rebel in their tendencies."[33] They were mostly located in Fleet Street and its environs, though the *Morning Post* was further west, in Wellington Street, on the edge of Covent Garden, and the *Times* was in its famous home in Printing House Square, near Blackfriars Bridge.

The evening papers were similarly divided in their allegiance, with the *Evening Herald*, the *Evening Standard*, the *Globe* and the *Sun* favoring the South, and the *Evening Star* and the *Express* (the evening edition of the *Daily News*) backing the North. At the time of the *Trent* incident, the *London American* summarized the sympathies of what it regarded as the leading English newspapers as follows: *Morning Star* (Union); *Morning Post* (Secession); the *Times* (Secession); *Daily News* (Union); *Daily Telegraph* (Rabid Secession); *Morning Advertiser* (Secession); *Standard* (Rabid Secession); and *Globe* (Secession).[34]

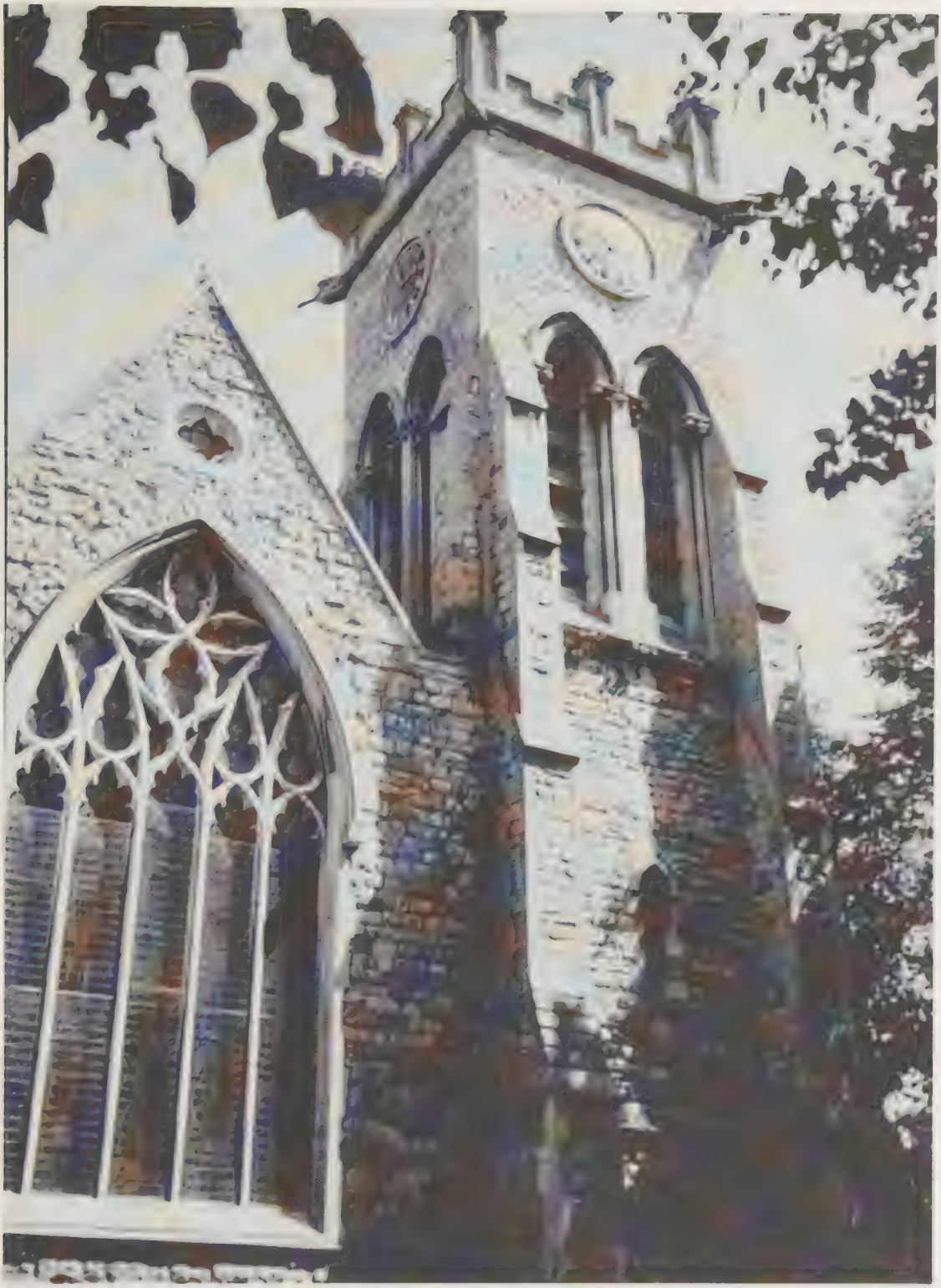
Some Church of England clergymen were sympathetic to the Confederacy. They saw slavery as having a benign influence, bringing Christianity to its servile recipients, and the Rev. William Malet, whose account of his visit to the wartime South was published in 1863, was probably not untypical. It is not without significance that, when it began publication that same year, the *Church Times* also adopted a pro–Southern viewpoint.

The best-known pro–Confederate parson in London was the Rev. Francis W. Tremlett, the vicar of St. Peter's, Belsize Park. Francis William Tremlett was born in Newfoundland in 1821 and ordained there before coming to England in 1849. In 1861 he became vicar of what was then a new parish, and was sufficiently wealthy to pay for the building of a substantial vicarage, as well as most of the church itself. During the war, he became a close friend of Commander Matthew Maury, who later described him as "the best Confederate in England," and with whom he carried on an extensive correspondence. He also corresponded with other Confederate naval officers, including Captain Semmes, Commanders North, Sinclair and Pegram (the former captain of the *Nashville*) and Lieutenant Murdaugh.

A number of Confederates who visited London are known to have stayed at a house in nearby Buckland Crescent, which served as the vicarage until 1862, and others lodged in the vicarage itself, which became known as "the home of the Confederates" or "the rebels' roost." Captain Semmes, who had been introduced to the Rev. Tremlett by Commander Bulloch and Commander North, stayed with him twice, and described "the Confederate parson" in his *Memoirs of Service Afloat* (1869):

> a somewhat portly gentleman, with an unmistakable English face, and dressed in clerical garb — not over clerical either, for, but for his white cravat, and the cut of the collar of his coat, you would not have taken him for a clergyman at all ... The name of the Rev. Francis W. Tremlett, of the Parsonage, in Belsize Park, near Hampstead, London, dwells in my memory, and in that of every other Confederate who ever came in contact with him — and they are not few — like a household word.[35]

John Peyton dedicated his book, *The American Crisis* (1867), to "the Rev. F.W. Tremlett ... in admiration of ... his unbounded kindness, and hospitality to all Confederate exiles ..." and later praised him for "the liberal hospitality extended to all friends of the South then in



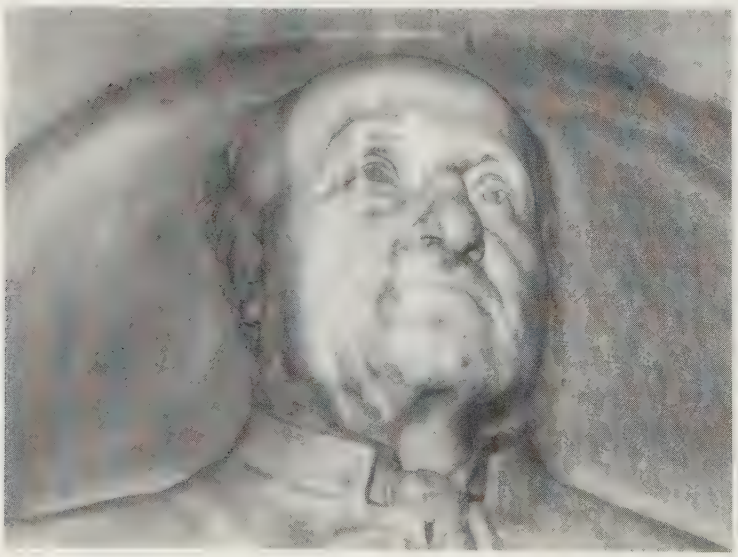
St. Peter's Church, Belsize Park, whose vicar, the Rev. Francis W. Tremlett, was a staunch supporter of the Confederacy. His sermon on *Christian Brotherhood*, delivered here in November 1863, made special reference to the Civil War in America and sold many thousands of copies. (Author's photograph)

London," while another Confederate, Commander Pegram, writing to Tremlett's sister, Louisa, remarked that he could never repay all the acts of kindness and generosity he had received at the hands of her and her brother.[36]

Sympathy for the Southern cause, however, did not usually extend to Nonconformist ministers. In December 1861, at the time of the *Trent* incident, the Rev. Dr. John Waddington, the pastor of Union Street Congregational Chapel in Southwark, wrote to Sir Austen Layard at the Foreign Office deploring the idea of British support for the South and the possibility of war with the North. He wrote again in November 1862, expressing his hopes that the British government would not give any help to the slavery cause.[37]

There was also support for the Confederacy among some writers and intellectuals. Those favoring the South included historian and essayist Thomas Carlyle, poet and critic Matthew Arnold, historian Sir John Acton (who was also a Liberal M.P. and friend of Gladstone), novelist Edward Bulwer-Lytton and the poet laureate Alfred Tennyson. Confederate journalist and poet John R. Thompson became a friend of Carlyle, "the Sage of Chelsea," who though publicly neutral, nevertheless hoped for a Southern victory. He questioned Thompson about the Confederacy, its resources, its army, and its supplies of food and powder, and made many inquiries about General Lee, whom he greatly admired, during his visits to Carlyle's house in Cheyne Row, Chelsea.

The first pro–Southern organization in the metropolis was the London Confederate States Aid Association, established in August 1862. Its rules and aims were set out in a pamphlet, *An Address to the British Public and all Sympathizers in Europe,* a copy of which was obtained by the U.S. minister and sent to the secretary of state in Washington. "Formed for the purpose of giving countenance and support to the Confederate States of America in their struggle to establish and maintain their independence ... all moneys received by the association [were to be] appropriated for purchasing and forwarding to the Confederate States of America the materials ... the best calculated to enable them to carry on the war, and to bring their present protracted struggle to a successful issue."[38]



Memorial to the Rev. Tremlett by Kathleen Shaw in St. Peter's Church. (Author's photograph)

Reporting on this new association, Charles Francis Adams observed wryly, in a letter to Washington, that "an office has been opened in a house in the next street to that in which I am writing, at which place meetings for discussion are held every Wednesday evening." This was in Devonshire Street, just around the corner from the U.S. legation, which was now in Upper Portland Place. The association's meetings were not open to the public at large; a card, countersigned by the secretary, was necessary for admission. Nor was open

A house in Buckland Crescent, Belsize Park, belonging to the Rev. Francis W. Tremlett, where a number of Confederate naval officers stayed during the war. (Author's photograph)

discussion encouraged: "At one of the earlier [meetings] one person appeared who ventured to question some remark made by one of the speakers, for which act he was immediately expelled."[39] Nothing more was heard of it after 1862.

The Society for Promoting the Cessation of Hostilities in America was founded in October 1863 by the Rev. Francis Tremlett, Mrs. Rose Greenhow and Commander Matthew Maury. The committee included Lord Robert Cecil, the Marquis of Lothian, Lord Wharncliffe, the Marquess of Bath, Alexander Beresford Hope and William Lindsay, and it held its meetings in Regent Street. The Society claimed to have 5,000 members, and was to prove the most active of the pro-Confederate organizations in London.

Its aims were set out in an article which appeared in the *Index* on February 11, 1864. "By wide association, by petition, by the publication of papers, by enlisting in its cause the great mass of the clergy and ministers of the gospel," it would "put all the moral pressure possible on the people and government of England, the peoples and governments in America, as by some means or other to restore the blessings of peace to that distracted country."

In May 1864 it sent a pamphlet to all members of Parliament, appealing for immediate action to end the war by mediation. Later that summer it embarked on its most ambitious enterprise, an Address from the people of Great Britain and Ireland to the people of the United States, which called on the latter to make peace with the Confederate States. Appended to the Address were 300,000 signatures, from "men of all ranks, classes, religions and politics" collected "within the short space of three weeks from its first appearance." In September Benjamin Moran noted in his journal the campaign for it, with large posters inviting people to sign the petition and men going from house to house to collect signatures. He thought the address was insulting to the loyal American people, and those who put their names to it, mostly "children and fools ... shop girls and servants."[40]

The petition, seventy-six lines in length, was published in the *Times* on October 12, 1864, together with a letter from Sir Henry De Hoghton, allegedly one of the principal subscribers to the Cotton Loan. By then it was on its way to America in the care of Joseph Parker of Manchester, to be given to the governor of New York, who, it was hoped, "would place [it] before the people of the United States of America ... with a view to secure the object of our appeal."[41] The initiative proved a failure, Secretary of State Seward refusing to accept anything not approved by the British government.

In December 1863 yet another pro-Southern organization had come into being, when a group of thirty influential gentlemen met at Arklow House in Connaught Place, the home of Alexander Beresford Hope. They were there in response to a circular signed by Beresford Hope, William Lindsay and the Hon. Robert Bourke, who had contributed articles about the Southern states and Jefferson Davis to *Blackwood's Magazine*. The object of the meeting was to form the Southern Independence Association of London. Among those present were some of the best-known names in London Confederate circles, including Lord Campbell, Lord Robert Cecil, John Gilliat, Lord Wharncliffe, the Earl of Donoughmore and William Gregory. All but two of those present agreed to join the association, whose aim was "to keep before the minds of the British public the policy and justice of recognizing the independence of the Confederate States at the earliest possible moment." Membership was to be one guinea a year, and at least eight members contributed additional funds, among them Alexander Collie.[42]

In its *Address to the Public*, issued in January 1864, the Association stated:

> Their wisdom in council, their endurance in the field, and the universal self-sacrifice ... have won general sympathy for the Confederates as a people worthy of, and who have earned, their independence. Our commercial classes are also beginning to perceive that our best interests will be promoted by creating a direct trade with a people so enterprising as the Confederates ... Therefore ... the Southern Independence Association of London has been formed ... as the rallying-point of all who believe that the dignity and interest of Great Britain will best be consulted by speedily and cheerfully recognizing a brave people...[43]

"The committee which is appended to the Address," noted pro–Northern academic Goldwin Smith in a pamphlet, "is highly aristocratic in its character. The list of the members of the Association, which has also been published, contains a large proportion of men of title and family, whose names head the list, and a good sprinkling of clergymen, curiously associated with the Member for Sheffield" [John Roebuck].[44]

In spite of its well-intentioned aims, the new association was not universally welcomed by the Confederates. The *Address* included the assumption that "recognition by Europe must necessarily lead to a revision of the system of servile labour ... in accordance with the spirit of the age, so as to combine the gradual extinction of slavery with the preservation of property..."[45] Dudley Mann wrote indignantly to Judah Benjamin about the offending paragraph, which had supposedly been inserted by James Spence, "the same gentleman who has the reputation of being, *par excellence*, the British champion of our cause."[46]

Henry Hotze's expectations of "much solid good" from the new associations were to be disappointed. "I am sorry that I can not give you a very glowing account of the two Southern Independence Associations which started out with such favorable auspices," he wrote to

Wharncliffe House, Curzon Street, Mayfair, the residence of Lord Wharncliffe, president of the Southern Independence Association of London. (Author's photograph)

Judah Benjamin in March 1864. "Both languished, partly for want of money and partly for want of moral courage."[47] The two associations did, however, join together in July 1864 to send a deputation to Lord Palmerston. It was headed by the Marquess of Clanricarde and the Bishop of Chichester, and urged the Prime Minister to mediate in the conflict. The response was predictable: a reaffirmation of British neutrality.

Lord Wharncliffe, president of the Southern Independence Association, was also chairman of a committee formed to administer the proceeds of the bazaar held at Liverpool in October 1864 to raise funds for Confederate prisoners-of-war. In November he wrote to Charles Francis Adams to obtain permission for "an accredited agent" to visit Federal prison camps and alleviate the sufferings of the inmates. His request, forwarded to Washington, brought a chilling response from Secretary of State Seward and a denial that any such sufferings existed. "The refusal of the Federal Government will not practically affect the distribution of the fund, for which, unhappily, we can find but too many recipients," Lord Wharncliffe assured the *Times*, in a long letter in December 1864, which it published along with the correspondence from Adams and Seward.[48]

Potential recipients of the fund were, indeed, not long in making themselves known. In January 1865 Lord Wharncliffe received a number of letters from men claiming to be former Confederate prisoners-of-war or wounded soldiers, some of whom may have been English. Joseph Taylor, late Co. F, 5th Louisiana, described the terrible conditions at Fort Delaware, where he had been held prisoner after being captured at Gettysburg; William S. Warwick, formerly a captain in General Morgan's cavalry, had been wounded three times; James D. Arco had also been wounded three times, though he omitted to give any details; and T. Hampson, "late Capt., 13th Louisiana Regt., and Provost Marshal, Adams' (Louisiana) Brigade," had escaped from Vicksburg in August 1864, before making his way to England. Most of the men were unemployed or in poor health and requested financial help. Some of the letters were referred to the Society for the Relief of Distress, suggesting Lord Wharncliffe had doubts about their authenticity.[49]

Goldwin Smith had observed that the Southern Independence Association was "not so strong in representatives of the interests of the labouring classes." Writing in 1862, just after Second Manassas, Henry Hotze observed: "The sympathies of the intelligent classes are now intensified into a feeling of sincere admiration ... If it cannot be said that this feeling is generally shared by the lower classes, it is at least certain that they also are swayed by that British instinct which hurrahs for the combatant who deals the hardest blows."[50]

The extent of support for the South among the "labouring classes" is still being debated by historians. Once thought to have been almost nonexistent, that view has now been revised somewhat. One modern historian has stated that the evidence suggests that many British workingmen — possibly a majority — were, like Gladstone, sympathetic to the idea of Confederate independence.[51] Another, however, has concluded that, though many working-class newspapers may have supported the South initially, their readers probably did not.[52]

The *Bee-Hive*, a weekly paper aimed at London workingmen, which began publication in October 1861, was an example of this. Intended as the official organ of the London Trades Council, which had been set up in 1860 as a result, the previous year, of a strike and continuing unrest in the London building trades, it adopted a pro–Confederate stance under its first editor, George Troup, arguing that secession would end slavery, and advocating the breaking of the Yankee blockade. Other prominent labor leaders, including George Potter, a carpenter, Thomas Vize and T.G. Facey of the Painters' union, T.J. Dunning of the Bookbinders',

and J.B. Leno, a former shoemaker and prolific versifier, all supported Troup's pro–Southern views.

Things began to change, however, in January 1863, when Troup was replaced by Robert Hartwell, a former Chartist, who supported the North. This was in line with the shift in public opinion which seems to have occurred following Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, and was demonstrated in London by the mass meeting held at the end of that month in support of it at Exeter Hall, in the Strand. "That meeting," wrote the radical M.P. Richard Cobden, one of its organizers, perhaps a little prematurely, "has had a powerful effect on our newspapers and politicians. It has closed the mouths of those who have been advocating the side of the South."[53] By April 1863 the *Bee-Hive* was of the opinion that support for the Southern cause was now confined to "a very small section among the least thinking of the working millions."[54]

The huge trades union meeting which took place at St. James's Hall, Piccadilly, in March 1863 was "the most notable one in support of the North held throughout the whole course of the war."[55] It led to at least one union, the Bookbinders, disaffiliating itself from the London Trades Council the following year in protest at this pro–Northern agitation. "The trades of London," announced its secretary, T.J. Dunning, who was known as "the Father of London Trades Unionism," "have no confidence in Mr. Lincoln, either an an opponent to slavery or as a friend to the Negro. His Emancipation Proclamation ... they consider less intended to benefit the negro, than to destroy, if possible, the Confederates. Of course we say nothing as to their correctness, but such are the opinions of nine out of every ten workmen we have heard speak on the matter."[56]

Sympathy for the South certainly existed in considerable measure, both inside and outside Parliament. Whatever the actual extent of it, the British government was unlikely to grant the Confederacy diplomatic recognition until her independence was assured by military success. And that recognition would have meant, at the very least, the long-term enmity of the United States, not something that would have been seen as being in Britain's best interests.

Epilogue

Everybody was delighted or feigned delight with the news of Lee's surrender.
— Benjamin Moran, April 24, 1865

With the Civil War coming to an end, former Confederates began to arrive at the U.S. legation in Upper Portland Place, hoping to take the oath of allegiance and obtain passports, with a view to returning home. In May 1865, Benjamin Moran recorded the appearance there of M. Hildreth Bloodgood, "a rebel auditor of accounts," who two years previously had been sent to assist Colin McRae in his investigation of Major Huse's business transactions, and Commander William A. Webb, who had captained three Confederate warships, including "the rebel ram *Atlanta*," and was in England waiting to take command of another when the war ended.[1] Both were fortunate and were given passports; the amnesty issued by the U.S. government at the end of that month did not apply to Confederates who had worked abroad, and fearing persecution or even imprisonment, many who were in London when the war ended chose to remain there for the time being.

Later that year they were joined by others who had fled, either because they feared indictment for treason, or no longer wished to live in a defeated and devastated South. They included two former members of the Confederate government — Secretary of War Major General John C. Breckinridge and Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin, who arrived in London separately in August 1865 — and an assortment of ex-senators, state governors and former generals.

For many, it was a stay of months rather than years and they moved on; Paris, with its large Confederate community, was a favorite destination. Writing to James Mason in May 1867, Judah Benjamin estimated that few former Confederates now remained in London, and most of those on the Continent seem to have departed by the middle of the following year.[2] Many had already gone back to America by the time of the universal amnesty of Christmas 1868, but some did not return until the 1870s.

A number of Confederates, of course, had gone back to the South while the war was still in progress. After serving as both a Confederate and state purchasing agent, Major Edward Anderson returned to Georgia in late 1861 and ended the war as a colonel. He was Savannah's first postwar mayor, became a director of both the Atlantic & Gulf and Central Railroads, and died in 1883; he was buried in Laurel Grove Cemetery, Savannah. Thomas King, who had been sent to Europe early in 1861 as a state commissioner for Georgia, returned the following year without having achieved very much; he did not outlive the war, but died in 1864

at Waresboro, Georgia. William Yancey, one of the first Confederate commissioners to be sent to Europe, went home in 1862, a deeply disillusioned man, and was only 49 when he died at his plantation near Montgomery, Alabama, the following year; he was buried there in Old Oakwood Cemetery. Lucius Lamar, one of the Confederacy's lesser-known diplomats, returned in 1863 and served as a judge-advocate in the Army of Northern Virginia in 1864–1865. After the war he became a member of the House of Representatives and a Senator, was Secretary of the Interior in Grover Cleveland's administration, 1885–1888, and was an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court when he died at Macon, Georgia, in 1893. John Fearn, who in turn had been secretary to Commissioners Yancey, Rost and Lamar, also had an impressive postwar career. He established an international law firm with offices in London and New York, held several diplomatic appointments, and was involved in planning the great Chicago Exposition of 1893; he died at Hot Springs, Virginia, in 1899.

Ordered back to the Confederacy in 1864 after the *Georgia* was decommissioned, Midshipman James Morgan tried his hand at many things after the war, including helping to train the Egyptian Army. His celebrated book, *Recollections of a Rebel Reefer*, appeared in 1917 and he lived to the age of 83, dying in Washington in 1928. Mrs. Rose Greenhow had also attempted to return to the Confederacy in 1864, but with tragic consequences; the blockade-runner *Condor* in which she was traveling ran aground off the North Carolina coast near Wilmington, and she was drowned while struggling to get ashore. Her grave is in Oakdale Cemetery, Wilmington.

After a period of recovery following the loss of the *Alabama*, Raphael Semmes and John Kell returned to the South. Semmes ended the war with the dual ranks of Rear Admiral, C.S.N., and Brigadier General, C.S.A. After being arrested on charges of treason and piracy in late 1865 and detained for three months, he was released and eventually able to return to Mobile to practice law; his *Memoirs of Service Afloat* was published in 1869. He died at Mobile in 1877 and was buried there in the Catholic graveyard. Kell, who had been promoted to commander, was on sick leave when the war ended. He became a farmer in his native state of Georgia and died there at Sunnyside in 1900, the year his *Recollections of a Naval Life* appeared.

A number of other Confederate naval officers were on their way back to the South when they learned that the war was over. Flag Officer Samuel Barron, the most senior of them, settled down to the life of a farmer in Essex County, Virginia, and died in 1888. Assistant Paymaster Douglas Forrest, who became an Episcopalian minister and served as rector of a number of churches in different parts of the United States, died while on a visit to Virginia in 1902. Commander James North chose to return to England and rejoin his family, but eventually went back to the United States and also became a farmer in Virginia, dying there in 1893.

Commander Matthew Maury went to Mexico after learning of the Confederate collapse, but after nine months in the impressive-sounding but largely meaningless role of Imperial Commissioner of Immigration, he returned to London in 1866 to be reunited with his family. There, he was guest of honor at a testimonial dinner attended by English naval officers, "scientific men of the highest distinction," and ex–Confederates like General Pierre G. T. Beauregard, and was presented with a purse of 3,000 guineas in appreciation of his services to the maritime world. He was commissioned to write a series of geography textbooks for a New York publisher, and in 1868 was awarded an honorary doctorate by Cambridge University. Later that year he returned to the United States, where he was appointed Professor of

Meteorology at the Virginia Military Institute, Lexington. He died there in 1873 and was buried in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond.

Albert Bledsoe, one of Henry Hotze's associates, returned to the South in 1865 and went to live in Baltimore, becoming a fierce promoter of the Lost Cause. In 1867 he founded the *Southern Review*, dedicated to "the despised, disfranchised, and down-trodden people of the South," and remained its editor until his death ten years later. After the *Index* ceased publication, John Thompson found work in London with the *Standard* newspaper, but returned to the United States in 1866, becoming literary editor of the *New York Evening Post*. He died in New York in 1873 at the early age of 49 and, like Matthew Maury, was buried in Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond.

Hiram Fuller, who had also worked on the *Index*, did not go back to America until 1874, but his attempt to reestablish himself there by means of a book called *Grand Transformation Scenes in the United States, or Glimpses of Home after Thirteen Years Abroad* (1875) was not successful and he returned to Europe. His last few years were spent in Paris, working as a journalist, and he died there in obscurity in 1880. After the Civil War, John O'Sullivan, another of Hotze's journalist colleagues, remained in Europe for some years, dividing his time between London, Paris and Lisbon, before returning to America in 1879. He spent the remainder of his life in New York, dying there in 1895 at the age of 82. After living abroad for a number of years, Confederate propagandist Edwin De Leon also went back to the United States in 1879 and died in New York in 1891. His *Secret History of Confederate Diplomacy Abroad*, originally written in 1867 as a series of articles for the *New York Citizen*, was finally published in book form in 2005.

James Mason remained in London until 1866, when he went to Canada to be reunited with his wife and family in Montreal. Two years later he was able to return to his native Virginia, dying near Alexandria in 1871. Sent to London in the closing weeks of the war, in a last desperate attempt by the Confederate government to secure diplomatic recognition in return for the abolition of slavery, Duncan Kenner returned to his ruined Louisiana sugar plantation to rebuild his life. He was so successful that when he died in New Orleans in 1887 his estate was more valuable than it had been before the war. Pierre Rost, who after his unsuccessful postings to Paris and Madrid, seems to have spent the rest of the war in self-imposed exile in provincial France, also returned to Louisiana and died in New Orleans in 1868.

The flamboyant Belle Boyd, who had taken to the English stage to support herself, returned to America in 1866.[3] For a while she continued with her work in the theater, but retired from it three years later. Then, in 1886, she embarked on a new career, giving recitations of her wartime experiences entitled "The Perils of a Spy," dressed in a Confederate uniform of her own design. She continued with these until her death in 1900, at Kilbourne, Wisconsin, while on tour.

Colonel John Peyton, who had served as a state agent for North Carolina, moved to Guernsey in 1866; his book, *The American Crisis,* appeared the following year. Apart from his travels on the Continent, he remained there until his return to America in 1876. He settled near Staunton, Virginia, devoting his remaining years to farming and literary pursuits until his death in 1896. Lieutenant Thomas Crossan, who had also been a purchasing agent for the Tar Heel state, died in 1865; his colleague, John White, resided in Liverpool for some time after the war, working in the cotton business, but later returned to his native North Carolina, dying there in 1894.

Left almost penniless at the end of the war, with a large family to support, Major Caleb

Huse lived at Auteuil, near Paris, before returning to the United States in 1868, where he started a military school, preparing pupils for entry to West Point. His pamphlet, *The Supplies for the Confederate Army*, was published in 1904, and he died the following year at Highland Falls, New York. Captain William Crenshaw also remained in Europe until 1868. An astute businessman, he became wealthy in the 1880s mining pyrites for the manufacture of sulphuric acid, and built the first furnace for that purpose in the United States at Richmond; he died there in 1897. James H. Burton, another purchasing agent for the Ordnance Bureau, lived in England for some time after the war before returning to Loudoun County, Virginia, where he farmed for some years; he died in Winchester in 1894.

Among the arrivals in 1865 from the former Confederacy, the most remarkable success story was that of Judah P. Benjamin. In January 1866, at the age of 55, he embarked on a new career, enrolling as a law student at Lincoln's Inn, then going on to become a highly successful lawyer and Queen's Counsel. His *Treatise on the Law of Sale of Personal Property* ("Benjamin on Sales"), first published in 1868, became a standard legal textbook which went through many editions and helped make his reputation. When he retired in 1883, a farewell dinner was given in his honor at the Inner Temple, a rare occurrence. He died in Paris the following year and was buried in Pere Lachaise Cemetery.

Judah Benjamin's postwar recovery was exceptional; for most ex–Confederates abroad, it was a matter of trying to rebuild their lives in a foreign land, with varying degrees of success. Major Norman Walker, the former agent in Bermuda, arrived in England in May 1865 with his wife, Georgiana, and their children and went to live at Leamington Spa, Warwickshire, where a number of other Southern families were residing.[4] The following year he established a cotton-importing business at Liverpool with his father-in-law, though it is not clear how successful this was. In any event, the Walkers returned to America in 1878, eventually settling in New York, where Georgiana died in 1904 and her husband in 1913; they were both buried on Staten Island.

At the other end of the scale was Louis T. Wigfall of Texas, a former Confederate brigadier and senator, and one of Jefferson Davis's bitterest opponents. He arrived in England about March 1866 and was joined by his family in October, to begin a miserable, poverty-stricken exile in London. One of those who never accepted defeat, he seems to have spent much of his time in a state of intoxication and it was no doubt a relief to all concerned when, in 1872, he was persuaded to return to America. He settled first in Baltimore, then moved to Galveston, Texas, where he died in 1874; he was buried there in the Episcopal Cemetery.

And there were those Confederates who never went back to America at all. After the *Index* ceased publication in 1865, Henry Hotze moved to Paris, where he continued working as a journalist, and three years later married Ruby Senac, the daughter of a former paymaster in the Confederate Navy. He returned to London for a while at the time of the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, and is known to have visited Constantinople (Istanbul) in 1872 for a newspaper assignment, but eventually he went back to his native Switzerland, dying at Zug in 1887 at the early age of 53. James Williams, one of his associates, who had also written for the *Times* and the *Standard* and remained in Europe after the war, died at Graz, Austria, in 1869.

Dudley Mann, one of the first Confederate commissioners, also settled in Paris after the war, and made a living as a journalist; he died there in 1889 at the age of 88. John Slidell, another of the commissioners, chose to remain in Paris, with occasional visits to England, until the fall of the Emperor Napoleon III in 1870; he died the following year on the Isle of

Wight. Buried originally in Brighton Cemetery, he was subsequently reinterred at Villejuif (Seine), France.

Commander James Bulloch stayed on in Liverpool, where he had many friends and associates, and became a cotton broker. His book, *The Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe*, was published in 1883 and he died at Liverpool in 1901, the year in which his nephew, Theodore Roosevelt, became the twenty-sixth president of the United States. His grave in Toxteth Park Cemetery is marked by a modern headstone erected by the United Daughters of the Confederacy in 1968.

When the Civil War ended, Confederate finances in Europe were exhausted, other than for a certain amount credited to the Navy Department. U.S. Consul Freeman Morse proposed that Fraser, Trenholm & Company, the Confederacy's bankers, should submit their books and accounts to official inspection, and also provide details of any remaining Confederate property still in their possession, such as cotton and steamers, which could then be sold. This arrangement, however, was vetoed by Secretary of State William H. Seward, and instead legal proceedings against Charles Prioleau, one of the principals of Fraser, Trenholm, were set in motion in July 1865, ending two years later with a failed attempt at an out-of-court settlement and bankruptcy.[5]

Colin McRae was sued unsuccessfully in the English courts by the Federal government for Confederate assets believed to be in his possession at the end of the war, and in June 1866 the government also began proceedings against him as the agent of the Confederate Cotton Loan. The case dragged on for three years, but McRae was able to prove that he had accounted to his own government for "the entire proceeds of the loan in payment of supplies and munitions of war to various commissary and quartermaster officers in this country" and it was finally dismissed in May 1869.[6] In both cases, one of the defending lawyers was Judah Benjamin; the irony of that situation cannot have been lost on those involved. McRae never returned to the United States, but emigrated to British Honduras (Belize) in 1867, and died there ten years later.

In an attempt to settle outstanding Confederate government debts, John Breckinridge and Judah Benjamin tried to recover funds thought to be in the possession of Jacob Thompson, the former commissioner in Canada. He had been in London for a while — William E. Gladstone had met him there in early April 1865 — but moved to Paris in July. Exactly how much money he had was a matter of conjecture, but former associates in Canada claimed it was as much as $300,000. Both Breckinridge and Benjamin went to Paris and interviewed Thompson separately, but with only limited success. To avoid a public scandal, they were forced to compromise: Thompson agreed to pay them £12,000, but insisted on retaining another £23,000, which he admitted having, as compensation for the destruction of his plantation in Mississippi.[7]

More information about missing Confederate funds also came to light in November 1865, when Consul Morse learned that "one or two persons here, who appear to have full knowledge of some of the financial operations of the late rebels, say that from £50,000 to £60,000 of Confederate government gold is now held in this city, by some person, house or bank, and that the holders refuse to deliver it to any ex-Confederate agent whatever ... [saying] that it belongs to the United States, if they can find it."[8] He requested authorization to negotiate with the persons in question, though whether the gold, if it ever existed, was eventually retrieved is not known.

Of the men who championed the Confederate cause in Parliament, William Lindsay was

forced to give up both political life and the shipping business in 1864 when he lost the use of his legs. He retired to his home at Shepperton Manor, Middlesex, where he devoted his remaining years to writing his four-volume *History of Merchant Shipping and Ancient Commerce* (1874–1876); he died in 1877. John Roebuck continued to serve as an M.P. until 1868, and again from 1874 through 1879. Later a supporter of Benjamin Disraeli, he was made a privy councillor a year before his death in London in 1878; he was buried at Bushey, Hertfordshire. William Gregory remained in Parliament until 1871, then was appointed Governor of Ceylon (Sri Lanka). He held this post for five years and was knighted during the visit there of the Prince of Wales in 1875. His remaining years were spent chiefly in Ireland, though he died at his London home in 1892. *Sir William Gregory: an Autobiography*, edited by Lady Gregory, was published two years later.

Alexander Beresford Hope, treasurer of the British Jackson Monumental Fund, returned to Parliament in 1865 and remained an M.P., combining his parliamentary duties with his literary and artistic interests, until his death at Bedgebury Park, Kent, in 1887; he was buried nearby at Kilndown. Lord Wharncliffe, another prominent Confederate supporter, died at his London residence in 1899.

John Gilliat, head of J. K. Gilliat & Company, whom James Mason called "my bankers," had been appointed a director of the Bank of England in 1862 and was Governor in 1883–1884; between 1886 and 1900 he also served as an M.P. He died in London in 1912, at what the *Times* described as "the ripe age of 82," and was buried at Chorley Wood, Hertfordshire. Archibald Hamilton, the head of Sinclair, Hamilton & Company, and also a director of the London Armory Company, died at Southborough, Kent, in 1880. Edgar Stringer remained a partner in the firm of Stringer, Pembroke & Company until 1879, then continued in business on his own. After his retirement in 1882, he lived in a succession of large houses in west London, but died at Brighton in 1894. He left his widow well-provided for: Mrs. Julia Stringer was worth nearly £27,000 at her own death in 1906.

Thomas Hamber, the "Swiss Captain," continued to edit the *Morning Herald* until 1869, and the *Standard* until 1870, and went on to be the editor of three more newspapers over the next twenty years. He died at Mortlake, Surrey, in 1902. John Hopkins, who had been business manager, assistant editor, and eventually publisher of the *Index*, was a prolific journalist and after the war worked for the *Standard* for three years, as well as contributing to other newspapers and periodicals; he was also the author of several novels and plays. He died in London in 1888. John Witt, who was also an assistant editor on the *Index*, became a lawyer and a Queen's Counsel, dying in 1906. Percy Greg, another of the *Index's* contributors, wrote for many other periodicals, as well as publishing essays, novels and poems. His *History of the United States to the Reconstruction of the Union* (1887) left its readers in no doubt about his earlier pro–Southern views. He was only 53 when he died in London in 1889.

James Spence continued in business as an iron merchant and cotton broker at Liverpool, but in 1872 moved to London, "so as to be within reach of the literary circle of the metropolis." Later he seems to have returned to Liverpool, but by 1890 was living in South Wales, where he had a tinplate works. He finally retired to London, where he died in 1893.

The Rev. Francis Tremlett, who provided support and hospitality for many Confederates and former Confederates in London, during and after the war, died in 1913 at the remarkable age of 91, after serving for 52 years as vicar of St. Peter's, Belsize Park, and was buried in Hampstead Cemetery. There is a monument to his memory in St. Peter's Church.

John and William Dudgeon, who were among the principal London builders of blockade-runners, continued to operate their business until 1875, when their yards at Millwall and Cubitt Town were closed on the death of William and the mental illness of his brother John; the latter was admitted to an asylum in Edinburgh, where he died in 1881.

Zachariah Pearson was completely ruined by his blockade-running ventures and his disastrous involvement with the CSS *Rapphannock*. He never recovered his position as a leading shipowner and in later years found work as a ship's surveyor, though in 1882 he was described as "United States commercial agent, ship broker and coal exporter." He died in obscurity in Hull in 1891, though his name lives on in Pearson Park, which he had presented to the people of Hull in 1860; it contains an obelisk to his memory, bearing a relief portrait of him, and a statue of Queen Victoria which he commissioned. Thomas Begbie, though not actually bankrupted by the war, also lost a number of his blockade-runners, and does not seem to have prospered much afterwards as a merchant; he died in London in 1899 in relative poverty.

Though Samuel and Saul Isaac, of Isaac, Campbell & Company, were largely ruined by the war and their firm was forced into liquidation in 1871, both men had married wealthy second wives, so were able to start again and they made a remarkable recovery. Samuel acquired the rights to the unfinished Mersey Tunnel, between Liverpool and Birkenhead, and lived to see it opened in 1885; when he died in London the following year, he left more than £200,000. His younger brother, Saul, was M.P. for Nottingham, 1874–1880, and also had coal-mining interests in that area; he died in London in 1903. Both men were buried in Willesden Cemetery.

Alexander Collie survived his financial difficulties at the end of the war, only to go bankrupt in 1875. It was reported that his mansion in Kensington Palace Gardens, including the furniture and effects, was worth £28,755, while his pictures, watercolor drawings and paintings were valued at a further £14,500.[9] Charged with obtaining £200,000 from a bank by false pretenses, Alexander Collie broke bail and disappeared, leaving his partner, William Collie, to face the bankruptcy proceedings. They dragged on for nearly three years, by which time Alexander Collie had still not been traced.

The Rev. William Malet, the Hertfordshire clergyman whose visit to the Confederacy was described in *An Errand to the South in the Summer of 1862*, died in 1885, aged 81. The merchant William Corsan, who also visited the Confederacy that same year and wrote of his experiences in *Two Months in the Confederate States*, died at Sheffield in 1876 at the early age of 51. Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Fremantle, of the Coldstream Guards, author of *Three Months in the Southern States,* went on to have a distinguished military career, retiring with the rank of general. Subsequently knighted, he served as Governor of Malta from 1894 through 1899, and died on the Isle of Wight in 1901. All three of these books appeared in 1863, but Fitzgerald Ross, with whom Arthur Fremantle had watched the Battle of Gettysburg, did not publish his *Visit to the Cities and Camps of the Confederate States* until 1865. After its publication he vanished into genteel obscurity, dying at Kensington in 1895; he was buried at Little Bookham in Surrey.

* * *

The men sent to London by the Confederate government varied greatly in their abilities. Some were outstanding, others mediocre, almost verging on the incompetent. Representing a government not yet recognized, and one, furthermore, which endorsed slavery, they worked under difficult conditions, hampered by poor communications, financial

problems and increasingly efficient Federal surveillance. In spite of their achievements — and in some cases they were considerable — international political considerations and military developments worked against them, and meant that they were unable to influence the outcome of what their English contemporaries called "the sanguinary contest about which everybody talks and reads."

Appendix A

London Firms with Confederate Links

Numbered postal districts were not introduced in London until 1917, but they are used in the appendices and Gazetteer for ease of reference.

Robert Adams, 76 King William Street (EC4): gun, rifle and pistol manufacturer.

Sir William G. Armstrong & Co., 59 Fenchurch Street (EC3); and Newcastle-upon-Tyne: engineers and armaments manufacturers.

James Ash & Co., Cubitt Town (E14): iron ship builders.

J.H. Ashbridge & Co., Adelaide Chambers, 52 Gracechurch Street (EC3); later 148 Leadenhall Street (EC3); and Liverpool: dealers in bonds and securities.

Baiss Bros. & Co., 102 Leadenhall Street (EC3): wholesale and export druggists.

Barker Bros. & Co., 4 Abchurch Lane (EC4): merchants.

John E. Barnett & Sons, 134 Minories (EC3); Brewhouse Street, Shadwell (E1): wholesale gunmakers.

William J. Barron & Co., 66–67 Aldermanbury (EC2): elastic web makers and wholesale shoe dealers.

Benjamin Beasley, 4 St. James's Street (SW1): gun, rifle and sword maker; also manufacturer of Whitworth rifles ("By appointment to HM War Department").

Thomas S. Begbie, 4 Mansion House Place (EC4); later 36 Walbrook (EC4): shipowner and merchant.

Bennett & Wake, 77 Cornhill (EC3): ship and insurance brokers.

Thomas Bensusan, 75 Old Broad Street (EC2): dealer in stocks and shares.

Thomas Bissell, 75 Tooley Street (SE1): gun, rifle and pistol manufacturer.

Blakely Ordnance Co., 35 Parliament Street (SW1); 28 Gravel Lane and 1 Bear Lane, Southwark (SE1)(works): cannon manufacturers.

Joseph Buckley, 156 Cheapside (EC2): dealer in securities.

R. Gordon Coleman & Co., 28 Clements Lane (EC4): shipowners.

Alexander Collie & Co., 22A Austin Friars (EC2); later 17 Leadenhall Street (EC3); and Liverpool: cotton merchants & commission merchants.

Coutts Bank, 57–59 Strand (WC2).

Crowder, Maynard, Son & Lawford, 57 Coleman Street (EC2): lawyers.

Curtis & Harvey, 74 Lombard Street (EC3); Hounslow Heath (works); and Tonbridge, Kent: gunpowder manufacturers and merchants.

Thomas De La Rue & Co., 109–113 Bunhill Row (EC1): printers & wholesale stationers.

Dent & Co., 61 Strand (WC2); 34–35 Royal Exchange (EC3): chronometer, watch and clock makers.

John T. Dobson, 34 Great St. Helens (EC3): merchant.

John & William Dudgeon, 10 London Street (EC3); Sun Iron Works, Millwall (E14); Cubitt Town (E14): engineers, boilermakers and iron shipbuilders.

Firmin & Sons, 153–155 Strand (WC2); 13 Conduit Street (W1); 12 White Horse Yard, Drury Lane (WC2) (factory): army and navy button manufacturers.

Foster, Porter & Co., 47 Wood Street (EC2); 25 Addle Street (EC2); 21 Aldermanbury (EC2): wholesale hosiers & glovers.

Freshfields & Newman, 5 New Bank Buildings, Princes Street (EC2): lawyers.

John K. Gilliat & Co., 4 Crosby Square (EC3): merchants and bankers.

Goody & Jones, 40 Pall Mall (SW1): military and naval outfitters.

Charles W. & Wentworth Gray, 31 Great St Helens (EC3): merchants.

Greenwood & Batley, 20 Cannon Street (EC4); and Leeds: machinists.

John Hall & Son, 23 Lombard Street (EC3): gunpowder manufacturers.

Sydney Hodgkinson & Co., 4 Laurence Pountney (EC4): general merchants.

Thomas & Charles Hood, Iron Wharf, Earl Street, Blackfriars (EC4): iron merchants and contractors for iron ordnance and munitions of war.

Lambert Hotchkiss, 16 Bishopsgate Street Within (EC2): shipbroker.

Hughes & Kimber, 5 Red Lion Passage, Fleet Street (EC4): importers of lithographic stones, manufacturers of lithographic and copperplate presses, and engravers' and lithographers' materials.

Isaac, Campbell & Co., 71 Jermyn Street (SW1): commission merchants and army contractors; promoters of the Atlantic Trading Company.

Jones, Loyd & Co., 43 Lothbury (EC2): bankers.

M. Kramer, 10 Old Jewry Chambers (EC2): dealer in securities.

William Ladd, 11–12 Beak Street (W1): electrical engineer.

Charles W. Lancaster, 151 New Bond Street (W1); 2 Little Bruton St. (W1) (factory): gunmaker; patentee of the British Lancaster short rifle.

John Lane, Hankey & Co., 25 Old Broad Street (EC2): merchants.

Laurence, Son & Pearce, Auction Mart, Bartholomew Lane (EC2): stockbrokers.

William S. Lindsay & Co., 8 Austin Friars (EC2); 54 Old Broad Street (EC2): shipowners and insurance brokers.

London Armory Co., Henry Street, Bermondsey (SE1); later 36 King William Street (EC4); Victoria Park Mills, Old Ford Road (E2): armaments manufacturers.

Charles Lungley & Co., 4 Brabant Court, Philpot Lane (EC3); Deptford Green Dockyard (SE8); Commercial Dry Dock, Rotherhithe (SE16): shipbuilders.

Henry F. Mackintosh, 11 Crane Court, Fleet Street (EC4): printer.

Morgan Brothers, 21 Bow Lane (EC4): merchants; dealers in bonds.

Frederick Napton, Glass House Yard (EC4): gun carriage maker.

Negretti & Zambra, 1 Hatton Garden (EC1); 59 Cornhill (EC3); 122 Regent Street (W1); 153 Fleet Street (EC4): meteorological, mathematical, surveying, electrical, nautical, chemical and photographic instrument makers.

Overend, Gurney & Co., 65 Lombard Street (EC3): bankers and money dealers.

Z. C. Pearson & Co., 34 Great St. Helens (EC3); later 32 Nicholas Lane (EC4); and Hull: shipowners and brokers.

Peek Brothers & Co., 20–21 Eastcheap (EC3); 31 Love Lane (EC2); 4 St. Mary-at-Hill (EC3): wholesale tea, coffee and spice dealers.

Pile, Spence & Co., 2 Cowper's Court, Cornhill (EC3); and West Hartlepool: shipowners, shipbuilders and ship repairers.

Quilter, Ball, Jay & Co., 3 Moorgate Street (EC2): accountants.

Rayden & Reid, 12 King William Street (EC4): shipbrokers.

Reuter's News Agency, 1 Royal Exchange Buildings (EC3); 2 King Street, Finsbury Square (EC2) (American office).

Richardson Bros. & Co., 17 St. Helens Place (EC3) (counting house); 11 East Road (N1): merchants; saltpeter refiners.

Robinson & Cottam (late Bramahs), 7 Parliament Street (SW1): Lower Belgrave Place (SW1): engineers, iron founders and railway plant contractors.

Robinson & Fleming, 21 Austin Friars (EC2): merchants.

Alexander Ross & Co., Grange Mills, Grange Road, Bermondsey (SE1): army contractors, tanners and leather merchants, accoutrement makers, artillery harness, cavalry equipment.

John Scott Russell & Co., 20 Great George Street (SW1); Blackwall (E14): civil engineers and shipbuilders.

Martin Samuelson & Co., 8 Adam Street (WC2); later 28 Cornhill (EC3); and Hull: engineers and iron shipbuilders.

J. Henry Schroder & Co., 145 Leadenhall Street (EC3): merchants and bankers; members of the European Trading Company.

Stephen W. Silver & Co., 3–6 Bishopsgate (EC2); 66–67 Cornhill (EC3); Silvertown (E16): patentees and manufacturers of telegraphic wire insulators; army and navy contractors; clothing and accoutrement makers.

Sinclair, Hamilton & Co., 11 St. Helen's Place (EC3); later 17 St. Helen's Place: commission merchants.

George A. Spottiswoode, 5 New Street Square (EC4): printer.

Samuel Straker & Sons, 80 Bishopsgate Street Within (EC2); 26 Leadenhall Street (EC3):

printers, lithographers, engravers, wholesale and export stationers.

Stringer, Pembroke & Co., 8 Austin Friars (EC2); 54 Old Broad Street (EC2): ship and insurance brokers; directors of the Mercantile Trading Company.

Charles Tennant, Sons & Co., 9 Mincing Lane (EC3): chemical manufacturers and agents; West India merchants.

Turner Bros., Hyde & Co., Falcon Factory, Whitecross Street (EC1/EC2); and Northampton: boot and shoe manufacturers.

James White, 12 Narrow Street, Limehouse (E14): sailmaker.

Joseph Whitworth & Co., 28 Pall Mall (SW1); and Manchester: engineers, machine tool, cannon and rifle manufacturers.

Wilkinson & Son, 27 Pall Mall (SW1): gun and sword manufacturers and army contractors.

William Wilson & Sons, 3 Aldermary Churchyard, Bow Lane (EC4): wholesale boot and shoemakers.

Joseph S. Wyon, 287 Regent Street (W1); 3 Langham Chambers, Langham Place (W1): medalist and engraver of seals.

Elizabeth Yeomans & Son, 7 St. Mildred's Court, Poultry (EC2); Tenter Street West, Goodmans Fields (E1): gunmakers to Her Majesty's Honorable Board of Ordnance; wholesale gun, pistol and rifle makers and sword cutlers; ships' armaments fitted up and supplied.

Appendix B

Pro-Confederate Publications and Their Publishers

Richard Bentley & Son, 8 New Burlington Street (W1): James Spence. *The American Union* (1861). (Also translated into French & German.); James Spence. *On the Recognition of the Southern Confederation* (1862); John L. O'Sullivan. *Union, Disunion and Reunion* (1862); An English Merchant [William C. Corsan]. *Two Months in the Confederate States, including a Visit to New Orleans under the Domination of General Butler* (1863). Reissued by Louisiana State University Press, 1996; Rose O. Greenhow. *My Imprisonment and the First Year of Abolition Rule at Washington* (1863); William W. Malet. *An Errand to the South in the Summer of 1862* (1863); James Spence. *Southern Independence* (1863); James Williams. *The Rise and Fall of the Model Republic* (1863); *The Southern Bazaar, Liverpool, October 1864* (1864).

William Blackwood & Sons, 37 Paternoster Row (EC4): Arthur J. L. Fremantle. *Three Months in the Southern States* (1863). Reissued by University of Nebraska Press, 1991; Marquis of Lothian. *The Confederate Secession* (1864). (Also translated into French.); Fitzgerald E.T. Ross. *A Visit to the Cities and Camps of the Confederate States* (1865). Reissued by University of Illinois Press, 1958; Heros Von Borcke. *Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence* (1866).

Chapman & Hall, 193 Piccadilly (W1): A Blockaded British Subject [Catherine C. Hopley]. *Life in the South: From the Commencement of the War* (1863). Reissued by A.M. Kelly, 1971; [Catherine C. Hopley]. *Stonewall Jackson, Late General of the Confederate States Army: A Biographical Sketch and an Outline of the Virginia Campaign* (1863); Hiram Fuller. *North and South* (1863); Frederick A. Maxse. *Pro Patria* (1863).

William Freeman, 102 Fleet Street (EC4): *The Index* (1862).

Robert Hardwicke, 192 Piccadilly (W1): John W. Cowell. *Southern Secession* (1862); Hugo Reid. *The American Question in a Nutshell* (1862).

Hurst & Blackett, 13 Great Marlborough Street (W1): Samuel P. Day. *Down South: Or, An Englishman's Experiences at the Seat of the American War* (1862). Reissued by B. Franklin, 1971.

Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts & Green, 14 Ludgate Hill (EC4): James Williams. *The South Vindicated* (1862). (Also translated into German.)

Henry F. Mackintosh, Crane Court (EC4): *The Index* (1862–1864). A Northern Man [Hiram Fuller]. *Curiosity Visits to Southern Plantations* (1863). Charles Mitchell & Co., 12 & 13 Red Lion Court (EC4): P.C. Centz (Plain Common Sense) [Bernard J. Sage]. *Davis and Lee: A Vindication of the Southern States, Citizens and Rights* (1865).

James Ridgway, 169 Piccadilly (W1): Thomas C. Grattan. *England, and the Disrupted States of America* (1861); Alexander J.B. Beresford-Hope. *The American Disruption* (1862); Hiram Fuller. *The Causes and Consequences of the Civil War in America* (1862); Hiram Fuller. *The Flag of Truce: Dedicated to the Emperor of the French* (1862); Lord Campbell. *Speech in the House of Lords, March 1863* (1863).

Saunders, Otley & Co., 66 Brook Street (W1): Lord Robert Montagu. *A Mirror in America* (1861); T.D. Ozanne. *The South as It Is, or Twenty-One Years' Experience in the Southern States of America* (1863); *The Cruise of the Alabama and the Sumter, from the Private Journals and Other Papers of Commander R. Semmes, C.S.N., and Other Officers* (1864); *The Log of the Alabama and the Sumter* (1864); *Ordnance Instructions for the Confederate States Navy Relating to the Preparation of Vessels of War for Battle, to the Duties of Officers and Others When at Quarters, to Ordnance and Ordnance Stores, and to Gunnery,* 3rd ed. (1864); Belle Boyd. *Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison* (1865). Reissued by Thomas Yoseloff, 1968; Louisiana State University Press, 1998; John L. Peyton. *The American Crisis; or, Pages from the Note-book of a State Agent During the Civil War* (1867).

Tinsley Brothers, 18 Catherine Street (WC2): George A. Lawrence. *Border and Bastille* (1863).

Appendix C

Confederate Music Published in London

Boosey & Sons, 28 Holles Street (W1) [now Boosey & Hawkes]: "A Battle Hymn" (*ILN*, Dec. 1864); "Bonnie Blue Flag" (Harry Macarthy) (*ILN*, Dec. 1864); "Dixey's Land" (arr. Frederick Buckley) (*ILN*, Jan. 1865); "Maryland" (George Forbes) (*ILN*, Dec. 1864); "Maryland Quadrille" (Victor Colline) (*ILN*, Dec. 1864); "Old King Cotton" (*ILN*, Jan. 1865)

Brewer & Co., 23 Bishopsgate Street (EC2): "The Death of Stonewall Jackson" (Charles Blamphin) (*ILN*, Aug. 1864)

Cramer, Beale & Wood, 201 Regent Street (W1) [now Cramer Music]; "War Song of Dixie" (Frederick Buckley); "The Confederates' National Air, Maryland" (James R. Randall)

Foster & King, 16 Hanover Street (W1): "Stonewall Jackson Quadrille" (Henri Talbot) (*ILN*, Nov. 1862)

Hopwood & Crew, 42 New Bond Street (W1): "The Bonnie Blue Flag" (Harry Macarthy) (*ILN*, Oct. 1864); "The Boy of the Rappahannock" (Charles Blamphin) (*ILN*, Jan. 1865); "Dixie" (Daniel D. Emmett) (*ILN*, Nov. 1864); "Dixey's Land Gallop" (Charles Coote, Jr.) (*ILN*, Nov. 1861); "Down Among the Cotton" (*ILN*, Nov. 1864); "It is My Country's Call" (*ILN*, Oct. 1864); "My Maryland" (*ILN*, Oct. 1864); "My Southern Home" (*ILN*, Jan. 1865)

J. Jewell, 104 Great Russell Street (WC1): "The Confederate War March" (Carl Weiner) (*ILN*, Oct. 1864)

Christopher Lonsdale, 26 Old Bond Street (W1): "A Confederate Raid" (E.M.); "Our Queen Varine" (E.M.)

Joseph Williams, 123 Cheapside (EC2): "Dixie's Land Polka" (Henry Farmer) (*ILN*, Nov. 1861); "General Jackson's Schottische" (Tidwell, arr. Henry Farmer) (*ILN*, Sept. 1862); "The Picket of the Potomac" (Henri F. Hemy) (*ILN*, Jan. 1864)

ILN = Illustrated London News

For details of songs, see *Catalogue of Printed Music in the British Library to 1980.* 62 vols. (London: K.G. Sauer, 1981–1987). Brief histories of some music publishing firms can be found in Charles Humphries & William C. Smith, *Music Publishing in the British Isles from the Earliest Times to the Middle of the Nineteenth Century.* (London: Cassell, 1954).

Appendix D

The Southern Lobby in Parliament

House of Commons: Lord Robert Cecil, Conservative M.P. for Stamford (Lincolnshire), 1853–1868; William E. Duncombe, Conservative M.P. for the North Riding of Yorkshire, 1859–1867; Sir James Fergusson, Bt., Conservative M.P. for Ayrshire (Scotland), 1859–1868; William H. Gregory, Liberal-Conservative M.P. for County Galway (Ireland), 1857–1872; Thomas C. Haliburton, Conservative M.P. for Launceston (Cornwall), 1859–1865; John T. Hopwood, Conservative M.P. for Clitheroe (Lancashire), 1857–1865; Sir Edward C. Kerrison, Bt., Conservative M.P. for Eye (Suffolk), 1852–1866; John Laird, Liberal-Conservative M.P. for Birkenhead, 1861–1874; founder of J. Laird, Sons & Co., shipbuilders; William S. Lindsay, Liberal M.P. for Sunderland, 1859–1865; shipowner; George M.W. Peacocke, Conservative M.P. for Maldon (Essex), 1859–1868; Frederick Peel, Liberal M.P. for Bury (Lancashire), 1859–1865; financial secretary to the Treasury; John A. Roebuck, Independent M.P. for Sheffield, 1849–1868; James Whiteside, Q.C., Conservative M.P. for Dublin University, 1859–1866

House of Lords: John A. Thynne, 4th Marquis of Bath; William F. Campbell, 2nd Baron Campbell, 2nd Baron Stratheden; Lord Eustace Cecil; Richard J. Hely-Hutchinson, 4th Earl of Donoughmore; William S. Kerr, 8th Marquis of Lothian; author of *The Confederate Secession* (1864); Edward M. Stuart-Wortley-Mackenzie, 3rd Baron Wharncliffe

Appendix E

The Southern Independence Association of London

Committee[1]: Edward Akroyd; Marquis of Bath; A. J.B. Beresford-Hope; Hon. Robert Bourke; Lord Campbell; Lord Eustace Cecil; Lord Robert Cecil, M.P.; Hon. C.W.W. Fitzwilliam, M.P.; W.H. Gregory, M.P.; Col. F.S. Greville, M.P.; T.C. Haliburton, M.P.; W.S. Lindsay, M.P.; Marquis of Lothian; G.M.W. Peacocke, M.P.; William Scholefield, M.P.; James Spence; William Vansittart, M.P.; Lord Wharncliffe.

Chairman: A.J.B. Beresford-Hope

Secretary: A. Kintrea

Treasurer: Lord Eustace Cecil

Temporary office: 24 St. James's St. (SW1)

Appendix F

The British Jackson Monumental Fund

Committee[1]: Lord Campbell; Lord Eustace Cecil; Earl of Donoughmore; Hon. W.E. Duncombe, M.P.; Sir James Fergusson, Bt., M.P.; Hon. C.W.W. Fitzwilliam, M.P.; J.S. Gilliat; Col. F.S. Greville, M.P.; Sir E.C. Kerrison, Bt., M.P.; Sir Coutts Lindsay, Bt.; W. S. Lindsay, M.P.; G.M.W. Peacocke, M.P.; G.E. Seymour; James Spence.
Hon. Treasurer: A.J.B. Beresford-Hope
Hon. Secretary: W. H. Gregory, M.P.

There is a slight discrepancy between the weekly lists published in the *Index* and the records of the Stonewall Jackson Memorial Account at Coutts Bank. The former show a total of £1,040 donated between June 1863 and August 1864; the latter lists £965 subscribed between June 1863 and May 1864, with a further £55 in July and August 1865, making a total of £1,020. Coutts' account also shows various expenses, amounting to some £44, probably for printing and advertising. The account appears to have become dormant in 1877.

Some subscribers to General Jackson's Statue

Edward Akroyd	£5	A. J. B. Beresford-Hope*	£20
D. Forbes Campbell	£5.5s	Lord Campbell*	£10
Lord Eustace Cecil*	£5	Alexander Collie	£50
Sir Henry De Houghton, Bt.	£22.10.6	W.H. De La Rue	£1.1s
Earl of Donoughmore*	£5	Sir Eardley Eardley, Bt.	£10.10s
Sir James Fergusson, Bt., M.P.*	£5	W.H. Gregory, M.P.*	£5
Col. F.S. Greville, M.P.*	£5	Sir E.C. Kerrison, Bt., M.P.*	£10
Marquis of Lothian	£5	H.F. Mackintosh	£1.1s
W.J. Rideout	£1.1s	J.H. Schroder	£50
G.E. Seymour*	£25	James Spence*	£50

*Member of the British Jackson Monumental Fund committee; not all members of it contributed to the fund.

Appendix G

A Note on British Currency

In the early 1860s, the basic unit of currency, as now, was the pound sterling. It then took the form of the gold sovereign, which was divided into 20 shillings or 240 pence. The actual coins in circulation were as follows:

Gold: Sovereign (20 shillings); Half-sovereign (10 shillings)

Silver: Florin (2 shillings); Shilling (12 pence); Sixpence; Threepenny piece

Bronze: Penny; Half-penny; Farthing (quarter-penny)

Bank of England notes for £5, £10, £20, £50, £100, £200, £300, £500 and £1,000 were also issued.

Guineas (21 shillings) and half-guineas (10 shillings and 6 pence), which were gold coins, had been withdrawn from circulation in the early nineteenth century, but the practice of charging in guineas was still common in the 1860s, and lingered on well into the twentieth century.

The exchange rate with the U.S. dollar throughout the Civil War was $4.85. Though there was no official exchange rate with the Confederate dollar, there was an attempt at an unofficial one, which at the time of the Erlanger Loan in 1863 was quoted as $13.33.

Chronology

1861

April	Dudley Mann, one of the three Confederate commissioners appointed for Europe, arrives in London and two weeks later is joined by William Yancey and Pierre Rost, who subsequently proceeds to Paris.
May	The commissioners have two unofficial meetings with Foreign Secretary Lord John Russell. Captain Caleb Huse arrives in London to buy weapons for the Confederate Army. Queen Victoria issues a Proclamation of Neutrality, granting both sides belligerent status. In Parliament, Lord John Russell points out that recognizing the Confederate States as belligerents does not imply diplomatic recognition. Charles Francis Adams, new U.S. minister to Great Britain, arrives to take up his post, as does consul Freeman Morse.
June	James Bulloch, purchasing agent for the Confederate Navy, arrives at Liverpool and subsequently calls on the commissioners in London. Lieutenant James North and Major Edward Anderson reach London, North to buy ships for the Confederate Navy, and Anderson to oversee Army purchasing operations. Private detective Ignatius Pollaky is hired to keep watch on the Confederates.
July	Major Benjamin Ficklin is sent to London to engage craftsmen and buy equipment for printing treasury notes.
August	Pierre Rost rejoins William Yancey and Dudley Mann in London, for another meeting with Lord John Russell, but their request to see him is refused.
September	After new commissioners James Mason and John Slidell are appointed for Europe, William Yancey resigns, but is asked to remain in London until his replacement arrives.
October	Henry Hotze visits London to check on arms shipments. James Spence's *The American Union* is published. The *Bee-Hive*, a workman's paper with a pro–Confederate bias, begins publication. Major Anderson leaves London for Liverpool, to return to the Confederacy.
November	William Yancey and Dudley Mann are guests of honor at a banquet given at Fishmongers' Hall. The CSS *Nashville* arrives at Southampton, carrying spare officers for Confederate ships being built in England and Colonel John Peyton, state agent for North Carolina, who proceeds to London. Reports of the seizure of Mason and Slidell from the British mail steamer *Trent* cause a public outcry, with newspaper placards proclaiming "outrage on the British Flag." Pierre Rost again returns to London in the hope of further dialogue with Lord Russell.

December — A royal proclamation, prohibiting the export of arms and munitions, is published.
Lord John Russell declines to enter into any further communication with the Confederate commissioners.

1862

January — New Confederate commissioner James Mason finally reaches London.
Henry Hotze, Confederate States commercial agent, also arrives. Effigies of Mason and Slidell go on display at Madame Tussaud's waxworks.
The Federals dispense with Ignatius Pollaky's services.

February — The *Nashville* finally leaves Southampton.
The order prohibiting the export of arms, ammunition and military equipment is revoked.
Pierre Rost moves to Madrid; William Yancey returns to the Confederate States.
James Mason has a meeting with Lord Russell.
Henry Hotze's first editorial is published in the *Morning Post.*
The first letter by "S" (James Spence) appears in the *Times.*

March — A debate takes place in Parliament about the effectiveness of the blockade.
Samuel Day's *Down South* is published.
The *Oreto* (CSS *Florida*) sails for Nassau.

April — Commander Raphael Semmes, of the CSS *Sumter,* arrives in London for a stay of a few weeks.
John Swisher is sent to London by the Texas State Military Board.

May — Henry Hotze begins publication of the *Index* in Fleet Street.
Colonel Peyton has an unofficial interview with Prime Minister Lord Palmerston.
A bark, the *Agrippina* (a "Scotch collier"), is chartered by Commander Bulloch as a tender for the *Alabama* and loaded in the London Docks.

June — Edwin De Leon arrives in London as head of Confederate propaganda in Europe.

July — He has a meeting with Lord Palmerston before proceeding to Paris.
British mediation in the Civil War is debated in Parliament.
The *Enrica* (CSS *Alabama*) leaves Liverpool, supposedly for a trial run.

August — The London Confederate States Aid Association is formed.
At a banquet, Lord Palmerston reiterates that Britain will maintain its policy of "a strict and rigid neutrality."

October — James Spence is appointed European financial agent for the Confederacy.
The *Index* moves to Bouverie Street.

November — *A Southerner Just Arrived* is produced at the Olympic Theater.
Commander Matthew Maury comes to England to buy ships and materials for the Confederate Navy.
Major Norman Walker is sent to London by the Ordnance Bureau.

December — The Quartermaster Bureau sends Major James Ferguson to London.

1863

January — North Carolina state agents John White and Thomas Crossan arrive in London.
The *Bee-Hive* gets a new editor and no longer supports the Confederacy.

February — James Mason makes a speech at the lord mayor's banquet at the Mansion House. Lieutenant William Maury arrives in London with $1.5 million in cotton certificates to purchase and equip a commerce raider, and stays with his cousin, Commander Matthew Maury.

March
The Seven Per Cent Cotton Loan is floated in London, Liverpool, Paris, Amsterdam and Frankfurt; "a great carnival" is held at Morley's Hotel to celebrate the event. The *London American* ceases publication.
Colonel Lucius Lamar, Confederate commissioner to Russia, arrives in London, and remains until mid–April, when he leaves for Paris.
Federals and Confederates opens at the Polygraphic Hall and runs until May. Texas state agent Nelson Clements arrives in London.

April
The *Alexandra*, being built for the Confederates at Liverpool, is seized.
Catherine Hopley's *Life in the South* is published.
Confederate naval officers assemble in London prior to joining the CSS *Georgia*.
The South as It Is, by the Rev. T.D. Ozanne, is published.

June
Colin McRae comes to London to manage the Confederate loan and investigate alleged irregularities in the purchasing operations.
Henry Hotze organizes a Confederate flag poster campaign as a prelude to the forthcoming parliamentary debate about diplomatic recognition.
Parliament debates the recognition of the Confederate States.
The trial takes place at the Court of Exchequer concerning the case of the *Alexandra*.
An exhibition of Confederate portraits by Benjamin F. Reinhart is held at Revell's Fine Art Gallery.
Colonel Lamar returns to London after his mission is aborted and works with Henry Hotze.

July
The British Jackson Monumental Fund is launched.
Assistant Paymaster Douglas Forrest arrives in London, prior to being assigned to the CSS *Rappahannock*.
The Rev. William Malet's *Errand to the South* is published.

September
Charles Francis Adams sends a note to Lord John Russell, pointing out that to allow the Laird rams to sail might mean war with the United States; meanwhile the seizure of the vessels is already under way.
Mrs. Rose Greenhow arrives in England as an unofficial Confederate emissary.
The London Confederate States Commercial League is formed.
James Mason informs Lord John Russell of his instructions to withdraw from London; he leaves for Paris, but returns from time to time.
Albert Bledsoe comes to London and writes for the *Index*.

October
Captain Samuel Barron arrives in London, en route for Paris, where he is to be Flag Officer Commanding Confederate States Naval Forces in Europe.
The Society for Promoting the Cessation of Hostilities in America is founded.
The Confederate States Exchange Rooms are proposed.

November
Church's Historical Panorama at the St. James's Hall features *The Civil War in America*.
Colonel Lamar returns to the Confederacy.
Mrs. Greenhow's *My Imprisonment* is published.
Charles Francis Adams makes representations to Lord John Russell about the CSS *Rappahannock*.

December
Colin McRae replaces James Spence as chief financial agent in Europe.
The Southern Independence Association of London is formed.
Colonel Arthur Fremantle's *Three Months in the Southern States* is published.

1864

January
Colonel Josiah Gorgas, head of the Ordnance Bureau, visits London.

March
The Alabama: A Nautical Extravaganza is performed at the Theater Royal, Drury Lane.

May
The Society for Promoting the Cessation of Hostilities addresses an appeal to M.P.s for immediate action.

June
Captain Semmes arrives in London, following the loss of the CSS *Alabama* in a battle off Cherbourg; he and Commander Maury are guests of the Rev. Francis W. Tremlett in Belsize Park.
The steamer *Hawk*, intended as a privateer in the Virginia Volunteer Navy, leaves London for Bermuda.
A Confederate bank in London is proposed by J. Henry Schroder and Emile Erlanger.

July
The Society for Promoting the Cessation of Hostilities and the Southern Independence Association of London make a joint appeal to Lord Palmerston for mediation in the war.
James Mason meets Lord Palmerston.
John Seymour is acquitted of violating the Foreign Enlistment Act in the *Rappahannock* affair.
John Thompson comes to London to work on the *Index*.
The Cruise of the Alabama and Sumter is published.

August
A Confederate wedding takes place at St. James's church, Piccadilly.
Major Walker comes to London again on Confederate business.
Mrs. Greenhow leaves London to return to the Confederate States.

September
John Witt is appointed assistant editor of the *Index*.

October
The *Index* moves to the Strand.
Captain Semmes returns to the Confederacy.
The *Sea King*, soon to become the CSS *Shenandoah*, sails from London.

November
Mrs. Greenhow is reported drowned.
Lord Wharncliffe asks permission for an "accredited agent" to be allowed to visit Confederate prisoners-of-war in Federal prison camps, but is unsuccessful.

1865

January
The *Hawk*, now returned to London, is sold at auction to pay its debts.

February
Lieutenant Colonel Heros Von Borcke arrives in London on a special mission for the Confederate government.
William Rumble, an Admiralty official, is found not guilty of a breach of the Foreign Enlistment Act in connection with the CSS *Rappahannock*.

March
Duncan Kenner comes to London on a secret mission from President Davis.
Officers take over from the CSS *Florida* arrive in London, on their way to join the ironclad CSS *Stonewall*.
Reports of the fall of Charleston create consternation among Confederate supporters.
James Mason and Duncan Kenner meet Lord Palmerston to discuss diplomatic recognition.
The last payment of interest on the Confederate loan is made.

April
Flag Officer Barron, Commanders North, Sinclair and Pegram, Assistant Paymaster Forrest and other naval officers leave for Havana.
A dinner is held in honor of Commander Maury prior to his return to the Confederacy.
News of Lee's surrender reaches London.
The reports of Lincoln's assassination cause intense excitement in the West End, leading John Thompson to remark that he "never witnessed such a sensation in London."

May
Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison is published.
Captain Ross's *Visit to the Cities and Camps of the Confederate States* also appears.

June
The *Times* publishes an official circular, declaring the Civil War to be at an end.

August
The Confederate's Daughter opens at the Britannia Theater, Hoxton.
The *Index* ceases publication.

November
The CSS *Shenandoah* surrenders at Liverpool.

Gazetteer

The following principal Confederate sites in London, mentioned in the text and described below, can still be seen: Arklow House, W2; 3 Belsize Square, NW3; 35 Buckland Crescent, NW3; 38 Clarendon Road, W11; 15 Half Moon Street, W1; 162 New Bond Street, W1; 40 Pall Mall, SW1; St. James's Church, W1; St. Peter's Church, NW3; 34 Sackville Street, W1; 17 Savile Row, W1; Wharncliffe House, W1.

Adelphi Theater see **Strand**

Albemarle Street (W1)

At the time of Commander Maury's stay in December 1862, the Albemarle Hotel, on the corner of Piccadilly, was owned by Louis Schill. The hotel, which was rebuilt in 1889, closed about 1905 and is now a suite of offices called Albemarle House.

The first Confederate commissioner to arrive in London, Dudley Mann had found lodgings at 40 Albemarle Street by May 1861; the premises then belonged to William Markwell, a wine and spirit merchant. Although subsequently commissioner to Belgium and the Vatican, Mann nevertheless appears to have been in London for much of the war, living at this address.

Arklow House see **Connaught Place**

Austin Friars (EC2)

The offices of W. S. Lindsay & Co., leading shipowners and insurance brokers, were at 8 Austin Friars; Commissioner Yancey went there in May 1861 and had "a long & interesting interview" with Mr. Lindsay. Edgar Stringer and Edward Pembroke, employees of Lindsay, set up the firm of Stringer, Pembroke & Co. c1864, and took over these premises, as well as others in Old Broad Street, when Lindsay retired.

Alexander Collie & Co., cotton merchants and major operators of blockade-runners, had a London office at 22A Austin Friars until 1864, when they moved to 17 Leadenhall Street. Agents like Major Huse and Captain Crenshaw seem to have used the premises as an accommodation address for correspondence.

Baker Street (W1)

Since 1835 Madame Tussaud's Waxworks on Baker Street had been a leading tourist attraction and was visited by a number of Confederates, including Lieutenant North in July 1861 and Assistant Paymaster Forrest in August 1863; Forrest was much impressed, finding them housed in "a magnificent building and admirably appointed." The collection moved to its Marylebone Road site in 1884.

Belsize Square (NW3)

Designed by J.R. St. Aubyn Mumford for the new suburb of Belsize Park and consecrated in 1859, St. Peter's Church, Belsize Square, was built largely at the expense of its first incumbent, the Rev. Francis Tremlett, who paid for the nave, aisles and transepts. A staunch Confederate, his sermon, *Christian Brotherhood: Its Claims and Duties, with a Special Reference to the Fratricidal War in America*, delivered here in November 1863, was printed and sent to churches throughout the country; it sold many thousands of copies. There is a memorial to him by Kathleen Shaw, on the wall by the vestry door, erected in 1915; his sister, Louisa, who corresponded with Captain Semmes and Commander Pegram, died in 1912 and is commemorated by a brass tablet in the side chapel.

Usually referred to in the nineteenth century as the Parsonage, St. Peter's Vicarage was built in 1862, also by the Rev. Tremlett; even by mid–Victorian standards it was massive. Confederates and their supporters were frequent guests here during the Civil War, and it became known as "the home of the Confederates" and "the Rebels' roost."

Ex-Confederates who came here after the war included Jefferson and Varina Davis, and ex-generals Pierre Beauregard, William Pendleton and Walter Stevens. The Rev. Tremlett remained here until his death in 1913 and it was demolished the same year to make way for a new vicarage.

In March 1866 Matthew Maury returned from Mexico and was reunited with his family at 30 Harley Street, where they rented rooms. From there they moved to 41 Clarendon Terrace, Belsize Road, in July, then to more comfortable accommodation at 3 Belsize Square in November. It cost $40 a week for food and lodgings "for all hands" (the Maurys and their four children) and was conveniently close to St. Peter's Vicarage, where the Rev. Francis Tremlett lived. The Maurys were to remain here until their return to the United States in July 1868. The house still exists.

Berners Street (W1)

Assistant Paymaster Forrest stayed at the Berners Hotel when he arrived in London at the end of July 1863, and probably again after his return from Liverpool the following month; it was then owned by Mrs. Louisa Ashton, the widow of its founder, Thomas Ashton. The hotel, which was rebuilt c1909, is still in existence.

Bouverie Street (EC4)

The *Index* left Fleet Street in October 1862 and moved to 13 Bouverie Street, next-door-but-two to the pro–Northern *Daily News*; it was published there until October 1864, when it transferred to the Strand. The paper occupied two small rooms in a building it shared with other publishers, engravers and a kitchen-range manufacturer.

Britannia Theater see **Hoxton Street**

Brunswick Hotel see **Jermyn Street**

Buckingham Palace Road (SW1)

When Assistant Paymaster Forrest stayed at the Grosvenor Hotel in November 1863, it had only been open two years. The Grosvenor was reconstructed in 1892–1899 and extended in 1907, but externally is not greatly changed. It is still a major London hotel.

Buckland Crescent (NW3)

Built in the late 1850s, 11 (now 35) Buckland Crescent, Belsize Park, served as a temporary vicarage for St. Peter's Church until the one in Belsize Square was completed in 1862. It remained the property of the incumbent, the Rev. Francis Tremlett, a staunch supporter of the South, and a number of Confederates are known to have stayed there in the early weeks of 1863, among them Commander Sinclair and Lieutenants Chapman and Evans.

Bunhill Row (EC1)

The premises of Thomas De La Rue & Co., stationers and printers, at 109–113 Bunhill Row, were visited by various Confederate agents, including Commander Bulloch, Commander Sinclair and Major Ficklin, who may also have lodged there and used them as an accommodation address for correspondence. They were destroyed in the London Blitz in 1940.

Burlington Hotel see **Cork Street**

Bury Street (SW1)

Mrs. E. Preston, of 31 Bury Street, St. James's, advertised "Furnished apartments and bedrooms to let" in the *Index* from September 1862 to January 1863, and Henry Hotze himself stayed there when he arrived in London. At least two other Confederates, Lieutenants Chapman and Carter, are also known to have lodged with Mrs. Preston.

Cambridge House see **Piccadilly**

Chesham Place (SW1)

There is a plaque on 37 Chesham Place to mark the residence here, from 1841 until 1870, of Lord John Russell, foreign secretary during the Civil War, and twice prime minister. Here he had interviews with commissioners William Yancey, Pierre Rost and Dudley Mann in May 1861, and with their successor, James Mason, in February 1862.

Cheyne Row (SW3)

Confederate journalist and poet John Thompson visited 5 (now 24) Cheyne Row, Chelsea, the home of Thomas Carlyle, on a number of occasions during his stay in London between 1864 and 1866. The house, which was Carlyle's home from 1834 until 1881, is marked with a plaque; it has been the property of the National Trust since 1936 and is open to the public.

Clarendon Road (W11)

Major Huse had moved from Jermyn Street to 38 Clarendon Road, Notting Hill, by July 1862; this may have been because of the arrival of his wife and children, though evidence for this is lacking. He was still at this address in 1863, but by February 1864 was living in the suburbs of Paris, in a house provided rent-free by the banker Emile Erlanger; 38 Clarendon Road seems little changed externally.

Clifford Street (W1)

Captain Ross, who wrote *A Visit to the Cities*

and Camps of the Confederate States, was living at 3 Clifford Street when it was published in 1865; Lieutenant Colonel Von Borcke, author of *Memoirs of the Confederate War for Independence*, published the following year, also lodged there. The house was rebuilt in the late nineteenth century.

Connaught Place (W2)

Alexander Beresford Hope, a leading supporter of the South, lived at Arklow House, 1–2 Connaught Place. A number of Confederates came here during the war, including William Yancey, James Mason, Commander Bulloch, James Spence, Henry Hotze and Edwin De Leon. A plaque indicates that in 1883–1892 it was also the home of Lord Randolph Churchill, father of Sir Winston Churchill.

Cork Street (W1)

Flag Officer Barron, Commander Maury, Colin McRae, Hildreth Bloodgood and James Spence all stayed at the Burlington Hotel. The hotel was demolished in 1935, and a block of flats, later converted into offices, built on the site.

Covent Garden (WC2)

Assistant Paymaster Forrest was unimpressed with the Tavistock Hotel when he spent a night there in February 1864. It was rebuilt in 1868 and pulled down in 1928.

Crosby Square (EC3)

In September 1863, on the termination of his London mission, James Mason deposited "all the books and other things belonging to the commission" with J. K. Gilliat & Co., merchants and bankers, of 4 Crosby Square. At this time the head of the firm, which had various dealings with the Confederacy, was John Gilliat.

Curzon Street (W1)

The residence of Lord Wharncliffe, president of the Southern Independence Association of London, Wharncliffe House was the scene in February 1865 of a luncheon at which Confederate journalist John Thompson was present, and he commented in his diary on the sumptuous nature of the meal. The white-stuccoed mansion, which still exists, dates from about 1730, and was known for many years as Crewe House. In the twentieth century it was briefly home to two American ambassadors, including Frank Billings Kellog, of the Kellog-Briand Pact (1928), which attempted to outlaw war.

Devonshire Street (W1)

The home of Rev. Arthur Godson, curate of All Souls', Langham Place, 3 Devonshire Street, was where the London Confederate States Aid Association had an office and held its Wednesday evening meetings in the latter part of 1862.

A block of 1930s flats called Goodwood Court stands on the site of 54 Devonshire Street, where James Mason had taken rooms by the middle of May 1862; the house was then occupied by Frederick Hermann, a marquetery manufacturer. Mason was still there at the beginning of October, but a month later had moved to his next and final London address in Upper Seymour Street.

Drury Lane (WC2)

The Theater Royal, where John Morton's nautical extravaganza, *The Alabama,* was performed in March 1864, dates from 1812, though there have been many alterations since then. It is the oldest theater in London.

Euston Square (NW1)

On their first visit to London in May 1862, Commander Semmes and Lieutenant Kell took rooms in Euston Square. It was then still mostly in private occupation, though there was a boarding house on the north side and a private hotel on the east side. This latter building still exists, as does part of the south side of the original square, renamed Endsleigh Gardens in 1879.

Euston Street (NW1)

Lieutenant North stayed at the Euston Hotel in October 1861, on his way to and from Liverpool. The hotel was demolished in 1963 when Euston Station was rebuilt.

Evans' Music and Supper Rooms see **King Street**

Fenton's Hotel see **St. James's Street**

Fishmongers' Hall see **King William Street**

Fleet Street (EC4)

The *Index* was first published by William Freeman at 102 Fleet Street in May 1862, and continued to be published from this address until October 1862, when it moved to Bouverie Street.

Garrick Club see **King Street**

Grosvenor Hotel see **Buckingham Palace Road**

Half Moon Street (W1)

In May 1861 William Yancey came to lodge at 15 Half Moon Street, the home of Arthur Dare, a hosier and glover, who had a shop in nearby Piccadilly. The following month he was called on by James Bulloch, then by Major Anderson, Lieutenant North and Captain Huse. In August 1861 it was the scene of an altercation between Yancey and

Anderson, concerning the former's recommendation of unknown Englishmen for appointments as officers in the Confederate Army and the latter's apparent failure to purchase 20,000 French muskets as a result of slowness. Yancey seems to have remained here until he returned to the Confederacy the following February. The house is now used as offices.

Hampstead Cemetery (NW6)

The Rev. Francis Tremlett, the vicar of St. Peter's, Belsize Park, who died in June 1913, aged 91, is buried here. His grave, which also houses his mother and sister, is marked by a simple cross bearing the patronym "Tremlett."

Hanover Square (W1)

In August 1863, Assistant Paymaster Forrest attended morning service at St. George's Church and was thrilled to discover that one of his eighteenth century ancestors had been married there. St. George's was designed by John James and built in 1721–1724.

Hatchett's Hotel see **Piccadilly**

Haxell's Hotel see **Strand**

Haymarket (SW1)

Major Anderson visited the Theater Royal twice, in August and September 1861. Externally, the building is largely unchanged since then, though there have been two major reconstructions of the interior, in 1879 and 1904.

High Holborn (WC1)

In September 1861 Major Anderson visited the Holborn Casino, a place for dancing rather than gambling. It was rebuilt in 1874, when it became the Holborn Restaurant, a celebrated establishment which survived until 1955. The site is now occupied by offices and a supermarket.

Lieutenant Whittle stayed at Wood's Hotel in October 1864 and here he met his contact, prior to embarking in the *Sea King*, the future CSS *Shenandoah*. The hotel later featured in Charles Dickens' last, unfinished novel, *Edwin Drood* (1870), and was demolished in 1895. A plaque on what was formerly the Prudential Assurance building, which stands on the site, records its approximate location.

Hoxton Street (N1)

John Thompson saw Colin Hazlewood's play, *The Confederate's Daughter,* at the Britannia Theater in August 1865. For many years the Britannia was famous for its melodramas; from 1923 until its destruction by bombing in 1940 it was used as a cinema.

Jermyn Street (SW1)

The Piccadilly Arcade, built in 1910, stands on the site of the Brunswick Hotel, where Belle Boyd stayed from August 1864 until at least January 1865; the owner then was Charles Hughes.

Captain Huse found rooms at 58 Jermyn Street, a lodging house kept by William Wyborn, and in July 1861 he was joined by Major Anderson, who noted in his diary the following month that he was sharing the accommodation with Huse, James Bulloch, and John Fearn (Commissioner Yancey's secretary). Anderson left at the beginning of October, when he returned to the Confederacy, but Huse was still there in March 1862.

Isaac, Campbell & Co., commission merchants and army contractors, established about 1852, were at 71 Jermyn Street, on the corner of Bury Street, by 1861. It was used later by Captain Huse as an accommodation address for correspondence. The firm remained there until after the war, when they moved to East India Avenue, Leadenhall Street. 71 Jermyn Street was rebuilt in 1902.

Belle Boyd was staying at 102 Jermyn Street, a private hotel kept by Mrs. Eliza Wood, in February 1865.

In July 1861 Major Anderson found "cheap lodgings" for Lieutenant North and his family at 108 Jermyn Street, an establishment kept by Henry Porter.

Colonel Peyton, state agent for North Carolina, took furnished rooms in Jermyn Street in November 1861.

Kensington Palace Gardens (W8)

Built in 1845–1846, 12 Kensington Palace Gardens was bought in 1864 by Alexander Collie. He had previously lived in Sussex Gardens, Bayswater, but in January 1865, in a letter to Lord Wharncliffe, he announced that he had now moved to his palatial new abode. Collie lived there until 1875, when he disappeared following his bankruptcy and prosecution for a banking fraud. The house still exists.

King Street (WC2)

James Mason made several visits to the Garrick Club; he dined there in February 1862 as a guest of William Gregory, M.P., and again in April with Alexander Baring, M.P. The club was then at 35 King Street, Covent Garden, and did not move to its present building in Garrick Street until 1864.

Evans' Music-and-Supper Rooms, which Assistant Paymaster Forrest visited in August 1863, were at 43 King Street, Covent Garden, and operated until c1882. They occupied an early eighteenth-century house which has survived, though much restored.

King William Street (EC4)

William Yancey and Dudley Mann were guests of honor at a dinner given by the Fishmongers' Company at Fishmongers' Hall, by London Bridge, in November 1861, at which Yancey made a speech. Fishmongers' Hall, designed by Henry Roberts and completed in 1834, was badly damaged in the London Blitz in 1940.

Knightsbridge (SW7)

Henry Hotze met William E. Gladstone, Chancellor of the Exchequer, at a dinner party at Stratheden House, the residence of Lord Campbell, in July 1862. James Mason had dined there the previous April, and met General Sir James Scarlett, a Crimean War hero, and the novelist Mrs. Caroline Norton. Rutland Court, a block of mansion flats built in 1901, stands on the site.

London Pavilion see **Tichborne Street**

Mansion House (EC4)

The official residence of the lord mayor of London, the Mansion House was built in 1739–1753 to the designs of George Dance, the Elder. Its splendid Egyptian Hall was the scene of a banquet in February 1863, when Confederate commissioner James Mason was a guest and made an impromptu speech.

Morley's Hotel see **Trafalgar Square**

New Bond Street (W1)

The Time and Life Building stands on the site of 157 New Bond Street, where in early August 1863, Assistant Paymaster Forrest and three other Confederate naval officers were lodging. The building was then occupied at street level by Henry Browne, a tailor, but the upper part was let as rooms. Later, at the beginning of March 1865, a dozen officers from the *Florida* arrived there, on their way to join the CSS *Stonewall.*

William Houghton, a stationer, occupied 162 New Bond Street when Commander Maury stayed there in May 1863. The five-story building, used as shop and office premises, still exists.

Olympic Theater see **Wych Street**

Osnaburgh Street (NW1)

For many years 10 Osnaburgh Street was the home and studio of sculptor John Foley, and the statue of General "Stonewall" Jackson was made there for the British Jackson Monumental Fund. Work on the statue was in progress by July 1865, though it was not completed until shortly before the sculptor's death in 1874. No. 10 subsequently became No. 30 and there is now a block of flats on the site.

Oxford Street (W1)

Assistant Paymaster Forrest paid a visit to the Princess's Theater in July 1863, but was unimpressed, both with the theater itself and the play (*Romeo and Juliet*). The Princess's Theater was destroyed by fire in 1880; though rebuilt, it closed in 1902 and was converted into shops. A modern shopping complex called Oxford Walk stands on the site.

Pall Mall (SW1)

Goody & Jones, military tailors, of 40 Pall Mall, advertised the availability of "Confederate Grey Cloth" in the *Index.* Their narrow-fronted, five-story building, with a stuccoed facade, still exists.

Piccadilly (W1)

The Piccadilly Hotel stands on the site of the St. James's Hall where Hiram Fuller gave a lecture about secession in December 1861. It was then a new building, opened only three years previously. Built as a concert hall, it became famous for its minstrel shows, as well as being used for lectures and readings. It was demolished in 1905.

The only West End church to be designed by Christopher Wren, St. James's church was the scene of Belle Boyd's wedding in August 1864; it was rebuilt following bomb damage in World War II.

Major Anderson and Lieutenant North stayed at Hatchett's Hotel when they first arrived in London in June 1861, and Anderson stayed there twice more the following month. It was rebuilt in 1886 but proved unsuccessful and was forced to close, though Hatchett's Restaurant perpetuated the name for many years.

94 Piccadilly, then called Cambridge House, was the home of Lord Palmerston from 1857 until his death in 1865. Confederates who came to see Palmerston included Colonel Peyton in May 1862, Edwin De Leon in July 1862, and James Mason, who had two meetings with him, in July 1864 and March 1865. The house, which still exists, was occupied by the Naval and Military Club from 1866 until 2000. Palmerston's residence here is commemorated by a plaque.

By mid–February 1862 James Mason had moved to 109 Piccadilly, a rooming house kept by Robert Francis. There until at least the beginning of May, Mason subsequently moved to an address in Devonshire Street.

Polygraphic Hall see **William IV Street**

Portland Place (W1)

The Royal Institute of British Architects' building occupies the site of 24 (now 66) Portland Place, which housed the U.S. legation at the

outbreak of the Civil War. Confederate commissioner Dudley Mann called there in April 1861, on his arrival in London, to see outgoing minister George Dallas.

The U.S. legation was at 5 Upper Portland Place (now 98 Portland Place) from 1862 until 1866. When the Civil War ended, several Confederates living in London went there to obtain passports to return to America, including Hildreth Bloodgood, Colin McRae's assistant, and Commander Webb, formerly of the CSS *Atlanta*. A plaque records its diplomatic role as well as the fact that it was the home of Henry Adams, who became a distinguished historian.

Princess's Theater see **Oxford Street**

Regent Street (W1)

The Society for Promoting the Cessation of Hostilities in America had its headquarters at 215 Regent Street. Other occupants of these premises included Bosworth & Harrison, who published the Rev. Francis Tremlett's topical sermon, *Christian Brotherhood*, in 1863.

Russell Square (WC1)

After their return from Paris in November 1861, Lieutenant North and his family lodged at 37 Russell Square, on the corner of Montague Place, a private residence occupied by the Misses Ellis. They were certainly there by January 1862, and remained until at least June, after which they moved to Scotland. Stewart House, neo–Georgian offices built for the University of London in the 1980s, now stands on the site.

Sackville Street (W1)

When Commander Maury came to London in 1862, he found rooms at 10 Sackville Street, a house whose main occupant was William Frohlich, a military tailor. He was still there in September 1863, but by the following month had moved across the road to 43 Sackville Street, where his landlady was a Mrs. Hopkinson. 10 Sackville Street was rebuilt in 1961–1962, and a modern block called Pegasus House occupies the site of No. 43.

In July 1864, on her arrival in England, Georgiana Walker lodged for a few days at 34 Sackville Street, where she found that one of the other residents was Rose Greenhow, whom she had met in Bermuda. Mrs. Greenhow left in August, but Mrs. Walker again stayed there in September with her husband, Major Walker. The premises then were partly occupied by John Johnstone, an army clothier, and today are still in commercial use.

St. George's Church see **Hanover Square**

St. Helen's Place (EC3)

Sinclair, Hamilton & Co., commission merchants, had been at 11 St. Helen's Place since the 1850s. A storeroom, where Captain Huse proposed depositing future purchases of arms, and which Major Anderson refers to as "our warehouse," may have been there. The firm later moved to 17 St. Helen's Place, where it remained for many years after the Civil War.

St. James's Church see **Piccadilly**

St. James's Hall see **Piccadilly**

St. James's Street (SW1)

Because of the *Trent* incident, James Mason found himself a celebrity, "called on by a great number of gentlemen within the first few days" of his arrival at Fenton's Hotel at the end of January 1862. How long he was there is uncertain, but by mid–February he had moved to an address in Piccadilly. Fenton's Hotel closed and was demolished in 1886.

St. Mildred's Court (EC2)

The short-lived London Confederate States Commercial League was located at 7 St. Mildred's Court, Poultry, in 1863. The honorary secretary was James Yeomans, of the firm of Elizabeth Yeomans & Son, wholesale gun, pistol and rifle makers, and sword cutlers, whose address it was.

St. Peter's Church & Vicarage see **Belsize Square**

Savile Row (W1)

A four-story, stucco-fronted house, 17 Savile Row contained the offices of the Confederate States Commercial Agency between 1862 and 1865. Henry Hotze also resided there and was visited by men like Lord Campbell, a leading member of the Southern lobby in the House of Lords; John Thompson, who came to London to work on the *Index*, lodged there in August 1864 and possibly until he returned to America in 1866. At that time, Savile Row was mainly occupied by physicians and surgeons, and had not yet become world-famous as the home of London's finest tailors. No. 17 was the home of Dr. Richard King, and after he left in 1867 the house served as the offices of London University, and then as the Burlington Fine Arts Club, but is now used for business purposes. 17 Savile Row was a center of Confederate activity in London and is one of the most important sites to survive. A plaque records that it was also the home of architect George Basevi, 1829–1845.

Seymour Street (W1)

By the beginning of November 1862 James Mason had moved to 24 Upper Seymour Street

(later 46 Seymour Street), a rooming house kept by the Misses Frances and Elizabeth Davies, and this became his chief base in London. He left for Paris at the end of September 1863, after receiving instructions to terminate his mission to London, but returned briefly about the middle of October to clear up some outstanding matters. In a letter to Judah Benjamin written about this time, he speaks of "having given up my house"; whether this means he rented all the available accommodation, or is simply a figure of speech, is not clear. Nonetheless, he made so many return visits to London, always staying at this address, that he must have made special arrangements to have rooms kept ready for him. In 1864 he was there from mid–February through the beginning of April, from early June through early August, in late September, probably in mid–October and in December. He was there again in January 1865, but had returned to Paris when Duncan Kenner arrived in late February, and came back to London with him at the beginning of March. When the war ended he was still there, and remained until the end of April 1866, when he left for Liverpool, en route for Montreal, where he was reunited with his family.

Stable Yard (SW1)

James Mason twice visited Stafford House, "perhaps the largest and most sumptuous in London," as a guest of the Duke and Duchess of Sutherland in May 1862. The first occasion was a glittering affair, when "a great crowd of the nobility" and members of the royal family, *"it was said,* were present"; the second was a dinner party which included such guests as Baron Rothschild. Perhaps Mason might have been less enraptured had he known that it had also been the scene of a luncheon given in honor of Harriet Beecher Stowe in 1853, when she was presented with a gold bracelet made in the form of a slave's shackle. Stafford House was built between 1825 and 1841 and renamed Lancaster House after it was presented to the nation in 1913; it is now used for government conferences and receptions.

Strand (WC2)

An account was opened at Coutts Bank, at 59 Strand, for the British Jackson Monumental Fund in June 1863. Founded in 1692, the bank came into the possession of the Coutts family in 1755, and under the direction of Thomas Coutts (d. 1822), it became a leading financial institution, numbering many distinguished people, including members of the royal family, among its clients. Now at 440 Strand, it was rebuilt in 1904 and again in 1978.

In October 1864 the *Index* moved from Bouverie Street to a large rented house at 291 Strand, and from then until it ceased publication in August 1865 was published from there.

A large establishment ("upwards of one hundred rooms"), Haxell's Hotel advertised in both the *Index* and the *London American.* Confederate journalist John Thompson stayed there when he first arrived in London in July 1864. The hotel, which was in two parts, separated by Exeter Hall, closed in the late 1920s; the Strand Palace Hotel, still popular with American visitors, stands on the site.

Major Anderson visited the Adelphi Theater in September 1861, shortly before his return to the Confederacy. The present Adelphi Theater dates from 1930.

Stratheden House see **Knightsbridge**

Tavistock Hotel see **Covent Garden**

Tichborne Street (W1)

Assistant Paymaster Forrest visited the London Pavilion Music Hall in August 1863. It was demolished in 1885 when Piccadilly Circus and Shaftesbury Avenue were constructed. A new London Pavilion, whose facade still exists, was built, but on a different site.

Trafalgar Square (WC2)

Captain Huse stayed at Morley's Hotel in May 1861, when he first arrived in London; a Mr. Davis, president of a New Orleans bank, met Major Anderson there in September 1861 to talk about financial matters; "a great carnival" was held there in March 1863 to celebrate the initial success of the Confederate Cotton Loan; and Assistant Paymaster Forrest stayed there twice, in February and April 1864. In 1921 Morley's Hotel became the first South Africa House; it was replaced by the present building in 1935.

Tussaud's Waxworks see **Baker Street**

Victoria Street (SW1)

William Yancey and Pierre Rost stayed at the Westminster Palace Hotel in May 1861, and Yancey returned there in August, when there was a dinner for Dudley Mann, John Fearn, Major Anderson and Richard Meade (a former U.S. minister to Brazil), "a very handsome affair, given in honour of the Confederates." Later, in March 1863, Midshipman Morgan spent several weeks there, prior to joining his ship, the CSS *Georgia.* Converted into offices after World War I and renamed Abbey House, it was demolished in the 1970s.

Wharncliffe House see **Curzon Street**

William IV Street (WC2)

Henri Drayton's show *Federals and Confederates* was staged at the Polygraphic Hall, in what was then King William Street, from March until May 1863. The Polygraphic Hall, which had opened in 1854, was converted into a theater in 1869; it was demolished in 1896 for an extension to Charing Cross Hospital.

Wood's Hotel see **High Holborn**

Wych Street (WC2)

Major Anderson visited the Olympic Theater in August 1861. It was rebuilt in 1890 but demolished in 1905 when the area was cleared for the building of the Aldwych.

Chapter Notes

Introduction

1. First reports of the Battle of Gettysburg (July 1–3, 1863) did not appear in the *London Times* till July 17, and the fall of Vicksburg (July 4, 1863) till the 20th. The occupation of Richmond (April 3, 1865) was first reported in the *Times* on April 15, with official dispatches in full two days later. Lee's surrender (April 9, 1865) was first known about in London on April 23, with reports appearing in the *Standard* on April 24 and the *Times* the following day.

2. There was at least one proposal for an Atlantic cable during the war. In 1862 a man called Henry Cook put forward a scheme for a cable linking the Confederate States with Europe and the details were forwarded to Richmond; Cook was told that the idea would be considered when peace was secured. *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Navies* (ORN), ser. II, vol. 3, 545, 666.

3. Graham Storey, *Reuter's Century, 1851–1951* (London: Max Parrish, 1951), 33–34; Donald Read, *The Power of News: The History of Reuters, 1849–1989* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), 35.

4. In *The Secret Service of the Confederate States in Europe* (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1959), first published in 1883, naval agent James Bulloch mentions the delays in communicating by letter and the danger of writing at length about important topics because of the danger of correspondence being captured.

1— London in the 1860s

1. John Timbs, *Curiosities of London* (London: Longmans, Green, 1868), 27.

2. *Census of England & Wales, 1861, Vol. 3. General Report* (1863), Table 133.

3. See Gavin Stamp, *The Changing Metropolis: Earliest Photographs of London, 1839–1879* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK: Viking, 1984), for illustrations of what 1860s London really looked like, including the chaos caused by the construction of the Metropolitan Railway, views of Battersea, Southwark and Waterloo Bridges, Morley's Hotel, Her Majesty's Theater and the International Exhibition in South Kensington.

4. Details of maps are in Ralph Hyde, *Printed Maps of Victorian London, 1851–1900* (Folkstone, UK: Dawson, 1975).

5. *Collins' Illustrated Atlas of London*, with introduction by H. J. Dyos, was reissued by Leicester University Press in 1973.

6. Quoted in William Kent, *London for Americans* (London: Staples Press, 1950), 141.

7. *Murray's Modern London 1860* (reprinted by Old House Books, 2003), xii.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., xiii.

10. Ibid., xiv-xv.

11. George F. Pardon, *The Popular Guide to London and Its Suburbs* (London: Routledge, Warne & Routledge, 1862), 25.

12. *Index*, January 5, 1865.

13. Timbs, 442.

14. Pardon, 47.

15. *Murray's*, xxxvii.

16. Pardon, 47.

17. Daniel Joseph Kirwan, *Palace and Hovel; or, Phases of London Life* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1963), 15. First published 1870.

18. Pardon, 48.

19. Ibid., 37.

20. Francis Wey, *A Frenchman Sees the English in the 'Fifties* (1935), quoted in Alison Adburgham, *Shopping in Style* (London: Thames & Hudson, 1979), 112.

21. Pardon, 44.

22. Quoted in Ben Weinreb & Christopher Hibbert (eds.), *The London Encyclopaedia* (London: Macmillan, 1983), 513.

23. Douglas F. Forrest, *Odyssey in Gray: A Diary of Confederate Service, 1863–1865*, ed. William N. Still, Jr. (Richmond: Virginia State Library, 1979), 51.

24. George Augustus Sala, *Twice Round the Clock, or the Hours of the Day and Night in London* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1971), 157. First published 1859. A *bezesteen* is a bazaar or marketplace in the East.

25. Henry Mayhew, *The Shops and Companies of London* (London: Strand Printing & Publishing Co., 1865), 101.

26. *Lady's Newspaper*, December 21, 1850.

27. *Murray's*, xxi-xxii.

28. Quoted in M. Willson Disher, *Winkles and Champagne: Comedies and Tragedies of the Music Hall* (London: Batsford, 1938), 15.

29. Forrest, 46. "Welsh rarebit," or "rabbit," is toasted cheese.

30. Edward C. Anderson, *Confederate Foreign*

Agent, ed. W.S. Hoole (University, AL: Confederate Publishing, 1976), 67–68.

31. *Murray's*, xlviii.

32. Henry Mayhew, *London's Underworld*. Selections from *Those That Will Not Work*, vol. 4 of *London Labour and the London Poor*, ed. Peter Quennell (London: Spring Books, 1950), 38–39. First published 1862.

33. *Murray's*, 26.

34. Mayhew, op. cit. See also Kellow Chesney, *The Victorian Underworld* (Harmondsworth, Middlesex, UK: Pelican Books, 1972) for a detailed description of the criminal scene in the 1860s.

2 — A Diplomatic Presence

1. *Charleston Mercury*, June 4, 1861, quoted in Thomas A. Bailey, *A Diplomatic History of the American People*, 9th ed. (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1974), 333. A surplus of cotton in Britain when the Civil War began postponed the expected cotton famine until 1862. It has been suggested that the failure of the British wheat crop early in the war, resulting in greatly increased imports from North America, may also have helped undermine the power of King Cotton; though European wheat could have been imported, it would have been more expensive than that from America. Clement Eaton, *A History of the Southern Confederacy* (New York: Free Press, 1965), 68–69.

2. Benjamin Moran, *The Journal of Benjamin Moran, 1857–1865*, eds. Sarah A. Wallace & Frances E. Gillespie, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1948), 799.

3. Frank L. Owsley, *King Cotton Diplomacy*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1959), 52.

4. Quoted in David P. Crook, *The North, the South and the Powers, 1861–1865* (New York: Wiley, 1974), 27–28.

5. Brian N. Morton, *Americans in London* (London: Queen Anne Press, 1988), 208. "William L. Yancey's European Diary, March-June 1861," ed. W. Stanley Hoole, *Alabama Review*, *25* (April 1972):138. A report of both visits appeared in the *New York Tribune* and was reprinted in the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, June 1, 1861. None of the histories of Barings makes any reference to the commissioners' visit.

6. *London American*, May 8, 1861. This was one of the very few references to their activities by the Federal newspaper.

7. "William L. Yancey's European Diary," 139. Each commissioner received a monthly allowance of $1,000, a generous amount, considering that the *annual* salary of commercial agent Henry Hotze when he first came to London in 1862 was only $1,500. The Confederate secret service fund accounts (*American Historical Review*, *35* [1930]:814–821) suggest that government officials in London were paid in U.S. currency because there was no British exchange rate with the Confederacy. How they actually received their money is uncertain, but it was probably via Fraser, Trenholm & Company, the Liverpool firm which acted as bankers to the Confederacy.

8. Yancey to Hunter, August 7, 1861, in James D. Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Confederacy*, vol. 2 (Nashville, TN: U.S. Publishing, 1905), 57.

9. Russell had promised Adams in June that he would not see the "pseudo-commissioners" anymore. Richardson, vol. 2, 136.

10. *Times*, November 12, 1861.

11. Yancey, Rost and Mann to Hunter, December 2, 1861, in Richardson, vol. 2, 121.

12. Richardson, vol. 2, 132.

13. *Punch*, January 18, 1862. *Stone-jug* was slang for "prison"; "a free and an accepted mason" is a Masonic phrase.

14. *Illustrated Times*, February 8, 1862. Charles P. Cullop, *Confederate Propaganda in Europe, 1861–1865* (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1969), 32.

15. Yancey to Reid, July 3, 1861, quoted in the *Dictionary of American Biography* article on Yancey. John Bigelow, "The Confederate Diplomatists," *Century Magazine*, *42* (1891):117. "Mr Yancey ... left yesterday," reported the U.S. consul in London on February 5, 1862.

16. Mary B. Chesnut, *Mary Chesnut's Civil War*, ed. C. Vann Woodward (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1981), 170–171, 520.

17. H. Adams to C. F. Adams, Jr., June 6, 1862, in Worthington C. Ford (ed.), *A Cycle of Adams Letters, 1861–1865*, vol. 1 (London: Constable, 1920), 154.

18. Henry Adams, *The Education of Henry Adams* (Boston: Mariner Books, 2000), 184–185.

19. Moran, vol. 2, 1212.

20. Mason to Hunter, January 30, 1862, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 3, 323.

21. Virginia Mason, *Public Life and Diplomatic Correspondence of James Murray Mason* (Roanoke, VA: Stone Printing & Manufacturing Co., 1903), 340–342.

22. *Times*, February 12, 1863.

23. Mason, 185.

24. H. Adams, 185.

25. *Times*, June 18, June 23, 1863. William L. Garrison, *The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison*, ed. Walter M. Merrill, vol. 5, 1861–1867 (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1979), 88, 132–133, 161–162.

26. C. F. Adams to C. F. Adams, Jr., September 25, 1863, in Ford, vol. 2, 85.

27. Adams to Adams, Jr., February 17, 1865, ibid., 256–257.

28. Adams to Seward, March 9, 1865, in *Papers Relating to the Foreign Relations of the United States, 1865*, vol. 1, 199.

29. *Times*, January 16, 1865; Gladstone to Reynard, April 18, 1865, in C. Collyer, "Gladstone and the American Civil War," *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical & Literary Society*, *6* (1948–1952):593.

30. *Index*, January 19, 1865.

31. Kenner's mission also included attempting to negotiate a second foreign loan of £15 million, following the proposed establishment of a Confederate bank in Europe.

32. Moran, vol. 2, 1410.

33. *Times*, April 17, 1865.

34. Adams to Seward, April 20, 1865, in *Foreign Relations 1865*, vol. 1, 323.

35. Moran, vol. 2, 1414.

36. Mason to Benjamin, May 1, 1865, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 3, 1277.

37. Bulloch, vol. 2, 155.

3 — The Propaganda War

1. Mason to Benjamin, May 2, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 401. There was a similar flood of pro-Northern books and pamphlets; they are listed in Donaldson Jordan & Edwin J. Pratt, *Europe and the American Civil War* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1931).

2. The German translation, and possibly also the French one, was paid for by the Confederate secret service fund; Hotze himself also contributed towards the cost of the German edition. J. F. Jameson, "The London Expenditures of the Confederate Secret Service," *American Historical Review, 35* (1930):814–815. *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 536.

3. Mason, 340; John W. Cowell, *Southern Secession,* quoted in James T. deKay, *The Rebel Raiders* (New York: Ballantine Books, 2002), 122. Cowell's pamphlet was also paid for by the Confederate secret service fund (Jameson, 815–816).

4. Richardson, vol. 2, 115.

5. Hotze to Hunter, February 23, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 346–347.

6. Ibid. The "clubs" were the gentlemen's clubs of Pall Mall and St James's.

7. Ibid.

8. Sir Henry Brackenbury, *Some Memories of My Spare Time* (1909), 108, quoted in Basil L. Crapster, "Thomas Hamber, Tory Journalist," *Victorian Periodicals Newsletter, 8* (1975): 116.

9. Crapster, 117.

10. Hotze to Benjamin, September 26, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 535.

11. Hotze to Benjamin, April 25, 1862, ibid., 400–401. Both Brewer and Wetter were involved in the shipping business and later in blockade-running.

12. *Index,* May 1, 1862.

13. Hotze to Benjamin, May 15, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 423.

14. H. Adams to C. F. Adams, Jr., June 6, 1862, in Ford, vol. 1, 154.

15. Ephraim D. Adams, *Great Britain and the American Civil War,* vol. 2 (London: Longmans, 1925), 231.

16. *Index,* February 18, 1864.

17. Hotze to Benjamin, September 26, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 537.

18. Ibid., 535.

19. He died at Ealing, then a village in Middlesex, and was buried in the crypt of Kensington parish church. *Gentleman's Magazine,* August 1862. *Who Was Who in America, Historical Volume 1607–1896* (Chicago: Marquis, 1963).

20. *American Magazine Journalists, 1850–1900 (Dictionary of Literary Biography,* vol. 79) (Detroit: Gale Research Inc., 1989), 61. Bledsoe traveled to England with Flag Officer Barron and Lieutenant Whittle in the steamship *Florida.*

21. The articles by "A White Republican" in *Fraser's Magazine* were as follows: "Universal Suffrage in the United States, and Its Consequences" (July 1862); "North and South: The Controversy in a Colloquy" (September 1862); "North and South: The Two Constitutions" (October 1862); "North and South; or, Who Is the Traitor?" (November 1862); "Negroes and Slavery in the United States" (February 1863).

22. S. H. Harris, "John L. O'Sullivan Serves the Confederacy," *Civil War History, 10* (1964):275–290.

23. Hotze to Benjamin, October 24, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 567; October 31, 1863, ibid., 944. John Slidell and Dudley Mann both complained about Spence, Slidell in connection with the Erlanger Loan and Mann regarding the Southern Independence Association of London's prospectus.

24. Some people apparently thought that "S" was John Slidell. There were at least forty-two letters, published on the following dates: 1862: February 5; March 18, 22; April 7, 28; May 5, 19, 29; June 4, 11, 16, 17; July 7, 17; August 1, 12, 29; October 3, 9, 11, 23; November 4, 27; December 30. 1863: January 16; June 19; July 2; August 13, 29; September 11, 26; October 9, 29; December 11. 1864: January 4; April 1; June 8; July 13; September 15; November 15; December 12. 1865: January 6.

There is no discernible pattern in their frequency and there may be others which have not yet been found.

25. Hotze to Benjamin, September 26, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 537.

26. Jameson, 812.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid., 814, 816. The exchange rate was then US$4.85 to £1 sterling.

29. Moran, vol. 2, 1114. The *London American* survived for 2 years and 10 months, the *Index* for 3 years and 3 months.

30. Hotze to Benjamin, August 4, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 507. Why did Hotze travel all the way to Germany to consult an oculist when an eminent ophthalmic surgeon like William Bowman was just round the corner in Clifford Street?

31. William E. Gladstone, *The Gladstone Diaries,* vol. 6, 1861–1868, ed. H. C. G. Matthews (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 138; Richard Shannon, *Gladstone,* vol. 1, 1809–1865 (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1982), 463.

32. Hotze to Benjamin, August 4, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 506.

33. Jameson, 813.

34. Ibid., 816–817. The posters cost US$522, or approximately £108.

35. *Autobiography of Moncure D. Conway* (1904), vol. 1, 365, quoted in David A. Wilson, *Carlyle to Threescore-and-ten, 1853–1865* (London: Kegan Paul, 1929), 556.

36. *Antebellum Writers in New York and the South,* in *Dictionary of Literary Biography* (DLB), vol. 3 (Detroit: Gale Research Inc., 1979), 330–332. See also *American Magazine Journalists, 1741–1850* (*DLB,* vol. 73, 1988), 327–330, and *Antebellum Writers in the South,* Second Series (*DLB,* vol. 248, 2001), 364–369.

37. "From the Diary of John R. Thompson," *Confederate Veteran* (March 1929), 99.

38. *Index,* August 12, 1865. There is a complete file of the *Index* in the British Library Newspaper Library at Colindale, London NW9. The copies presumably came from the *Index* office as they bear the signatures of the publishers, Henry F. Mackintosh and John B. Hopkins.

4 — Supplies for the Confederate Army

1. Caleb Huse, *Supplies for the Confederate Army* (1904), quoted in Philip Van Doren Stern, *Secret Missions of the Civil War* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1990), 76.

2. Ibid., 77. In June 1863 Huse informed McRae he had been offered the opportunity to buy the London Armory Company; nothing came of this, though the following January it was recommended to Col. Gorgas that an unidentified armaments factory in England should be acquired (Thomas Boaz, *Guns for Cotton* [Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1996], 72).

3. *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (ORA), ser. IV, vol. 1, 344.

4. Dunbar Rowland, *Jefferson Davis, Constitutionalist* (Jackson, MS: Mississippi Department of Archives & History, 1923), vol. viii, 311.

5. Victor A. Hatley, "Monsters in Campbell Square," *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, vol. 4 (1966), 54. Isaac, Campbell & Co. had a boot and shoe factory in Northampton from 1857 until 1861, which was then taken over by Turner Bros., Hyde & Co., a London firm which advertised in the *Index*. Part of the cargo of the *Justitia*, a blockade-runner owned by Thomas Begbie, which left London in November 1862, was supplied by them.

6. Anderson, 31.

7. Peggy Robbins, "Caleb Huse, Confederate Agent," *Civil War Times Illustrated* (August 1978):35.

8. Anderson, 31.

9. Ibid., 43. James Bulloch was a naval purchasing agent, John Fearn was Commissioner Yancey's secretary and George Jones was a visitor from Savannah.

10. Ibid., 61. At the end of the war, Helm returned to London with General Breckinridge, whom he had encountered in Havana (A. J. Hanna, *Flight into Oblivion* [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1999], 232).

11. Pardon, 177–178.

12. Ibid.

13. Anderson, 58. Archibald Hamilton's country residence was a house called Southbarrow, at Southborough, then a hamlet two miles from the village of Bromley, Kent.

14. Ibid., 62, 58.

15. Ibid., 67.

16. Ibid., 71. Henry Hotze was born in Zurich, in the German-speaking part of Switzerland.

17. Moran, vol. 2, 893.

18. Invoice dated January 1862, Pickett Papers, Library of Congress; *The American Civil War: A Centennial Exhibition* (Washington: Library of Congress, 1961), 26.

19. John W. Dubose, *Life and Times of William Lowndes Yancey* (Birmingham, AL: Roberts & Son, 1892), 661–664; *Foreign Relations, 1862*, 108.

20. William Diamond, "Imports of the Confederate Government from Europe," *Journal of Southern History, 6* (1940):470–503.

21. *ORA*, ser. IV, vol. 3, 674.

22. Emma H. Ferguson, "Running the Blockade: A Confederate Reminiscence," *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* (October 1893):493–502. Major Ficklin had previously been to England as a Treasury agent.

23. It was apparently the "magnificent new uniform" that Lee wore at Appomattox and which was also used by the French sculptor M. J. A. Mercie when modeling the equestrian statue of Lee which stands in Monument Avenue, Richmond, Virginia. Emma H. Ferguson, "Sketch of Major Ferguson," *Confederate Veteran* (March 1899):99–100.

24. John B. Jones, *A Rebel War Clerk's Diary*, ed. Earl S. Miers (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 258.

25. He is sometimes referred to as General McRae: this was a pre-war rank in the Mississippi state militia and has nothing to do with the Civil War.

26. McRae to Seddon, February 19, 1864, *ORA*, ser. IV, vol. 3, 155. Before Bloodgood arrived, McRae was assisted in the initial examination by H. O. Brewer, a business associate from Mobile who was involved in blockade-running.

27. For the various ways in which the Confederates financed their overseas purchases, see Richard C. Todd, *Confederate Finance* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1954), particularly chapter 6, "Financial Operations Abroad."

28. Quoted in Todd, 187.

29. Georgiana G. Walker, *The Private Journal of Georgiana Gholson Walker*, ed. Dwight F. Henderson (Tuscaloosa, AL: Confederate Publishing, 1963), 104. The vessel's arrival was reported to the U.S. consul, Freeman Morse.

30. Ibid., 109.

31. Angus J. Johnston, *Virginia Railroads in the Civil War* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1961), 178–180; *ORA*, ser. IV, vol. 2, 409–410, 841–842.

32. Anderson, 4.

33. Ibid., 66.

34. John L. Peyton, *The American Crisis*, vol. 1 (London: Saunders, Otley, 1867), 334.

35. *Times*, November 26, 1861.

36. Peyton to Vance, January 15, 1863, in *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance*, ed. Joe A. Mobley, vol. 2, 1863 (Raleigh, NC: State Dept. of Archives & History, 1995). John Wilson was a bookseller and minor publisher.

37. *The Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance*, ed. Frontis W. Johnston, vol. 1, 843–862 (Raleigh, NC: State Dept. of Archives & History, 1963), lii-liii, 288, 360; Stephen R. Wise, *Lifeline of the Confederacy* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1991), 105–106.

38. *ORA*, ser. IV, vol. 1, 545.

39. Louise B. Hill, *Joseph E. Brown and the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1939), 119.

40. The invoice, dated May 15, 1863, is in *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 3, 940.

5 — Vessels Suitable for Our Purposes

1. Raimondo Luraghi, *A History of the Confederate Navy* (London: Chatham Publishing, 1996), 20–21. It may also have been difficult at this time to fund the purchase of the cotton or transport it to England (Lester, 91).

2. Because he had commanded a mail steamer, he was often referred to as Captain Bulloch, which has led to confusion over his rank: he left the U.S. Navy as a lieutenant and was later commissioned as a commander in the C.S. Navy, but he never held the naval rank of captain. There is also a query concerning the spelling of his middle name. In the introduction to the 1959 edition of his memoirs, the *Dictionary of American Biography* and the *Historical Times Illustrated Encyclopedia of the Civil War*, it is spelt Dunwody; elsewhere, including on his tombstone in Toxteth Park Cemetery, Liverpool, it is Dunwoody.

3. Bulloch to Mallory, August 13, 1861, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 2, 86.

4. Bulloch, vol. 1, 100.

5. It has been suggested that Bulloch's informant was a Foreign Office clerk called Victor Buckley (Luraghi, 225, 422).

6. Lester, 110–112.

7. *Times*, January 26, 1865. There were also plans for the Dudgeon Bros. to build six torpedo boats for the Confederate Navy, but they were still under construction when the war ended (Milton F. Perry, *Infernal Machines* [Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1965], 178).

8. *Times*, March 16, 1865.

9. Bulloch to Whittle, October 6, 1864, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 2, 731–732.

10. A number of Confederates who came to England during the Civil War brought, or were joined by, their wives and children. In addition to Mrs. North, there was Mrs. Bledsoe, Mrs. Bulloch, Mrs. Clements, Mrs. Ferguson, Mrs. Hobson, probably Mrs. Huse, Mrs. Peyton and Mrs. Walker; Dudley Mann's son, Grayson, also came to London to act as his secretary, and Cdr. Maury was accompanied by 13-year-old Matthew, Jr.

11. James H. North Diary, July 29,1861, #862, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

12. Anderson, 66.

13. North Diary, October 7–10, 1861. Bulloch came to England as a civilian; it was not until January 1862 that he became a commander in the Confederate Navy.

14. North to Mallory, March 29, 1862, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 2, 176–177.

15. Quoted in Lester, 122.

16. *Times*, April 7, 1863, quoted in Douglas H. Maynard, "The Forbes-Aspinwall Mission," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 45* (1958):74. Confederate commissioner James Mason had also been informed of their mission by a contact in New York.

17. Edgar Stringer seems to have specialized in introductions: apart from the two naval contracts with J. & G. Thomson, he also introduced Nelson Clements, a Texas state purchasing agent, to Sinclair, Hamilton & Co.

18. Sinclair to North, February 2, 1863, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 2, 350.

19. Douglas H. Maynard, "The Confederacy's Super-Alabama," *Civil War History, 5* (1959): 80–95. Some of the guns intended for it were later installed in the *Shenandoah*.

20. Raphael Semmes, *Memoirs of Service Afloat*, ed. John M. Taylor (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), 347–348. It is interesting to compare Semmes' rose-tinted view of Mason with that of Benjamin Moran and Henry Adams. Apart from newspaper reports, an article about the *Sumter* had appeared in the *London Journal* in March 1862, and there were several more pieces mentioning Semmes by name later that year.

21. Ibid., 785.

22. Part of this took the form of letters to the newspapers, e.g., *Times*, "A Voice from Secessia," December 23, 1862; "Prospects of the Confederates," August 20, 1863; and "The War in America," September 19, 1863, all of which were signed.

23. Bulloch, vol. 2, 261. After the war, Maury handed over the rights to his electric torpedoes to Nathaniel J. Holmes, "electrical engineer and contractor," who patented them in December 1865 (Perry, 191).

24. James M. Morgan, *Midshipman in Gray: Selections from Recollections of a Rebel Reefer*, ed. R. Thomas Campbell (Shippensburg, PA: Burd Street Press, 1997), 85. Maury remained a lieutenant in the U.S. Navy for many years and was not promoted to commander till 1858. In the Virginia State Navy and the C.S. Navy, he also held the rank of commander; sometime after his return to America in 1868, he was apparently given the honorary rank of commodore. His letter to the *Times*, December 23, 1862, was written from the Albemarle Hotel, where presumably he was staying for a few days.

25. Maury, Jr., to Mrs. Ann Herndon Maury, March 14, 1863, in Frances L. Williams, *Matthew Fontaine Maury* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1963), 405.

26. Morgan, 85.

27. Ibid., 88.

28. Ibid., 89. Lt. William L. Maury was promoted to commander about this time.

29. Maury to Carter, July 24, 1863, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 2, 471.

30. Forrest, 39.

31. Ibid., 45. Paymaster Felix Senac subsequently served in Paris under Flag Officer Barron; his daughter, Ruby, married Henry Hotze after the war. Lt. Charles Graves served with Forrest on the *Rappahannock*, and Lt. Charles M. Morris was on his way to take command of the *Florida*.

32. According to Douglas Forrest's diary, Hobson appears to have died in the early part of 1865, though no record of his death in England has been found.

33. The Confederates were not the only ones trying to recruit in London: in November 1864 the *Times* carried reports of attempts to engage men, in both London and Lancashire, supposedly for a glassworks in New York, but in reality for the Union Army. Several hundred men were already on board an emigrant ship at Liverpool when this violation of the Foreign Enlistment Act was discovered; they were subsequently sent home. The Federals were also attempting to recruit in Ireland at this time.

34. *Foreign Relations*, 1864, pt. 1, 18–19.

35. *Times*, February 7, 1865.

36. Adams to Seward, April 28, 1864, in *Foreign Relations, 1864*, 1, 642.

37. *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 2, 671.

38. Morse to Adams, June 15, 1864, in *Foreign Relations, 1864*, 185–187.

39. Bulloch, vol. 2, 253.

40. Ibid., 253–254, 256–258.

41. A consular dispatch at the beginning of March

1865 reported rather belatedly that ten or more officers from the CSS *Florida* had arrived in London and were lodging in New Bond Street prior to joining the CSS *Stonewall* (London consular dispatches, March 4, 1865).

42. Wharncliffe Muniments, WhM 461. The honorary secretary of the testimonial fund was probably the Rev. Francis Tremlett. The circular was sent from 28 Charles Street, the offices of Du Pasquier & Tremlett, a firm of lawyers, one of whom, George Tremlett, was the Rev. Tremlett's cousin; it does not indicate where the dinner was to be held.

43. There are useful descriptions of the *Florida*, the *Alabama*, the *Georgia*, the *Rappahannock* and the *Shenandoah* in Lester, 212–221.

6— *The Spying Game*

1. Harriet C. Owsley, "Henry Shelton Sanford and Federal Surveillance Abroad, 1861–1865," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 48* (1961–1962):212–213.

2. Ibid., 213.

3. *Times*, January 23, 1862. Pollaky, who was later assisted by his son and namesake, subsequently moved his office to Paddington Green, where it functioned until the 1880s. He appears in Gilbert & Sullivan's light opera *Patience* (1881) as "Paddington Pollaky."

4. "On Duty with Inspector Field," *Household Words*, June 14, 1851. He was also the original of Inspector Bucket in Dickens' *Bleak House* (1853).

5. Owsley, 217.

6. It had been in operation since at least August; Major Anderson noted in his diary on September 26 that he, as well as Bulloch and Huse, had been followed for the past month by detectives employed by the U.S. minister.

7. Moran, vol. 2, 946.

8. At the time of the Civil War, the United States had nine consulates in England. In addition to London and Liverpool, they were located at Falmouth, Plymouth, Southampton, Bristol, Leeds, Manchester and Newcastle. There were also three in Scotland, one in Wales and five in Ireland.

9. London consular dispatches, November 1, 1861.

10. Ibid., November 2, 1861.

11. Ibid., January 24, 1862.

12. Ibid., March 14, 1862.

13. Ibid., June 5, 1863.

14. Ibid., November 7, 1862.

15. Ibid., July 16, 1864. Bunting is mentioned several times in Douglas Forrest's diary. According to him, "that dog Bunting" was a former doctor who had been expelled from Canada for performing an abortion.

16. Ibid., July 6, 1864.

17. Forrest records a visit to them on April 12, 1864, when he met "Thomas Gordon," a name sometimes used by Thomas Bold, Cdr. Maury's cousin.

18. Morse to Adams, June 15, 1864, in *Foreign Relations, 1864*, pt. 2, 185.

19. Ibid., 186.

20. Ibid., 202.

21. Ibid., 187. The ship had, in fact, been intended for the Virginia Volunteer Navy, but the money to pay for it was not forthcoming.

22. London consular dispatches, July 18, 1862, July 25, 1862.

23. Ibid., September 23, 1864.

24. Ibid., July 19, 1861. Chester G. Hearn, *Gray Raiders of the Sea* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992), 154.

25. Owsley, 214.

26. Bulloch, vol. 1, 102.

27. Ibid., vol. 2, 38.

28. Ibid., vol. 1, 425.

29. Luraghi, 225, 422; Adams, vol. 2, 120. Buckley's name also appears in the list of supposed Confederate bondholders published in the *New York Herald*, December 9, 1865, with the comment: "This man is a clerk in that department of the Foreign Office through which passed all correspondence with or about the United States." Major Anderson also claimed to have a contact in the Foreign Office, a relative of a Mr. Bond, a member of the firm of Sinclair, Hamilton & Co.

30. Anderson, 63–64.

31. Ibid., 64.

32. Ibid., 64.

33. Ibid., 65.

34. Ibid., 68–69.

35. K. Bourne (ed.), *British Documents on Foreign Affairs: Reports and Papers from the Foreign Office Confidential Print.* Pt. 1, ser. C, vol. 6, *The Civil War Years 1862–65*, doc. 58, Huse to Major (?), April 1, 1862.

36. London consular dispatches, March 5, 1864. Edward (or Edwin) Archer's name does not appear in the list of commissioned and warrant officers in J. Thomas Scharf's *History of the Confederate States Navy* (1887), 819–820; like Daniel Talley, he was probably an officer in the Virginia Volunteer Navy.

7— *The Cotton Loan*

1. Quoted in Philip Van Doren Stern, *The Confederate Navy: A Pictorial History* (New York: Da Capo Press, 1992), 157. John Slidell formed a close relationship with Emile Erlanger, which became even closer when his daughter Marguerite married the latter in 1864.

2. In her carefully researched article on the Erlanger Loan, Judith Gentry concluded that "the Confederates could not have negotiated a better contract than that made with Erlanger & Company, and a comparison of the Erlanger contract with offers from other firms removes all doubt of it" (Judith F. Gentry, "A Confederate Success in Europe," *Journal of Southern History, 36* [1970]:182).

3. At the time of the Loan, the (unofficial) Confederate exchange rate was $13.33 : £1 sterling, which would have made it worth $39,990,000. Using the U.S. exchange rate of $4.85 : £1 sterling, it was worth $14,550,000. The prospectus for the Loan is in the *Times*, March 20, 1863, the *Economist*, March 21, 1863, and is reprinted in *The Times Reports the American Civil War* (London: Times Books, 1975), 110–113.

4. Samuel B. Thompson, *Confederate Purchasing Operations Abroad* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1935), 58.

5. *Times*, March 20, 1863.

6. Quoted in Richard Roberts, *Schroders: Merchants and Bankers* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992), 66.

7. *Economist*, March 21, 1863.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid.

10. Moran, vol. 2, 1137–1138.
11. *Times*, August 6, 1863.
12. There is a useful summary of Erlanger Loan quotations, taken from the *Index* and *The Times*, in Lester, app. II, 204–208.
13. *Times*, August 14, 1865.
14. Ibid., October 2, 1865.
15. Thomas J. Keiser, *The English Press and the American Civil War* (Reading University PhD thesis, 1971), 298.
16. A list of major Erlanger Loan bondholders, from John Bigelow, *Lest We Forget: Gladstone, Morley and the Confederate Loan of 1863* (New York, De Vinne Press, 1905), is reprinted in Lester, app. III, 209.
17. Quoted in *Times,* October 7, 1865.
18. Ibid., October 9, 1865.
19. *Morning Star,* October 9, 1865.
20. *New York Herald,* December 9, 1865. Sixty-six of the names had previously appeared in the *Index* as subscribers to General Jackson's statue, but none of them included men such as Vice-Admiral Sir Provo Wallis, John M. Chamberlain, Thomas G. Taylor, William B. Morgan, Joseph Joseph, Spencer Herapath and Joseph Sebag, who are known to have attended meetings of bondholders in the autumn of 1865.
21. *Times,* December 21, 1865.
22. Ibid., November 3, 1865.
23. *Morning Star*, October 3, 1865; reprinted in Bigelow, 8.
24. Ibid., November 15, 1866.
25. Daniel Grinnan, "Disposition of Confederate Funds," *Confederate Veteran* (July 1929):328–329. For an account of the post-war history of the Cotton Loan, see John C. Schwab, *The Confederate States of America, 1861–1865: A Financial and Industrial History of the South During the Civil War* (New York, C. Scribner's Sons, 1901), 37–39.
26. Gentry, 171.
27. Schwab, 36.
28. Ibid., 43; Gentry, 188.

8 — Business with the Southern States

1. The engineer who installed the machinery was a Mr. McFarland, whom both Capt. Huse and Major Anderson encountered at the London Armory Company in 1861, working as a Federal purchasing agent. *ORA*, ser. IV, vol. 1, 345. George Measom, *The Official Illustrated Guide to the South-Eastern Railway and Its Branches*, 1858 (reprinted by E & W Books Ltd., 1970), 132–136; Robert E. Gardner, *Small Arms Makers* (New York: Crown, 1963), *passim*.
2. Howard L. Blackmore, *A Dictionary of London Gunmakers, 1350–1850* (Oxford: Phaidon Christie's, 1986), 39. Jackson's pistol, still in its original case with all its accoutrements, is in the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond, Virginia. Col. Gorgas's visit to London is mentioned in an advertisement in the *Index* (July 7, 1864), though it is not recorded in his diary. Robert Adams started up again in business in 1866 but died in 1870.
3. Blackmore, 130.
4. S.B. Saul, "The Machine Tool Industry in Britain to 1914," *Business History, 10* (1968):26–27; Robert E. L. Krick, *Staff Officers in Gray* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 87; Frank E. Vandiver, *Ploughshares into Swords* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1952), 174–176.
5. *Times*, December 7, 1861.
6. Adams to Seward, January 24, 1862, in *Foreign Relations, 1862*, 17.
7. Seward to Adams, June 2, 1862, ibid., 108.
8. Moran, vol. 2, 1090.
9. London consular dispatches, January 20, 1865.
10. *Foreign Relations, 1865*, vol. 1, 256–257, 348–350.
11. Moran, vol. 2, 1426. Taliaffero P. Shaffner was secretary of the North Atlantic Telegraph Company and also joint author of an *Illustrated Record of the International Exhibition of 1862.*
12. North to Hood, June 16, 1864, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 2, 671–672. T. & C. Hood is an example of a firm which dealt with both sides: in December 1863, fifty 68-pounder guns they had supplied for the United States were proved at Woolwich Arsenal, then taken away by Naylor, Vickers & Co., who were acting as agents for the Federal government, and shipped to New York (Bulloch, vol. 1, 362).
13. London consular dispatches, November 25, 1864.
14. *London American*, August 13, 1862.
15. *Index*, October 1, 1863.
16. Ibid., October 22, 1863.
17. Ibid., September 3, 1863.
18. Sally C. Luscomb, *The Collector's Encyclopedia of Buttons* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1967), 46–48; Forrest, 163. A set of 24 gilded, brass Confederate Navy buttons, made by Firmin & Sons and still in their original box, is in the Museum of the Confederacy. The company, which is now based in Birmingham, still has some of the original button-stamping dies, though unfortunately not a complete set. Firmin also made swords, and one formerly owned by Flag Officer French Forrest (Douglas Forrest's father) is also in the Museum of the Confederacy.
19. *Index*, February 15, 1864; ibid., January 5, 1865. An estimated 550,000 pairs of shoes were imported, though English footwear was apparently thought to be no better than that issued by the Confederate government: "English-made shoes were ... lined with stiff paper, and after fording a few times, they came to pieces," one former soldier recalled (Philip Van Doren Stern, *An End to Valor: The Last Days of the Civil War* [Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1958], 239–240).
20. Mark E. Neely, Jr., et al., *The Confederate Image* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987), 8; Lester, 162. In the event, the one-cent orange stamp was never issued.
21. *De La Rue Journal 1862–1865,* MS937, University of Reading Library. The rejected press was apparently transferred to Kent, Paine & Co. of Richmond, Virginia.
22. Lester, 161. The firm also printed paper currency ("greenbacks") for the Federal government.
23. Lorna Houseman, *The House That Thomas Built* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1968), 103; Stern, 306–307, 319.
24. Boaz, 9–10; *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 5, 121.

25. Mason to Benjamin, April 30, 1863, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 3, 754–755.

26. *Index*, August 25, 1864; ibid., November 3, 1864; ibid., November 19, 1863.

27. *Times*, June 14, 1864. It was not only Confederate notes that were being forged: Benjamin Moran noted in his diary (December 13, 1862): "There is a gang of English rogues at Sheffield busily engaged in counterfeiting our Treasury notes."

28. Overend, Gurney turned out to be the owners of freight on Zachariah Pearson's steamer *Circassian*, which was captured off Cuba in May 1862. Their name also appears several times in correspondence published in Frank E. Vandiver's *Confederate Blockade Running through Bermuda, 1861–1865* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1947).

29. Forrest, 40. James T. Soutter was the former president of the Bank of the Republic in New York and lived in Rome during the war; his daughter Sallie married Lieutenant Charles M. Fauntleroy, the last captain of the ill-fated CSS *Rappahannock*. Details of the proposed £15 million loan are in Thompson, 100–101.

30. *Foreign Relations*, 1864, pt. I, 582–583. The Atlantic Trading Company is not mentioned in *Lifeline of the Confederacy*, Stephen Wise's exhaustive study of blockade-running, and may never actually have commenced operations.

31. Charles Capper, *The Port and Trade of London: Historical, Statistical, Local and General* (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1862), 182. The collapse of the banking house of Overend, Gurney in 1866 dealt shipbuilding in London a serious blow from which it never really recovered.

32. "Record of Performance and Experiences with Twin-screw Steamers built by J. & W. Dudgeon," in "*Transactions of the Institute of Naval Architects* , 1865, 209–213.

33. *Times*, September 4, 1863. The *Nutfield* was apparently named after the village in Surrey where Edgar Stringer was then living.

34. Scott Russell seems to have had Confederate links which went beyond just building blockade-runners. In April 1864 he approached Charles Francis Adams with what he claimed were Confederate terms for an armistice. Though Adams was naturally skeptical, the information was nevertheless conveyed, via his son, Capt. C. F. Adams, Jr., to Secretary of State W. H. Seward. The State Department went as far as approving an unofficial liaison officer, but he was unreliable and the effort collapsed the following month (*The Letters of Henry Adams, vol. I, 1858–1868* [Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1982], 434).

35. Mrs. Georgiana Walker, wife of Confederate agent Major Norman Walker, traveled as a passenger in the *Index* from Bermuda to London in June-July 1864, in what was to be its last trip as a blockade-runner, and described the experience in her journal; the trip took 22 days. Details of individual blockade-runners are in Wise.

36. Moran, vol. 2, 1109.

37. *Survey of London*, vol. 37, *North Kensington* (London: Greater London Council, 1973), 168; *Builder* (1865), 677.

38. *Foreign Relations, 1873*, vol. 3, "American-British Claims Committee," 117–123; W. R. Hooper, "Blockade Running," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* (December 1870):105.

39. *Times*, July 28, 1863. See also October 30, 1863, January 16, 1864, February 6 and 20, 1864, March 7 and 12, 1864, April 25, 1864.

40. Ibid., February 10, 1864. Samuelson was the builder of the *Eugenie*, which was also purchased for the Confederate Ordnance Bureau. Later in 1864, his own firm collapsed and he was forced to sell out to a joint-stock company, which itself went into liquidation in 1866.

41. Collie to Wharncliffe, June 27, 1868, in Wharncliffe Muniments, WhM 461.

42. *Times*, November 29, 1865.

9 — *Artistic Reflections, Literary Echoes*

1. "From the Diary of John R. Thompson," *Confederate Veteran* (March 1929):100. Most of these plays have never been published, but there are manuscript copies in the Lord Chamberlain's Plays Collection in the Department of Manuscripts at the British Library in London. See also Allardyce Nicoll, *History of English Drama, vol. 5, Late Nineteenth Century Drama, 1850–1900*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1959).

2. *Times*, May 2, 1863; *Index*, April 9, 1863.

3. *Times*, March 25, 1863.

4. Ibid., November 23, 1861, August 10, 1863; *London American*, January 22, 1862. McClellan himself visited London in February 1865 and stayed at the Westminster Palace Hotel.

5. Forrest, 53–54. Lieut. King subsequently served on the CSS *Georgia*.

6. *Times*, June 20, 1865; ibid., July 10, 1865. "General Tom Thumb" (Charles S. Stratton) was a famous American midget who came to England several times. Most of the other Civil War personalities were removed in or before 1869; Madame Tussaud's has no record of a figure of John Wilkes Booth, so it is not known how long he was there.

7. *Illustrated London News*, March 7, 1863.

8. *Times*, November 7, 1863. This was presumably painted by or in association with New York artist Frederic Church, who is known to have contributed to at least one other panorama.

9. Ibid., November 9, 1863.

10. Ibid., November 10, 1863.

11. Ibid., January 10, 1862.

12. *Index*, August 25, 1864.

13. Ibid., December 10, 1863.

14. Ibid., December 8, 1864.

15. Neely, 20–21, 119, 195; *Index*, May 25, 1865.

16. Ibid., June 25, 1863.

17. *Times*, May 26, 1863, May 29, 1863. This phenomenon is examined by Charles P. Cullop in "English Reaction to Stonewall Jackson's Death," *West Virginia History, 29* (1967):1–5; see also John D. Bennett, "General Jackson's Statue," *Crossfire*, December 2004, 25–26.

18. Moran, vol. 2, 1167.

19. Hotze to Benjamin, June 6, 1863, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 3, 784.

20. *Index*, April 26, 1864. This may also have been the photograph used by Foley for his statue.

21. Ibid., December 24, 1863. "Volk" was probably

the Bavarian-born sculptor Frederick Volck. The original bust is now in the Confederate White House at Richmond. A plaster statuette of Robert E. Lee, based on photographs, was also made by the Richmond sculptor Edward V. Valentine, while studying in Berlin in 1864, and sent to England to be sold for the Southern cause, possibly at the Liverpool Bazaar in October of that year (Ex inf. Valentine Richmond History Center.)

22. Peyton, vol. 2, 39–40.

23. *Illustrated London News,* January 9, 1864.

24. E. Lawrence Abel, *Singing the New Nation* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole Books, 2000), 104–105, 112–113, 316, 318.

25. *Times,* August 20, 1864, quoted in Michael Hammerson, "The American Civil War Comes to Belsize Park," in *Belsize 2000: A Living Suburb* (London: Belsize Conservation Area Advisory Committee, 2000), 60.

26. They are listed in the *British Museum Catalogue of Printed Maps, Charts and Plans*, vol. 14 (London: British Museum, 1967), 634–638.

27. The full title was the *Monthly Packet of Evening Readings for Younger Members of the English Church.* The articles are not mentioned in Mary Elizabeth Massey's *Refugee Life in the Confederacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), perhaps because she was unaware of them or maybe doubted their authenticity.

28. Royden Harrison, "British Labour and the Confederacy," *International Review of Social History, 2* (1957):79, 104.

29. Samuel P. Day, *Down South,* vol. 2 (London: Hurst & Blackett, 1862), 196.

30. William W. Malet, *An Errand to the South in the Summer of 1862* (London: Richard Bentley, 1863), 187. There is a parallel account of Malet's visit, written by Elizabeth Collins, who was his sister's maid (*Memories of the Southern States* [Taunton, Somerset, UK: J. Barnicott, 1865]).

31. Allan Nevins et al. (eds.), *Civil War Books: A Critical Bibliography,* vol. 1 (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1967), 91; Constance C. Harrison, *Recollections Grave and Gay* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1911), 133.

32. William C. Corsan, *Two Months in the Confederate States*, ed. B. H. Trask (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1996), xii; *Index,* June 25, 1863.

33. Catherine C. Hopley, *Life in the South,* vol. 1 (London: Chapman & Hall, 1863), vi-vii.

34. Ibid., vol. 2, 404.

35. *Saturday Review,* May 6, 1865.

36. Fitzgerald Ross, *Cities and Camps of the Confederate States*, ed. Richard B. Harwell (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1997), xviii-xix.

37. *All the Year Round,* March 19, 1864. The two pamphlets only contained selections from George T. Fullam's journal; the full text, edited by Charles G. Summersell, was not published till 1973.

38. Robin and Carol Wichard, *Victorian Cartes-de-Visite* (Princes Risborough, Bucks, UK: Shire Publications, 1999), 62. In 1864 action photographs were not yet possible, though in his account of the battle, Frederick Edge claimed to have seen the negative of one made by a Cherbourg photographer called Rondin (*Notes & Queries*, April 23, 1910).

39. Moran, vol. 2, 1308.

40. Walker, 53.

41. Ibid., 104. In her journal Mrs. Walker makes no mention of Belle Boyd, who was also in London at this time and actually living nearby; well-bred Southern ladies are unlikely to have approved of her flamboyant behavior and predilection for male company.

42. Wharncliffe to Greenhow, September 5, 1864, in Wharncliffe Muniments, WhM 461.

43. Spence to Wharncliffe, October 31, 1864, in Wharncliffe Muniments, WhM 460. Mrs. Greenhow's body was found the next day on the beach near Fort Fisher by Thomas Taylor, who was engaged in blockade-running for the Anglo-Confederate Trading Co. of Liverpool.

44. Collie to Wharncliffe, November 9, 1864, ibid.

45. Moran, vol. 2, 1346–1347.

46. These quotations are all taken from Sala's Introduction, which is dated May 17, 1865.

47. *Illustrated London News,* February 25, 1865.

48. Sala declined to put his name to the English edition, for reasons which are not apparent, though it appeared on the American one, published in New York later that year.

49. Quoted in *Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison*, ed. Curtis C. Davis (New York: Thomas Yoseloff, 1968), 48.

50. Ibid., 48–49.

51. Ibid., 50. Despite these lackluster reviews, she seems to have done quite well as a result of her literary venture. In April 1868, in a letter to a friend, she speaks of expecting "some 7. or 8. thousand dollars coming to me from the sale of my Book." Quoted in Sharon Kennedy-Nolle's introduction to *Belle Boyd in Camp and Prison* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 4.

52. Charles E. Shain, "The English Novelists and the American Civil War," *American Quarterly, 14,* no. 3 (1962):420–421 (Copyright the American Studies Association).

10— Support for the South?

1. Bulloch, vol. 1, 294.

2. Maury to Franklin Minor, January 21, 1863; Williams, 404.

3. Forrest, 43–44.

4. Robert G. H. Kean, *Inside the Confederate Government: The Diary of Robert Garlick Hill Kean*; ed. Edward Younger (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1993), 129. J. E. Ward was a former U.S. minister to China.

5. Peyton, vol. 2, 101; 39–40.

6. Moran, vol. 2, 1022.

7. Adams to Seward, July 11, 1862; *Foreign Relations, 1862,* 133. Adams to Adams, Jr., December 25, 1862, Ford, vol. 1, 220–221; Adams to Adams, Jr., September 25, 1863, ibid., vol. 2, 85.

8. Forbes was in England on a secret mission for the Federal government (Douglas H. Maynard, "The Forbes-Aspinwall Mission," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review, 45* (1958):73.

9. *New York Tribune*, October 15, 1875, quoted in Philip Ziegler, *The Sixth Great Power: Barings 1762–1929* (London: Collins, 1988), 214.

10. London consular dispatches, July 18, 1862.

11. Ibid., August 7, 1863.

12. Hotze to Benjamin, July 23, 1863, *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 3, 849; Ford, vol. 2, 58–63.

13. Hotze to Benjamin, October 31, 1863; Thompson, 74. Spence claimed $45,000—just over £9,000—as compensation for his losses.

14. Gilliat to Barret, April 24, 1863, quoted in Lester, 41.

15. *Times,* January 16, 1863.

16. John W. Raimo, *A Guide to Manuscripts Relating to America in Great Britain and Ireland,* Rev. ed. (London: Mansell Publishing, 1979), 58.

17. *Times,* October 9, 1862.

18. Sir William Gregory, *Autobiography,* ed. Lady Gregory (London: John Murray, 1894), 215–216.

19. Ella Lonn, *Foreigners in the Confederacy* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 357–358. Robert Bourke described his visit in *Blackwood's Magazine,* December 1861, 755–767. Thomas Conolly's diary was published as *An Irishman in Dixie,* ed. Nelson D. Lankford (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1988).

20. *House of Commons Parliamentary Debates,* July 10, 1863.

21. H. Adams to C. F. Adams, Jr., March 15, 1862; Ford, vol. 1, 120–121.

22. *Cassell's Illustrated Family Paper,* March 28, 1863.

23. H. Adams, 186.

24. *House of Commons Parliamentary Debates,* June 30, 1863.

25. Sir John Trelawny, *Parliamentary Diaries, 1858–1865,* ed. T. A. Jenkins, Camden, 4th ser., vol. 40 (London: Royal Historical Society, 1990), 260. Lindsay confirmed Roebuck's version of their meeting with the Emperor in a letter to the *Times,* July 4, 1863.

26. *House of Commons Parliamentary Debates,* June 30, 1863. In his diary, Gladstone recorded the books he was reading and during the Civil War they included: James Spence, *The American Union* (November 23, 1861); Alexander Beresford-Hope, *A Popular View of the American Civil War* (December 13, 1861); John Cowell, *Southern Secession* (January 25, 1862); James Spence, *On the Recognition of the Southern Confederacy* (August 12, 1862); and Arthur Fremantle, *Three Months in the Southern States* (January 2, 1864).

27. H. Adams to C. F. Adams, Jr., July 3, 1863; Ford, vol. 2, 43.

28. *Illustrated Times,* July 4, 1863.

29. Collie to Wharncliffe, January 23. 1865, in Wharncliffe Muniments, WhM 461.

30. Moran, vol. 2, 904. An article in the *Spectator* (October 5, 1861), for example, claimed that American news from Reuters was biased towards the Confederates.

31. *Die Presse,* November 14, 1862, quoted in John Laskey, "Marx and Engels on the Civil War," *Crossfire* (December 2003), 24. Edward B. Hamley, "Our Rancorous 'Cousins'," *Blackwood's Magazine,* November 1863, 637; Peyton, vol. 2, 39–40.

32. Adams to Seward, July 23, 1863, in *Foreign Relations, 1863,* vol. 1, 319.

33. Perhaps demonstrated by the fact that George E. Seymour, one of the proprietors of the pro-Northern *Daily News,* was included in the list of Confederate bondholders. Henry Adams was a contributor to both the *Morning Star* and the *Daily News.*

34. *London American,* December 4, 1861.

35. Semmes, 348–349.

36. Hammerson, 60.

37. Raimo, 59.

38. *Foreign Relations, 1863,* vol. 1, 19–24, which reprints the complete text of the association's pamphlet.

39. Ibid., 18.

40. Moran, vol. 2, 1329.

41. *Times,* October 12, 1864.

42. Collie, who undoubtedly made a great deal of money out of the Civil War, seems to have been prone to munificent gestures: through Governor Vance, he donated $20,000 for the relief of the North Carolina poor (*Papers of Zebulon Baird Vance,* vol. 1, liii).

43. Southern Independence Association of London, *Address to the Public,* in Goldwin Smith, *Letter to a Whig Member of the Southern Independence Association* (London: Macmillan, 1864), 34–35.

44. Ibid., 35–36.

45. Ibid., 35.

46. John Bigelow, "The Confederate Diplomatists," *Century Magazine* , May 1891, 123.

47. Hotze to Benjamin, March 12, 1864, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 1061.

48. *Times,* December 23, 1864; ibid., December 26, 1864.

49. Taylor to Wharncliffe, January 5, 1865; Warwick to Wharncliffe, January 6, 1865; Arco to Wharncliffe, January 12, 1865; Hampson to Wharncliffe, January 17, 1865, in Wharncliffe Muniments, WhM 461. Another disabled Confederate soldier who visited London was William H. Brawley, a South Carolinian who had lost his left arm at the battle of Fair Oaks in 1862. He arrived in London in June 1864 and in his diary he recorded meeting Commissioner Mason and seeing the sights; his diary was edited by Francis R. Brawley and published in 1970.

50. Hotze to Benjamin, September 26, 1862, *ORN,* ser. II, vol. 3, 534.

51. Joseph M. Hernon, Jr., "British Sympathies in the American Civil War," *Journal of Southern History, 33* (1967):362.

52. Donald Bellows, "A Study of British Conservative Reaction to the American Civil War," *Journal of Southern History, 51* (1985):505–526.

53. Quoted in deKay, 131.

54. *Bee-Hive,* April 11, 1863, quoted in Royden Harrison, "British Labour and the Confederacy: A Note on the Southern Sympathies of Some British Working Class Journals and Leaders During the American Civil War," *International Review of Social History, 2* (1957):99.

55. E. D. Adams, 133.

56. Harrison, 101.

Epilogue

1. William Webb returned to his native state of Virginia, where he died in 1881. (William A. Young, Jr., "Treasures from the Attic: The Colonel's Bootjack & the Commander's Watch Chain," *Crossfire,* August 1997, 13–15.)

2. Daniel E. Sutherland, "Exiles, Emigrants and Sojourners: The Post-Civil War Confederate Exodus in Perspective," *Civil War History, 31* (1985): 252. Paris acted as a magnet for Americans both during and after the Civil War, and particularly for artists; men like Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer flocked there, as *Americans in Paris 1860–1900,* a recent exhibition at London's National Gallery demonstrated.

3. George Augustus Sala was an admirer of the American actress Kate Bateman, who was then playing in London, and knew her father, the theatrical impresario, Col. Hezekiah L. Bateman. Sala may have introduced him to Belle Boyd, and got her an introduction to the stage (Sigaud, 186).

4. For an account of the Confederate community at Leamington, see John D. Bennett, "A Popular Place with Rebels," *Crossfire*, April 2005, 23–24.

5. "United States of America v. Prioleau," *Times*, July 7, 1866, December 21, 1866, and June 18, 1867; Wise, 223.

6. "United States of America v. McRae," *The Law Reports, Equity Cases*, vol. 4, 1867, 327–340; *Chancery Appeal Cases*, vol. 3, 1867, 79–92; *Equity Cases*, vol. 8, 1869, 69–77; Daniel Grinnan, "Disposition of Confederate Funds," *Confederate Veteran* (July 1929):328.

7. William C. Davis, "The Conduct of Mr Thompson," *Civil War Times Illustrated*, May 1970, 5–7, 43–47. It seems likely that Thompson had considerably more than this; he went back to America in 1869, and when he died in 1885 was estimated to have been worth at least $500,000.

8. Morse to Seward, November 30, 1865, in *Foreign Relations*, 1866, vol. 1.

9. *Times*, November 24, 1875.

Appendix E — Southern Independence Association of London

1. *Index*, January 14, 1864, which also prints the Association's constitution.

Appendix F — The British Jackson Monumental Fund

1. *Index*, July 2, 1863; this differs somewhat from the list in *ORN*, ser. II, vol. 3, 828.

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James Heyward North Diary, #862, Southern Historical Collection, Wilson Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (microfilm).

Wharncliffe Muniments, #WhM 460 & 461, Sheffield City Libraries.

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Although the British government declared its neutrality during the American Civil War, London nevertheless became an important center of Confederate overseas operations. This work examines the extensive Confederate activities in London during the war, including diplomacy, propaganda, purchasing for the Army and Navy, spying, the Cotton Loan, and various business associations; reflections of the Civil War in British art and literature; and the extent of British support for the South. Appendices cover London firms with Confederate links, pro–Confederate publications, Confederate music published in London, the Southern lobby in Parliament, the Southern Independence Association, and the British Jackson Monumental Fund. The work also includes a chronology of events and a gazetteer of Confederate sites in London.

Former reference librarian JOHN D. BENNETT lives in Leicester, England.

McFARLAND

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On the cover: *foreground,* the offices of Overend, Gurney & Company, who lent money to London shipbuilders for the construction of blockade runners and were themselves involved; *background* ©2007 Shutterstock

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Full text of "Abraham Lincoln and the Jews"

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ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE JEWS

By ISAAC MARKENS

author of
"The Hebrews in America"

NEW YORK

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LINCOLN AND THE JEWS.

Since the name of Abraham Lincoln has been linked with no stirring event in connection with American Judaism it

follows that the subject " Lincoln and the Jews/' may possibly be lacking in the essentials demanding treatment at the hands of the critical historian. Nevertheless, as a student of the great war President the writer has been impressed by the vast amount of interesting material bearing upon his relations to the Jews, which it occurs to him is worthy of compilation and preservation. A contribution of this character seems specially fitting at the present time in view of the centenary of the one whose gaunt figure towers above all others in the galaxy of American heroes — " the first of our countrymen to reach the lonely heights of immortal fame."

The Jews of the United States formed but a small portion of the population in Lincoln's time. The President of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, their representative organization, estimated their number in the loyal States near the close of 1861 at not less than 200,000, which figures are now regarded as excessive. The Rev, Isaac Leeser as late as 1865 could not figure the entire Jewish population of the United States as exceeding 200,000, although he admitted that double that number had been estimated by others.

Political sentiment was then divided and found expression largely through the Occident^ a monthly, published by Eev. Isaac Leeser in Philadelphia ; the Jewish Messenger, a weekly, conducted by Rev. Samuel M. Isaacs in New York, and the Israelite, a weekly, edited by Rev. Isaac M. Wise in Cincinnati. Rabbis and laymen of learning and eloquence were

conspicuous in the political arena, both by voice and pen and to some of these we shall refer. Arrayed with the party represented by Lincoln was Rabbi David Einhorn, who published in Baltimore a German monthly called Sinai, devoted to the anti-slavery movement. Rabbi Isaacs unreservedly favored the preservation of the Union and the policy of Lincoln. In Philadelphia Rabbi Sabato Morals proved such a potential factor in rousing patriotic sentiment that he was elected an honorary member of the Union League Club of that city. Rabbi Liebman Adler of Chicago, besides patriotic appeals to his countrymen, sent his only son to serve in the ranks of an Illinois regiment. Dr. Abraham B. Arnold of Baltimore, arrayed himself with the Republican party on the election of Lincoln and was made a member of the State Executive Committee of Maryland. A former Assistant United States District Attorney of New York, Philip J. Joachimsen, who had secured the first conviction for slave trading, was a warm admirer of Lincoln and raised a regiment of troops which rendered good service.

The pro-slavery faction, by no means insignificant in numbers, had few leaders, their most earnest advocate being Rabbi Morris J. Raphall, of New York, author of Post-Bihlical History of the Jews. In a pamphlet entitled Bible View of Slavery, published shortly after Lincoln's election, he sought to show that the " Divine Institution " had Scriptural sanction, a proposition by no means original. Rev. Leander Ker of Missouri having taken the same ground as early as 1853 in a book. Slavery Sanctioned hy the Bible. Mr. Leeser, while sustaining Raphall, deplored his utterances as untimely, and Michael Heilprin in an article in the New York Tribune completely demonstrated the fallacy of Raphall's contention.

Writing from Philadelphia to the Israelite on January 13, 1861, Rabbi Wise said it was "not so much the election of Lincoln in itself that threatened the destruction of the Union as the speeches of Lincoln and his colleagues on the irre-

pressible conflict doctrine." This was coupled with a tribute to President Buchanan, the then occupant of the White House, who from Rabbi Wise's standpoint " has shown himself to be a full statesman and only now are the North appreciating his conservative administration." While deprecating the threatened dissolution of the Union Eabbi Wise indulged in frequent humorous flings at Lincoln after his election, comparing him to " a country squire who would look queer in the White House with his primitive manner." He also protested against his entertainment while passing through Cincinnati on his way to Washington. Later on his admiration for Lincoln was unbounded. In the course of an address following the President's death and published in the Cincinnati Commercial of April 20, 1865, he thus attempted to prove that he was one of the chosen people : " Abraham Lincoln believed himself to be bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh. He supposed himself to be of Hebrew parentage, he said so in my presence, and indeed he possessed the common features of the Hebrew race both in countenance and features." As a matter of fact Lincoln's knowledge of his ancestry was vague — so much so that his statement to Dr. Wise must be accepted as nothing more than a bit of pleasantry. Hon. Robert T. Lincoln states in reply to an inquiry of the writer, that he had "never before heard that his father supposed he had any Jewish ancestry."

Lincoln's policy was severely attacked in the California State Convention of the Breckinridge party held at Sacramento on June 11, 1861, by Solomon Heydenfeldt, a brilliant jurist of that State and a native of South Carolina. An example of his attitude appears in the published proceedings of that convention, wherein he refers in the course of the debates to "the Democrats of the Eastern States struggling

against the tyranny of the administration, their voices being drowned by the music of Lincoln's drums."

President Lincoln's administration was marked by a few noteworthy incidents affecting the Jews as a body, the most important being the appointment of a Jewish chaplain in 1861-62, and the proposed expulsion of the Jews " as a class " from within the lines of General Grant's army in 1862-63. Here it may be proper to note that the President on two occasions was sharply reproved by the Jews for the objectionable phraseology of his State papers.

In his first inaugural orders he declared :

Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way our present difficulty.

In his " General Order Eespecting the Observation of the Sabbath Day in the Army and Navy/' issued November 15, 1862, he announced :

The importance for man and beast of the prescribed weekly rest, the sacred rights of Christian soldiers and sailors, a becoming deference to the best sentiments of a Christian people, and a due regard for the Divine will demand that Sunday labor in the Army and Navy be reduced to the measure of strict necessity.

This order provoked more or less public discussion and elicited a lengthy address to the President from one B. Behrend, of Narrowsburg, N. Y., the father of a Jewish soldier in the service, on the ground that " thousands in the army who celebrate another day as Sunday should be allowed to celebrate that day which they think is the right day according to their own consciences." The Occident shared in these views and urged that Jewish soldiers should be free from unnecessary work on their Sabbath. While the alleged sectarian character of these compositions subjected the President to considerable criticism, his utterances were soon lost sight of in the more stirring events of the day.

In the United States Senate May 22, 1860, Judah P. Benjamin spoke in scathing terms of Stephen A. Douglas and

lauded Lincoln, the question under consideration being certain measures introduced by Jefferson Davis on the subject of State Eights and Slavery. Benjamin's address on this occasion occupies several pages of the Congressional Globe, 1859-60, Part III. The Senator from Louisiana therein charged Douglas with inconsistency and evasion in his debates with

Lincoln, referred to his Jonesboro address as " nonsense " and says Douglas copied from Lincoln's dispute with him. Lincoln had just been nominated for the Presidency. The nomination of Douglas was still in the balance. How far he had lost caste with the Southern leaders is evidenced by this excoriation by Benjamin :

I have been obliged to pluck down my idol from his place on high, and to refuse him any more support or confidence as a member of the Democratic party. His adversary stood upon principle and was beaten, and lo! he is a candidate of a mighty party for the Presidency of the United States. One stood on principle — was defeated. To-day where stands he? The other faltered — received the prize, but to-day where stands he? He is a fallen star; we have separated from him.

Eeferring further to the joint debates and more especially to Lincoln's declarations at Freeport in reply to interrogations of Douglas, regarding his position in the slavery question, he further complimented Lincoln in these words :

In that contest, the candidates for the Senate of the United States in the State of Illinois went before the people. They agreed to discuss the issue; they put questions to each other for answer, and I must say here, for I must be just to all, that I have been surprised in the examination that I have made again within the last few days of this discussion between Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Douglas, to find that Mr. Lincoln is a far more conservative man, unless he has since changed his opinions, than I had supposed him to be. There was no dodging on his part. It is impossible not to admire the perfect candor and frankness with which his answers are given — no equivocation, no evasion.

The Appointment of a Jewish Army Chaplain.

The Jewish Chaplain question was a matter of some significance and grew out of the refusal of Secretary of War Simon Cameron in the fall of 1861 to grant the application of Eev. Dr. Arnold Fischel for appointment as Chaplain of the Cameron Dragoons, a New York regiment largely composed of Jews, Fischel being informed by Cameron that favorable consideration of his application was impossible on account of an Act passed by Congress a few months previous and duly approved by the President, which provided that " chaplains must be regular ordained ministers of some Christian denomination."

This barrier to the appointment of a Chaplain gave rise to

a widespread agitation in which many prominent men took part, including Lewis K. Dembitz, of Louisville, who had voted for Lincoln in the Eepublican National Convention of 1860; Alfred T. Jones, of Philadelphia; Joseph Abrahams, of Cincinnati ; Jacob Kantrowitz, of Columbus, Ind. ; Felix Deutsch, of Franklin, Ind.; E. Fleischmann, of Iowa City; Martin Bijur, of Louisville; S. Eosenthal, of Albany, N. Y., and Eev. B. H. Gotthelf, of Louisville. They demanded that the Act of Congress be made to conform with their plain constitutional rights, " those rights " they urged " for which the bones of many of our brethren in faith are now mouldering on the banks of the Potomac." The New York Journal of Commerce and Baltimore Clipper sided with the Jews.

At this juncture the Board of Delegates of American Israelites took up the matter and through Senator Ira Harris and Eepresentative Frederick Conkling, both of New York, petitioned Congress, protesting that the existing Act was " prejudicial discrimination against a patriotic class of citizens on account of their religious belief " and demanding its repeal. At the same time they addressed the President urging the appointment of a Jewish Chaplain to each of the military

departments. This the President was unable to do, declaring his intention, however, to recommend Congress to modify the law as it stood. Dr. Fischel spent some time in Washington endeavoring to secure the repeal of the objectionable law.

On December 11, 1861, he reported to the Board of Delegates the result of his efforts thus far. This is printed in the article, " A Jewish Army Chaplain,^' by Myer S. Isaacs, Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, No. 12, 1904.

On the following day Dr. Fischel again called at the White House in accordance with the President's invitation but failed to see him. On December 14, 1861, the President wrote to Dr. Fischel:

Executive Mansion, December 14, 1861.
Rev. Dr. A. Fischel.

My dear Sib: I find that there are several particulars In which the present law in regard to Chaplains is supposed to be deficient, all of which I now design presenting to the appropriate Committee of Congress. I shall try to have a new law broad enough to cover what is desired by you in behalf of the Israelites.

Yours truly,

A. Lincoln.

The proceedings which followed in Congress were without noteworthy incident. Mr. Trumbull of Illinois at the request of Eabbi Isidor Kalisch, of Indianapolis, presented a numerously signed petition in the Senate and J. Friedenreich, of Baltimore, secured 7000 signatures, mostly of Christians to another. Numerous members of the Legislature of Maryland also memorialized Congress urging a change in the existing law. Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia also addressed a letter to the President. Final action by Congress was deferred until March 13, 1862, when the Act was amended so as to authorize the employment of Brigade Chaplains, " one or more of which shall be of the Catholic, Protestant or Jewish religion." Meanwhile Dr. Fischel conducted services for the Jewish Hospital in Virginia until April, 1862. Subsequently the President

appointed as Hospital Chaplains Eev. Jacob Frankel, of Philadelphia; Eev. B. H. Gotthelf, of Louisville, and Dr. Ferdinand Sarner of the 54th New York Infantry. Dr. Sabato Morals, of Philadelphia, had previously declined an appointment as Chaplain.

Dr. Kalisch, in the third year of the war, aspired to a chaplaincy, his sponsor being Adolph Dessar, a prominent citizen of Indianapolis, and a close friend of John P. Usher, Secretary of the Interior in Lincoln's cabinet. Mr. Usher's efforts were unavailing as appears from the following letter:

Depabtment of the Interior,

Washington, October 16, 1863.
Ad. Dessar, Esq.

Dear Sir: I made inquiry of the President to-day respecting the appointment of Post Chaplain, and was advised by him that the public service did not at present require the appointment of any more; but that if occasion should happen requiring the appointment of additional chaplains he should be happy to consider, with the many other applications, the claims of your friend. Rev. Mr. Isidore Kalisch.

Very truly yours,

J. P. Usher.

General Grant's Order No. Eleven.

The edict of General Grant, known as Order No. 11, excluding the Jews, as a class, from within the lines of his army, naturally aroused a storm of indignation. Grant's first manifesto appeared at Lagrange, Tenn., on November 9, 1862, in the form of instructions to Gen. Hurlbut to refuse all permits to come south of Jackson, Tenn., adding " the Israelites especially should be kept out." He next issued orders to Gen. Webster, referring to the Jews as " an intolerable nuisance." He also reported to the War Department that " the Jews roam through the country contrary to the government regulations." Finally on December 17 he issued a general order expelling all Jews as a class " from his Department within 21 hours."

Cincinnati and Paducah became the storm centres of the

Jewish uprisings mainly by reason of their proximity to Grant's field of operations, and the agitation eventually extended to the halls of Congress. Eabbi Wise, in the Israelite, demanded the recall of the order on the ground that " the President had an oath registered in Heaven to enforce the laws/' and he urged that justice should be demanded from the chief magistrate of the country. Capt. Ferdinand Levy, of Company H, Battalion New York Volunteers, wrote to The Jewish Messenger urging that the President compel General Grant to apologize or dismiss him from the service.

While the Jews of Cincinnati, under the lead of Eabbi I. M. Wise were devising means to reach the President, their coreligionists at Paducah were equally active. After several conferences they transmitted the following appeal to the President, the signers being among the leading merchants of the town.

Paducah, Ky., Dec. 29, 1862.
Hon. Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States.

General Order No. 11 issued by General Grant at Oxford, Miss., December the 17th, commands all post commanders to expel all Jews without distinction within twenty-four hours from his entire Department. The undersigned good and loyal citizens of the United States and residents of this town, for many years engaged in legitimate business as merchants, feel greatly insulted and outraged by this inhuman order; the carrying out of which would be the grossest violation of the Constitution and our rights as good citizens under it, and would place us, besides a large number of other Jewish families of this town, as outlaws before

the world. We respectfully ask your immediate attention to this enormous outrage on all law and humanity and pray for your effectual and immediate interposition. We would especially refer you to the post commander and post adjutant as to our loyalty, and to all respectable citizens of this community as to our standing as citizens and merchants. We respectfully ask for immediate instructions to be sent to the Commander of this Post.

D. Wolff & Beos.

C. J. Kaskel.

J. W. Kaskel.

It was determined to send a representative of the Jewish community to Washington to communicate with the President in person, and for that purpose Ceasar J. Kaskel, one of the signers of the appeal, a vice-president of the Paducah Union League Club and one of the most respected merchants of the town, was selected.

Ceasar Kaskel was a native of Prussia. When Grant's General Order No. 11 was issued he was in his thirtieth year, J. W. Kaskel, another signer of the appeal, was his brother. A record of the Paducah proceedings was preserved by the latter, now living at Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, N. Y., from which we learn that Ceasar Kaskel at once left Paducah by steamer for Cairo. While en route he prepared a full account of the affair which on reaching Cairo was furnished to the agent of the Associated Press, this being the first newspaper report given to the country.

Kaskel, says the Israelite, took with him letters from Rabbi Max Lilienthal, and Daniel Wolf, a prominent Cincinnati merchant, to influential parties in Washington and arrived at the National Capital on the evening of January 3, 1863. Accompanied by Representative Gurley of Ohio the two at once sought an audience with the President, reaching the White House at about dusk. Announcing their presence, with an apology for calling at such an hour, the President sent word that he was " always glad to see his friends," and shortly made his appearance. On learning the object of their visit he remarked :

And so the children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan?

Kaskel replied :

Yes, and that is why we have come unto Father Abraham's bosom, asking protection.

Lincoln responded:
And this protection they shall have at once.

Then seating himself at a table the President penned an

order to General Halleck requesting his visitors to deliver it at once.

" You may leave for home at once if you wish/' said General Halleck to Kaskel on reading Lincoln's instructions, " and before you reach there Grant's order will have been revoked."

Kaskel that same night started back to Paducah, and arriv- ing there was surprised to learn that the order of revocation had not yet been promulgated.

"By whose orders do you return?" demanded the Post Commander, on learning of Kaskel's presence in town.

"By order of the President of the United States," replied Kaskel.

Halleck's instructions to Grant, it appears, had been delayed in transmission and the latter's revocation was not issued until January 7, 1863. Two weeks later, January 21, Halleck wrote to Grant:

The President has no objection to your expelling traitors and Jew peddlers which I suppose was the object of your order, but as it in terms proscribed an entire religious class, some of whom are fighting in our ranks, the President deems it necessary to revoke it.

Dr. Wise is authority for the statement that Halleck would not believe in the existence of Grant's order until Kaskel showed him the official copy.

Before the result of Kaskel's mission became known Rabbis Wise and Lilienthal, accompanied by Edgar M. Johnson, a lawyer of Cincinnati, Martin Bijur, a lawyer of Louisville, and Abraham Goldsmith, a merchant of Paducah, had gone to Washington. Learning of Kaskel's success on the way they determined nevertheless to complete the journey in order to express their thanks to the President for his prompt action. Eabbi Wise, in the Israelite, gave an interesting account of

their interview.

We went to the White House in our traveling habiliments and spoke about half an hour to the President of the United States in an open and frank manner and were dismissed in the same simple

style. Having expressed our thanks for his promptness and despatch in revoking Grant's order the President gave utterance to his surprise that such an order should have been issued. " I don't like to see a class or nationality condemned on account of a few sinners," he said. The President fully convinced us that he knows of no distinction between Jews and Gentiles and that he feels no prejudice against any nationality and especially against the Israelites. We had little chance to say anything, the President being so splendidly eloquent on this occasion. He spoke like a simple, plain citizen and tried in various forms to convince us of the sincerity of his words on this matter.

Pending a settlement of the matter, Representative George H. Pendleton, of Ohio, who the following year figured as the running mate of George B. McClellan, Lincoln's rival for the Presidency, introduced a resolution in the House of Eepre-sentatives condemning Grant's action " as well as that of the President as commander-in-chief of the Amy and Navy," which was laid on the table. Unmindful of the success of Kaskel's mission, Mr. Powell, of Kentucky, offered a resolution in the Senate on January 5, 1863, condemning Grant's order as "illegal, tyrannical, cruel and unjust;" but inasmuch as the order had been revoked, objection was raised to its con-sideration, and Senators Hale, of New Hampshire and Sum-ner, of Massachusetts urged that the resolution be tabled.

Mr. Powell, according to the Congressional Globe, then ad-dressed the Senate. He had in his possession, he said, docu-ments that would go to establish the fact beyond the possi-bility of a doubt that some thirty Jewish gentlemen, residents of Paducah, were driven from their homes and their business by virtue of this order of General Grant. They had only the short notice of four and twenty hours. The Jewish women and children of the city were expelled under that order. Not a Jew, man, woman or child was left, except two women who were prostrate on beds of sickness. He added :

If we tamely submit to allow the military power thus to encroach on the rights of the citizens who shall be setting a bad and most pernicious example to those in command of our Army.

He urged the passage of the resolution. It would be of the greatest importance particularly at that time when the constitutional rights of the citizens were being trodden under foot by the executive and military power.

General Grant might just as well expel the Baptists or the Methodists or the Episcopalians or the Catholics as a class, as to expel the Jews. All are alike protected in the enjoyment of their religion by the Constitution of our country. They are inoffensive citizens and it was set forth in papers that he had before him that two of the Jews that were expelled had served three months in the Army of the United States in defence of the Union cause.

It may be that some Jews in General Grant's department had been guilty of illegal traffic; if so, expel those who violate the law and punish them.

Mr. Clark, of New Hampshire, moved that the resolution be indefinitely postponed, believing that it would be unwise to condemn General Grant unheard. Mr. Anthony, of Kansas, suggested that a better disposition would be to refer it to the Committee on Military Affairs.

Mr. Wilson, of Massachusetts, followed. He declared that no man in the Senate approved Grant's order, that as soon as it was called to the attention of the President of the United States it was promptly revoked, and there the matter ended. He agreed with Mr. Clark, that Grant should not be condemned unheard. He considered the order unwise, unjust and utterly indefensible; but the rights of these people having been promptly vindicated he hoped the matter would be dropped. Senator Hale then moved to lay Mr. PowelFs resolution on the table and this was done by a vote of 30 to 7, thus disposing of further Congressional action.

Two Cincinnati newspapers, the Enquirer and the Volksfreund, were outspoken in condemnation of Grant. The Philadelphia Ledger opened its columns to persons who severely censured Grant, while the Inquirer of the same city declined to publish articles derogatory of the Federal Commander. John W. Forney, Secretary of the United States Senate, and

editor of the Washington Chronicle, defended General Grant, saying :

If there was no good reason, there was at least some excuse for the promulgation of the order.

The Occident commended the President's action:
Fortunately he would not be the instrument of such a cruel order and the majority in Congress deserve the condemnation due them for disregard of their obligations as conservators of the rights of the people, which ought to be safe under the guarantees of the Constitution.

The Board of Delegates of American Israelites adopted resolutions thanking Halleck for revoking Grant's order " in the name of the Hebrews of this country." Dr. Wise vehemently protested against this, describing the resolution as " a species of insanity," as " Halleck only carried out the order of the President who deserves thanks for his promptness in the affair."

Did Grant issue his obnoxious edict of his own volition, or at the behest of higher authority? The Cincinnati Commercial, after the affair was over, published a communication intimating that Grant had acted on orders from Washington.
The Israelite was of the opinion that such an order could have come only from Stanton or Chase, since the President and Halleck absolutely maintained that they knew nothing of it until seventeen days after it was issued.

General Grant, in his Personal Memoirs, makes no reference to Order No. 11. An explanation of his silence may be found in the following letter dated Governor's Island, N. Y., December 8, 1907, and addressed to the writer.

In reply to your letter of Nov. 23d I write to say that when my father was writing his memoirs I asked if he would refer to the order No. 11 — about which you enquire in your letter, and he replied that that was a matter long past and best not referred to; therefore, I shall, following his example, have nothing to say about that order.

Yours very sincerely,

Feedeeick D. Grant.

Nicolay and Hay dismiss the subject in these few words :
Lincoln had a profound respect for every form of sincere religious belief. He steadily refused to show favor to any particular denomination of Christians, and when General Grant issued an unjust and injurious order against the Jews expelling them

from his Department, the President ordered it to be revoked the moment it was brought to his notice.

As further bearing upon Ceasar Kaskel's activity in this matter it may be stated that the Washington press despatches gave him full credit for the repeal of the order. He died in Wiesbaden, Germany, March 30, 1892.

Lincoln's Jewish Friends.

The name of Abraham Jonas, a leading lawyer, politician, and public speaker of Illinois, is indissolubly associated with that of Abraham Lincoln, the two having enjoyed very intimate relations, dating, it is believed, from about the birth of the Whig party in 1834 and continuing up to the death of Jonas in 1864.

Of the antecedents of Abraham Jonas, we learn that he was one of twenty-two children of Annie Ezekiel and Benjamin Jonas, of Exeter, England, where he was born in 1801. He arrived in Cincinnati, in 1819, two years after his brother Joseph, the first Jew to settle in that city, and engaged in the auction business with his brother-in-law, Morris Moses. He was twice married, his first wife being Lucia Orah, daughter of Eev. Gershom Mendes Seixas, of New York, who died in 1825. In 1829 he married Louisa Block, of Virginia. He "7 was one of the incorporators of the first synagogue in Cincinnati, in 1829, and his name appears in a conveyance recorded in 1821, as one of the purchasers of a small plot of ground for a Jewish cemetery from Nicholas Longworth, great-grandfather of the present Ohio Congressman of that name, the son-in-law of President Theodore Eoosevelt.

Jonas moved to Williamstown, Grant County, Ky., before his marriage to Miss Block, and served in the State legisla-
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ture of Kentucky in 1828, 1829, 1830, and 1833. He was elected Grand Master of Masons of Kentucky in August, 1833, and his portrait as such adorns the walls of the Grand Lodge room in Louisville. He settled in Illinois in 1838 and was elected to the legislature in 1842. He became the first Grand Master of Masons of that State in 1839. A tablet in his honor was placed in the hall of the Grand Lodge of Illinois on the announcement of his death in 1864 and the Grand Lodge at their semi-centennial in 1889 had a bronze medal struck which bears his name.

Jonas, with Lincoln, was chosen by the Illinois State Convention held at Bloomington on May 29, 1856, a Presidential elector on the Fremont ticket. He was engaged in mercantile pursuits up to the year 1843. Meanwhile he had studied law and was admitted in that year to the bar in Quincy where he continued to practice with success up to his death in 1864, being associated with Henry Asbury. William A. Eichardson, of Quincy, avers that Lincoln, when in that city did much of his work in the office of Jonas & Asbury. The Quincy Whig, of October 7, 1858, prints a notice signed by Jonas, as chairman of the Eepublican committee of arrangements, addressed to the friends of Abraham Lincoln requesting their presence at the debate of Lincoln and Douglas, on October 13, in that city. (See Collections Illinois State Historical Society, Vol. III.) The Hon. William H. Collins, of Quincy, a prominent member of the State Historical Society of Illinois, is authority for the statement that Jonas was " an influential leader in the Eepublican party and likewise a personal friend of Lincoln.^' The Grand Secretary of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Kentucky also testified to his prominence " in all the positions he occupied."

With the exception of Nicolay and Hay none of the numerous biographers of Lincoln makes mention of Jonas either in connection with Lincoln or his prominence in Illinois politics. These writers give us an interesting letter addressed by Lin-

coin to Jonas after the former's nomination for President in 1860 when the opponents of the Republican nominee were assiduous in reviving accusations of his affiliation with the Know-Nothing party, notwithstanding his repeated statements to the contrary. In this emergency Lincoln turned to his friend Jonas, to whom he addressed the following letter which fully evidences the confidential relations of the two and explains the former's attitude on the Know-Nothing question:

Connaential j^j^ 21. 1860.

Hon. A. Jonas,

My dear Sib: Yours of the 2nd is received. I suppose as good or e\en better men than I may have been in American or Know-Nothing lodges; but in point of fact I never was in one in Quincy or elsewhere. I was never in Quincy but one day and two nights while Know-Nothing lodges were in existence and you were with me that day and both those nights. I have never been there before in my life and never afterwards, till the joint debate with Douglas in 1858. It was in 1854 when I spoke in some hall there,

and after the speaking, you with others took me to an oyster saloon, passed an hour there, and you walked with me to, and parted with me at the Quincy House quite late at night. I left by stage for Naples before daylight in the morning, having come in by the same route after dark the evening previous to the speaking, when I found you waiting at the Quincy House to meet me. A few days after I was there, Richardson, as I understand, started this same story about my having been in a Know-Nothing lodge. When I heard of the charge, as I did soon after, I taxed my recollection for some incident which could have suggested it; and I remember that on parting with you the last night I went to the office of the hotel to take my stage passage for the morning and was told that no stage office for that line was kept there and that I must see the driver before retiring, to insure his calling for me in the morning; and a servant was sent with me to find the driver, who after taking me a square or two, stopped me and stepped perhaps a dozen steps farther, and in my hearing called to some one, who answered him, apparently from the upper part of a building, and promised to call with the stage for me at the Quincy House. I returned and went to bed, and before day the stage called and took me. This is all. That I never was in a

Know-Nothing lodge in Quincy I should expect could be easily proved by respectable men who were always in the lodges and never saw me there. An affidavit of one or two such should put the matter at rest. And now a word of caution. Our adversaries think they can gain a point if they force me to openly deny the charge, by which some degree of offence would be given to the " Americans." For this reason it must not publicly appear that I am paying any attention to the charge.

Yours truly,

A. Lincoln.

Prom 1849 to 1852 Jonas served as postmaster at Quincy by appointment of Presidents Taylor and Fillmore. One of Lincoln's earliest appointments was that of his friend Jonas to his former office, his commission being dated April 29, 1861. He discharged the duties of postmaster until the spring of 1864 when he was incapacitated by serious illness. Martin Joseph, then, as now, a resident of Quincy, informs the writer that he visited Jonas frequently during his illness, being personally acquainted with him, and "when the doctors had no hope for his recovery, of which he was aware, his only wish was to see his son Charles H., at that time a prisoner of war, a member of the Twelfth Arkansas Regiment of the Confederate Army. The friends telegraphed to Lincoln to grant

him the privilege to go to his dying father and the President being a great friend of Mr. Jonas granted the release and sent word the son was on the way."

This statement of Mr. Joseph varies but slightly from that of Charles H. Jonas, still living in his 77th year. In a letter to the writer dated July 14, 1908, he says :

When during my father's last illness and hope of his recovery had been abandoned, my mother and sister asked Mr. Lincoln to permit me to see him before his death. I was at that time a prisoner of war on Johnson's Island, Lake Erie. President Lincoln granted the request without hesitation, and issued an order to the Commandant at the prison to liberate me on parole to visit my dying father. This was done at once and I reached Quincy on the day of my father's death, but in time to be recognized and welcomed by him.

From the records of the War Department we are enabled to reproduce the President's order above referred to, the same being also quoted by Leslie J. Perry in an article " Appeals to Lincoln's Clemency/' in the Century Magazine, December, 1895:

Allow Charles H. Jonas now a prisoner of war at Johnson's island a parole of three weeks to visit his dying father, Abraham Jonas, at Quincy, Ills.

June 2nd 1864. A. Lincoln.

In connection with this incident it should be said that three other sons of Jonas served in the Confederate army — Benjamin F., in later years United States Senator from Louisiana; Julian, and Samuel Alroy, the latter being known as the author of the poem " Written on the Back of a Confederate Note." A fifth son, Edward, served with distinction as Major of an Illinois regiment, Lincoln's postmaster at Quincy suffered in no wise by the Southern sympathies of his four sons; in fact we have it from Benjamin F. Jonas that " Mr. Lincoln always asked after us when he saw any one from New Orleans during the war."

Further evidence of Lincoln's high opinion of Jonas exists in the shape of an order of the President in the matter of one Thomas Thoroughman of St. Joseph, Mo., arrested for disloyalty in May, 1862, and sent to Quincy, 111. Appeal being made to Lincoln he directed the Secretary of War " to dispose of the case at the discretion of Abraham Jonas and Henry

Asbury, both of Quincy, both of whom I know to be loyal and sensible men." Their report resulted in Thoroughman's parole. This case is also quoted by Leslie J. Perry in the Century Magazine, December, 1895. Asbury in 1869 published in the Quincy Whig a series of sketches of the bench and bar of Adams County including that of Jonas, to which he refers in his volume Reminiscences of Quincy, published in 1882.

On the death of Jonas the President appointed his widow

Louisa Block Jonas to fill his unexpired term as postmaster, the office being meanwhile managed by her daughter Anna Jonas who became the wife of Adolph Meyer, for twenty years Congressman from Louisiana.

Of Jonas' personality we learn from his niece Mrs. Annie J. Moses, of New York. She writes :

He was tall, of medium weight, rather inclined to leanness than flesh, with black eyes and hair and complexion between dark and fair. His features were very strong, with a serious, intelligent face, which broke into a very pleasant expression when amused. He was a very intellectual man and full of humor and wit; and benevolence was well marked in his countenance.

Of the few Jewish residents of Springfield for several years preceding Lincoln's election to the Presidency, Julius Hammerslough, of the firm of Hammerslough Brothers, enjoyed very friendly relations with Mr, and Mrs. Lincoln. He heard Lincoln's memorable address in Springfield on June 17, 1858, beginning with the words, " If we could first know where we are and whither we are tending, we could better judge what to do and how to do it." Mr. Hammerslough witnessed Lincoln's first inauguration and frequently called to see him at the White House, the President invariably inquiring of Mr. Hammerslough : " How are the boys ? " — referring to the brothers in Springfield. One one occasion he escorted Mrs. Ninian Edwards, a sister of Mrs. Lincoln, from Springfield to Washington. He accompanied Lincoln's remains from Chicago to Springfield as one of a committee of citizens of Lincoln's old home chosen for that purpose, and he also provided the plumes for the funeral car used in Springfield. Hammerslough took a very active part in the project for the erection of the Lincoln monument in Springfield, being appointed by the national monument committee special agent to bring the subject to the notice of the Jews. In a stirring

appeal for funds dated Springfield, May 30, 1865, he wrote:

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It is above all, fitting in this land where the Hebrews have won so proud a name and are so greatly respected and honored that they should thus show their love and veneration for the fallen chief of the nation, whose wisdom, honesty and purity of purpose were so highly appreciated by foreign nations and who was so beloved at home.

Shortly before his death Mr, Hammerslough called the writer's attention to an old and familiar Lincoln story the authenticity of which has long been questioned. Eeturning to Springfield after several weeks' absence with saddle bags on his arms, Lincoln noticed on nearing his home that an additional story had been added since he left — the work of Mrs. Lincoln and intended as a surprise. Feigning inability to recognize the house he inquired of a passer-by, " Say, Mister, can you tell me where the widow Lincoln lives ? " The party thus addressed was Abner Wilkinson, a well-known merchant tailor of Springfield, from whose lips Hammerslough heard the story some years afterwards. This statement of Wilkinson to Hammerslough is interesting, in that it settles the character of at least one of the many Lincoln stories heretofore in the apocryphal class.

In the late 'sixties Mr. Hammerslough moved to New York where he became the founder and first President of the Clothiers Association of New York. On his death, June 18, 1908, the directors of that association formally gave expression to the debt of gratitude due him for the uplifting of the clothing industry. The daily newspapers also noted his intimate acquaintance with Lincoln.

There resided in Jacksonville, HI., from 1853 to 1861 Henry Eice a merchant born in Germany in 1834 and now a resident of New York. Eice knew Lincoln well. Eeferring to his acquaintance he told the writer of a visit to Springfield when he met Lincoln bound for the railroad station in quest of Mrs. Lincoln who had been away on a shopping trip " to get some duds" as he put it. Eice told Lincoln it was his

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intention, if he would permit it, to furnish his inauguration suit. He thanked Eice, saying he had already accepted a similar offer from the Springfield firm of Wood and Hinkle. Eice had been acting for several months after the breaking out

of the war as military store-keeper at Cairo, 111,, and sought a similar appointment embracing the entire district, being backed by John A. Logan and Governor Eichard Yates of Illinois. Accompanied by these gentlemen Eice called upon Lincoln at the White House. He found the President at supper and at his invitation the three joined in the repast. Lincoln favored Eice's appointment and endorsed his applica- tion to Simon Cameron, Secretary of War. It turned out however, that Cameron had already filled the office. Lincoln, when informed of this, suggested a method by which Eice might yet secure the appointment but the latter allowed the matter to drop.

A characteristic instance of Lincoln's probity is narrated by Mr. Eice, who was a party to the proceeding. Several Cin- cinnati firms, on learning of the failure of a Decatur, 111., debtor for a large sum, wrote to Eice at Jacksonville request- ing that he recommend a reputable lawyer to protect their interests. Eice suggested Abraham Lincoln of Springfield. Thereupon a committee representing the creditors met Eice at Springfield and the party called upon Lincoln. Much to their chagrin they were told he did not feel satisfied he could properly attend to the matter. He advised them, however, to consult his fellow-townsman and most bitter political op- ponent, John A. McClemand, also a lawyer of note, who was later a Major-General in the Union Army. Indisposed to accept a retainer McClemand suggested that the party again see Lincoln, assuring them of his thorough qualification for the work in hand. This flattering endorsement induced Lin- coln to yield, the result being a speedy and mutually satis- factory adjustment of the matter at issue.

It was during the Presidential campaign of 1860 that Abraham Kohn, City Clerk of Chicago, first met Lincoln, the acquaintance being formed in the store of Kohn, at that time a merchant, Kohn was a Bavarian, then in his 42d year, a man of excellent education, well versed in Hebrew literature and known and respected as a public-spirited citizen. He had been for several years President of the Hebrew Congregation Anshe Maariv (Men of the West). In politics Kohn was described by the Democratic press as " one of the blackest Eepublicans and Abolitionists." Kohn's popularity and in- fluence had probably been brought to Lincoln's attention, and the latter, consummate politician as he was, recognized in Kohn, presumably, an ally whose acquaintance would prove a valuable asset in the pending election. Lincoln was intro- duced by Congressman Isaac N. Arnold who accompanied him and it was this meeting that inspired Kohn with a feeling of

admiration for his visitor and a conviction that he was the destined Moses of the slaves and the saviour of his country. Thus says his daughter, Mrs. D. K. Adler, in a letter to the writer. Lincoln in the course of the conversation spoke of the Bible as their book and Kohn, being a devout Jew as well as an ardent patriot, conceived an intense admiration for Lincoln. This found expression in his sending to the President-elect before his departure for Washington a silk flag, the work of his own hands, painted in colors, its folds bearing Hebrew characters exquisitely lettered in black with the third to ninth verses of the first chapter of Joshua, the last verse being :

Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest.

This flag is referred to by Admiral George H. Preble in his History of the Flag of the United States, published in 1894. The incident being brought to the attention of the late President McKinley, when Governor of Ohio, he thus alluded to it

in the course of a speech delivered at Ottawa, Kansas, on June 20, 1895:

What more beautiful conception than that which Abraham Kohn of Chicago in February, 1861, to send to Mr. Lincoln, on the eve of his starting to Washington, to assume the office of President, a flag of our country, bearing upon its silken folds the words from the first chapter of Joshua. Could anything have given Mr. Lincoln more cheer or been better calculated to sustain his courage or to strengthen his faith in the mighty work before him? Thus commanded, thus assured, Mr. Lincoln journeyed to the Capital, where he took the oath of office and registered in Heaven an oath to save the Union. And the Lord our God was with him, until every obligation of oath and duty was sacredly kept and honored. Not any man v?as able to stand before him. Liberty was the more firmly enthroned, the Union was saved, and the flag which he carried floated in triumph and glory from every flagstaff of the Republic.

Mr. Lincoln at once wrote to Mr. Kohn thanking him for his gift. His letter was sent through a mutual friend, John Young Scammon, a prominent citizen of Chicago, who delayed its delivery until six months after Lincoln's departure from Springfield, when he wrote to Mr. Kohn as follows :

Chicago, August 28, 1861.

Abraham Kohn, Esq.

My dear Sib: The enclosed acknowledgment of the receipt of your beautiful painting of the American flag by the President got among my letters or it would have been sent to you before. Regretting the delay, I am.

Truly your friend,

J. Young Scammon.

Mr. Lincoln's letter to Kohn being lost cannot be reproduced. The whereabouts of the flag cannot be traced, although Mrs. Adler states that while in Washington during the administration of President McKinley she made a thorough search for the relic in all the places where it might be preserved but without success. Kohn never met Lincoln after his visit to his store in Chicago. He was one of the citizens appointed by the Mayor to go some distance into Indiana to

meet the train bearing Lincoln's body to that city. He died in Chicago in 1871.

Henry Greenebaum, for many years a banker of Chicago, was an intimate friend of Lincoln and numbered also among his friends Generals U, S. Grant, John A. Logan, James A. Garfield, and Stephen A. Douglas. Born in Hesse-Darmstadt, Germany, in 1833, he reached Chicago in 1849 and in 1855 was elected an Alderman on the Democratic ticket in recognition of his political activity and influence with the voters of that party. John Wentworth, " Long John," being Mayor of Chicago at the time, he invited the Aldermen to a dinner at the Tremont House, Lincoln, a personal friend of Wentworth, being a guest. Of this and subsequent visits Mr. Greenebaum gave the vn-iter the following account :

On the occasion of the dinner at the Tremont House I met Lincoln for the first time and was greatly impressed by his congeniality, by his wealth of humor, and by his remarkable mental endowment. I formed the brightest appreciation of his personality, and whenever he came to Chicago subsequent to that time, I called on him at the Tremont House to pay my respects. On one of these occasions, during his contest with Stephen A. Douglas, for the United States Senatorship, I accompanied Lincoln on a walk during which he asked me for my support. My reply was that I could not do so, that I was a strong political friend of Douglas. Lincoln said he knew this and that he was not in real earnest in asking my support.

Greenebaum was called to Springfield in the month of February, 1861, to attend a hearing before a committee of the State legislature. The night before Lincoln left Springfield, Greenebaum and a large party of legislators and others went to Lincoln's home to bid him good-bye and the President-elect asked all present to come to the depot in the morning to see him off. To quote Mr. Greenebaum:

A large crowd gathered and the dear man made a very solemn and impressive speech — indeed he moved us to tears. With wonderful modesty he expressed his fear of being unable to meet the grave responsibility that awaited him at the White House.

His faith in God gave him courage, he said, and he asked us to pray for him. Taken all in all I consider him the greatest man I ever met. He was a man of very broad views, had no prejudices whatever against any nationalities or classes and many of the most prominent Jews of Illinois supported him for the Presidency.

By reason of his residence and prominence in the city of Washington Adolphus S. Solomons had frequent intercouse with Lincoln. He was a member of the book and publishing firm of Philip and Solomons which for many years was given the government contracts for printing. Mr. Solomons has taken an active part in the inauguration ceremonies of every President from Lincoln to Eoosevelt, is still living in the National Capital in his eighty-second year, and is full of reminiscences of Lincoln. At the Lincoln birthday celebration given under the auspices of the Hebrew Educational Society of Brooklyn in 1903 he said :

To me, whose good fortune it was to know Mr. Lincoln when he first came to Washington, and to know him was to love him, it would come with natural impulse to glow over the make up of his remarkable career. All of his inclinations were on the sunny side of life and the beauty spots seen through his hopeful eyes covered many freckles upon the human face divine and made him think well of all his fellow men.

On the same occasion Mr. Solomons related the following reminiscences :

One day while I was in the White House waiting to see the President I found myself in line with fifty others and had to wait my turn. Right in front of me was a tall, stupid-appearing fellow, and I wondered what in the world his mission was. The

man said to the President, " I see that you are rather busy today, and I will come in some other time to tell you what a contraband told me"; whereupon the President interrupted him by a slap on the shoulder and with a steady look at his muddy clothing and boots, and looking at his shaggy red hair exclaimed:

" Excepting myself you are the homeliest man I ever set eyes on. But that makes no difference: sit right down and tell me all

you know." As he said this Lincoln winked at me over the stranger's shoulder, and added, " And it certainly cannot take you long." Evidently the man did not see the joke, for he told a short story and was soon out of the room.

On another occasion, when I was present, a Mr. Addison, a Federal officer from Baltimore, called upon Lincoln to tender his resignation, whereupon Lincoln said: " All right, Addison, I accept your resignation but nothing can compensate me for the loss of you, for when you retire I will be the ugliest man left in the employ of the Government " — again emphasizing that he thought himself no beauty.

The day that Lincoln issued one of his early war proclamations I chanced to be at the White House with a distinguished New York Rabbi, Dr. Morris J. Raphall, who came to Washington to ask for the promotion of his son Alfred, from a second to a first lieutenancy in the army. The White House was closed for the day when we got there, but upon sending up my card we gained admittance and after Lincoln had heard the Rabbi's request he blurted out, " As God's minister is it not your first duty to be at home today to pray with your people for the success of our arms, as is being done in every loyal church throughout the North, East and West? " The Rabbi, evidently ashamed at his faux pas, blushing made answer: "My assistant is doing that duty." " Ah," said Lincoln, " that is different." The President then drew forth a small card and wrote the following upon it:

" The Secretary of war will promote Second Lieutenant Raphall to a First Lieutenantcy.

A. Lincoln."

• Handing the card to the Rabbi he said, with a smile all his own: " Now doctor, you can go home and do your own praying."

Eeferring to this interview, in an address on Lincoln at his synagogue B'nai Jeshurun, Few York, April 19, 1865, Dr. Eaphall said that he had seen the President but once, he had

asked him but one favor, but that time he granted it freely, he had granted it lovingly " because he knew the speaker was a Jew — because he knew him to be a true servant of the Lord."

The last photograph of President Lincoln, taken shortly before his assassination, was made in the gallery attached to the Philip and Solomons' establishment in Washing-

ton. After Mr. Solomons retired from the business the plates and negatives of the firm passed to Alexander Gardner who was in charge of the portraiture branch and subsequently a partner in the concern. In the American Hebrew of February 12, 1909, Mr. Solomons gives the following account of Mr, Lincoln's sitting for this picture :

As many statements have been made relating to the " last photo-graph " Mr. Lincoln sat for, I feel assured that the following dis-poses of the fact:

During the early 60's our bookselling and publishing firm of Philip & Solomons, located at 911 Pennsylvania avenue in this city, had a large photograph branch in the upper part of the build-ing, under the charge of Alexander Gardner who was well known for his celebrated " Photographic Sketch Book of the War " in two oblong folio volumes, in which Mr. Lincoln was a frequent and conspicuous figure in camp and battle fields.

One day while in his office I casually remarked that I would like very much for him to give us another sitting as those we had been favored with were unsatisfactory to us, and would he permit us to try again, to which he willingly assented.

Not long afterwards he sent word that he could " come on some Sunday," and a date was arranged, which was the second Sunday previous to the Friday night when the assassin, Wilkes Booth, in cold blood shot to death one of the most beloved men God ever created.

At the time named by appointment, he came and at my first glance I saw, with regret, that he wore a troubled expression, which, however, was not unusual at that eventful period of our country's fitful condition, and throwing aside on a chair the gray woolen shawl he was accustomed to wear, Mr. Gardner, after sev-eral squints at his general make-up, placed him in an artistic position and began his work.

After several " snaps," during which the President while mak-

ing jocular remarks, had completely upset the operator's calculations, I followed Mr. Gardner into his " dark room " and learned to my sorrow that he had not succeeded in getting even a fair expression of his mobile countenance, and therefore was much discouraged, which, however, was but a repetition of former occasions.

I courageously named the result of my investigation to Mr. Lincoln, whereupon he, noticing, perhaps, my disappointment.

said to me, " tell Mr. Gardner to come out in the open " — referring to the " dark room," — " and you, Solomons tell me one of your funny stories and we will see if I can't do better."

I complied as best I could, and the result was the likeness as reproduced.

TMs portrait is identical with the one published by the Sprague & Hathaway Co., of West Somerville, Mass., which they informed the writer was made by them from an old-fashioned wet plate owned by Watson Porter, photographer to the Army of the Potomac, by whom it was sold to Henry M. Williams, a lawyer and capitalist at Fort Wayne, Indiana, whose father was a personal friend of Lincoln. By what means Porter came into the possession of this negative is not known.

Joseph Seligman, formerly of the New York banking firm of J. and W. Seligman & Co., had close relations with President Lincoln, by whom he was called to Washington for consultation with himself and Secretary Chase, on matters of finance. Many of the issues of government bonds were placed by the Seligmans in Frankfort and Amsterdam. This action, at a time when the nation's credit was low and its fate uncertain, elicited frequent expressions of commendation from the President. The appointment of General Grant to the supreme command of the army was in a large measure due to Joseph Seligman's influence with Lincoln, as he had known Grant before the war and recognized his fitness for the duties. Mr. Seligman entertained a strong affection for the President, which was fully reciprocated. He was in Frankfort at the time of Lincoln's assassination and his grief in learning the news was poignant. Eeferring to that event in later years he often declared to his children that not only had a noble man fallen by the hand of an assassin but also that the South had lost its best friend. Mr. Seligman was with others, instrumental in aiding Mrs. Lincoln after the death of her husband, whereby her wants were much alleviated. To his son, Mr. Isaac 'N. Seligman, of New York, we are indebted for the foregoing

details.

Presidential Electors and Delegates.

Two electoral votes were cast for Lincoln by Jews, one in the election of 1860, another in that of 1864. Two Jews served as delegates in the Eepublican National Convention of 1860 and one in that of 1864.

Sigismund Kaufmann, a member of the bar and a native of Darmstadt, Germany, was a Eepublican Presidential elector for the State of New York in 1860. He had taken part in the German revolution of 1848-49, was a man of brilliant parts and was at this period in his thirty-fifth year. Kaufmann was the representative of the German Eepublican element in the United States. He wrote for the Staats-Zeitung, founded the New York Turn Verein, and the Legal Aid Society, was President of the German Society of the City of New York, a commissioner of immigration, and a director of the Hebrew Orphan Asylum. At the age of twenty-seven he addressed anti-slavery meetings in the city of New York, speaking one evening in English, German, and French. With his fellow-members of the Electoral College he went to the Astor House to see Mr. Lincoln on his arrival in New York in February, 1861. On being presented Lincoln remarked, " I know enough German to know that Kauf mann means merchant." Then he added, as if to emphasize his linguistic accomplishments, " And Schneider means tailor — am I not a good German scholar? " (See New York Tribune, February 21, 1861.)

The President shortly after his inauguration offered Kaufmann the post of Minister to Italy. He declined it on the ground that he could be more useful to his party at home. Kaufmann was an important factor in the distribution of Federal patronage in the State of New York and wielded much influence with the Lincoln administration. He secured for Franz Sigel an appointment as Colonel of a Missouri regiment on the outbreak of the Civil War in response to an urgent appeal from Sigel then at St. Louis asking "What

shall I do ? " to which Kauf mann replied, " Organize a regiment. I will attend to the rest." Mr. Kaufmann in 1870 was an unsuccessful candidate for Lieutenant-Governor of the

State of New York, Stewart L. Woodford being the nominee for Governor.

The emancipation proclamation Kaufmann regarded as the transcendant act of Lincoln's administration. In the course of an address to the German Eepublicans in 1879 in opposition to a third term for President Grant he declared :

The proclamation of Abraham Lincoln freeing the slaves was the greatest victory for the Federal cause of the War. It shed no drop of blood, it cost no treasure. Where graves are the monuments of Grant's victories, millions of free men are the trophies Lincoln won.

Kaufmann died in Berlin in 1889, aged 65 years.

In the Presidential campaign of 18G4, Abram J. Dittenhoefer was a Presidential elector for the State of New York on the Republican ticket. He was born in South Carolina in 1836 and is a lawyer by profession.

Mr. Dittenhoefer heard Lincoln's Cooper Institute speech in 1859 and was then introduced to him. He did not become intimate with him, however, until after the Presidential election of 1864. Thereafter he called upon the President a number of times at the White House. The President seemed pleased to see his visitor and spent quite a time in conversation, generally about New York politics. Of these interviews Mr. Dittenhoefer, in a communication to the writer, said :

While an air of melancholy seemed always to suffuse his features, I always regarded President Lincoln as the most genial of men. I often found him sitting in the business oflBce of the White House having on a black, threadbare, alpaca coat, out at the elbows and in slippers. I could always notice when he was about to indulge in a jest, which he frequently did in the midst of the most serious conversation; a sort of half suppressed smile would appear on that strong face for a brief interval before the
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jest was given, as if he was anticipating the pleasure it would give in the hearing of it. I remember distinctly presenting to him the ballot I had cast as one of the Presidential electors for him in the New York college of electors. Looking at it a few minutes, he said, " It represents the power and dignity of the American people and the grandeur of American institutions."
In thanking me for giving it to him he said he would leave it to

his children as a memento. I saw him in Washington a few days before his death. He seemed then to be in the best of spirits and spoke of the great work that was before him in completing the restoration of harmony and peace between the North and the South.

The friends of Dittenhoefer early during the war, knowing that he was a South Carolinian, filed an application for his appointment as United States Judge of that State. Nothing, he says, was heard of the matter for a year or two, when a Mrs. Carson, a daughter of the only Union man in South Carolina, who had been driven from the State for his loyalty, wrote to him that she had been directed by Lincoln to examine the applications on file and make her recommendation to him. This she did and seeing Dittenhoefer's name among the applicants recommended his appointment, which the President promised to make. Shortly thereafter Dittenhoefer received a letter from one of Lincoln's private secretaries saying that the President was going to nominate him for that judgeship, but his business having meanwhile increased and being unwilling to take up his residence in the South he at once replied that he could not accept the nomination.

Mr. Dittenhoefer was in later life appointed a justice of the City Court of New York. He was a delegate to several Eepublican National Conventions and acted for twelve years as chairman of the Eepublican Central Committee of New York City where he now resides. For further details about him and Lincoln see New York Herald, November 22, 1908.

In the Eepublican State Convention held at St. Louis on February 12, 1860, Moritz Pinner, one of its members, was elected a delegate to the National Eepublican Convention to

be held in Chicago the following May. Pinner was a young German of thirty-two engaged in the publication of a German newspaper devoted to the anti-slavery cause. The St. Louis Republican of February 13, 1860, gives a detailed account of the proceedings of this State Convention in which Pinner seems to have been very prominent, being especially active in his efforts to defeat the endorsement of Edward Bates of Missouri for the Presidency. The friends of Bates, constituting a majority in the Missouri Convention, having introduced a resolution instructing the national delegates to vote as a unit for the Presidential nominee, Pinner announced his resignation as a delegate to Chicago, the convention immediately adjourning without taking action thereon, thus leaving him free to attend the National Convention where he

further devoted his attention to the prevention of Bates' endorsement by the Illinois delegation. This being accomplished he took no further part in the deliberations of the convention and kept aloof from the Missouri delegation, whose leaders Frank P. Blair and B. Gratz Brown he had antagonized in their efforts to secure the nomination of Bates. The consequence was that he failed to record his vote on either of the three ballots which resulted in the choice of Lincoln.

Pinner's name does not appear on the official roll of Missouri delegates to the convention. This omission he explains to the writer as " spite work " of Gratz Brown for his anti-Bates activity. Pinner favored the nomination of William H. Seward, but now in the light of history is extremely thankful that Lincoln was nominated and elected. While he made no effort to secure Lincoln's nomination he worked earnestly for his election and believes that " by preventing the nomination of Bates he paved the way for Lincoln and made his nomination possible and his election probable."

Pinner informs the writer that he became acquainted with Lincoln in Chicago during the Presidential campaign of 1856 and saw him quite often during the Lincoln-Douglas debates in 1858. After Lincoln's nomination he met him in Spring-

field and was there introduced to Mrs. Lincoln with whom he had a pleasant chat. He frequently saw the President after his election and was by him oifered the mission to Honduras which he declined, preferring to enter the army. Appointed by General Philip Kearney Brigade Quartermaster on his staff, Secretary Stanton resented Kearney's action, claiming the sole right of such appointments. An appeal to Lincoln followed. The latter's intervention. Pinner says, secured a prompt adjustment of the controversy but not before its consideration by a full cabinet meeting called for that purpose. Pinner's commission followed at once. This document, signed by Lincoln and Stanton, he has shown to the writer. Since the war Pinner has been engaged in real estate enterprises and the study of economic questions. He is now living in Elizabeth, N. J.

In the same convention with Pinner was Lewis N. Dembitz, a delegate from the city of Louisville, Ky., who was born in Prussia in 1833. He was educated abroad and read law at Cincinnati and Madison, Ind. From 1884 to 1888 he was assistant city attorney for Louisville and drafted the first American law establishing the Australian ballot for the Louisville election in 1888. He was a prolific writer, some of his

works being: Kentucky Jurisprudence, Law Language for Short-Hand Writers, Land Titles in the United States and Jewish Services in Synagogue and Home. He also contributed many articles to Jewish periodicals. Dembitz was very proud of having served as a delegate in the convention of 1860 and of voting for Lincoln, whom he much admired but never met, a fact which he always regretted.

Maier Hirseh, a merchant of Salem, Oregon, was one of the six delegates from Oregon to the Republican National Convention of 1864. He came from Hohebach, Wiirttemberg, in 1852, and had lived in Oregon for twelve years, his home being in Salem. He was a brother of Solomon Hirseh, United States Minister to Turkey from 1889 to 1892, and of Edward Hirseh, at one time State Treasurer and later on a

State Senator of Oregon. While prominent and influential in the councils of the Republican party in Oregon and frequently asked to stand for the legislature, Hirsch steadily refused the candidacy for any office save that of delegate to the convention of 1864 in which he appeared as an inconspicuous figure taking no part in the proceedings beyond voting with his delegation for Lincoln whom he much admired. He thereafter disappeared from public view, settling in New York City in 1874, where he died two years later at the age of forty-seven.

Demonstrations Following the Assassination.

In I he manifestation of the public grief following the death of President Lincoln, which event " arrested the daily concerns of the whole civilized world " the Jews everywhere were prominent. Occurring as it did on the Jewish Sabbath, the first pulpit utterances were heard in the synagogues, the general character of the services therein being thus described by the New York Times of April 21, 18G5 :

The American flag was half-masted and the hanner itself often enshrouded with folds of crape; long festoons of black and white overhanging the entrance doors. The galleries were draped in black and the huge tapers almost concealed beneath the sombre cloths of mourning. In all the synagogues, as on Saturday last, the prayers for the dead and dying were repeated by the ministers and sorrow-stricken people and the buildings were crowded with assemblages whose earnest attention and fervent responses to the supplications of the officiating clergymen gave evidence of the deep grief that bowed down the hearts of the congregation.

The Times states that the services on April 17, 18G5, at the Synagogue Shaary Zedek, Rev. Mr, Menks officiating, lasted from 8.30 a. m. to 1 p. m.

In the Synagogue Shearith Israel of New York, the rabbi recited an Hazcarah (prayer for the dead) for Lincoln. This, according to the Jewish Messenger, was the first time that prayer had been said in a Jewish house of worship for any other than those professing the Jewish religion. The innova-

tion provoked very strong remonstrance in some Jewish quarters. Rev. Mr. Leeser, however, took a liberal view. Addressing the Hebrew Congregation in Washington he declared that :

Prayers for the deceased President were in accordance with the spirit of the faith which the Jews inherited as children of Israel who recognized in all men those created like them in the image of God, and all entitled to his mercy, grace and pardon, though they have not yet learned to worship and adore Him as they do who have been specially selected as the bearers of His law.

The number of Jews taking part in the funeral procession in the city of Washington was about 125, mainly members of the " Hebrew Congregation " under the marshalship of B. Kaufman.

Of the 50,000 who marched in procession in the city of New York, 7000, according to the Jewish Messenger, were Jews, chiefly members of the orders of B'nai B'rith, B'nai Mosheh and Free Sons of Israel, including some 2000 who paraded with the Masonic, military and other organizations. The Free Sons of Israel carried a banner with the inscription :

The Father of his Country is Dead

The Nation Mourns him

LINCOLN

He is not dead but he still lives in

the hearts of the Nation.

The Henry Clay Debating Association of forty members, Samuel Adler, president, was assigned a place in the procession, as were the employes of Heineman and Silberman's factory. Following the funeral procession in the city of New York a memorial meeting was held in Union Square under

the direction of 100 leading citizens, Martin H. Levin, a merchant of prominence, being the only Jew among them. George Bancroft was the orator and to Rabbi Samuel M. Isaacs was assigned the reading of the Scripture. Referring

to this meeting Bishop Simpson said in his oration at the burial in Springfield:

The Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church in New York and a Protestant minister walked side by side in the procession, and a Jewish rabbi performed a part of the funeral service.

Most of the synagogues and Jewish organizations of the city were represented at this gathering, delegations being present from the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, the Purim Association, the Jerusalem Society, the Mutual Benefit and Burial Society, Young Men's Hebrew Benevolent Fuel Association, Hebrew Benevolent Society and Orphan Asylum, and Congregations B'nai Jeshurun, Shaarai Tefila, Anshe Chesed, Eodef Sholom, B'nai Israel, Ahawath Chesed, Beth Israel, Bikur Cholim Kadisha, Atereth Israel and Mishkan Israel.

The Jews of Boston joined in a funeral procession which ended at the Temple Ohabei Shalom, where an address was delivered by Eev. David Myers. In the Tribute of Nations covering 1200 contributions from every portion of the civilized world and published by order of Congress in 1867 the resolutions of this congregation appear in full, being, strange to say, the only tribute from American Jewish sources in the entire volume. They read as follows :

Boston, April 16, 1865.

At a vestry meeting held this day by the Hebrew Congregation Ohabei Shalom, worshipping in Warren street synagogue, a committee was appointed to draw up resolutions in regard to the late lamentable national calamity, and the following preamble and resolutions were drawn up and passed unanimously:

Whereas it has pleased an all-merciful Father to remove from our midst his Excellency Abraham Lincoln, President of these United States of America, by death, at a moment when the whole nation rejoiced in the promised peace of our distracted country; and

Whereas this death has been caused by the foul hand of an assassin, who came unawares upon his illustrious victim while

enjoying relaxation from his arduous duties, In the company of the partner of his bosom; and

"Whereas feeling that this calamity concerns every individual, not alone in this country, but throughout the civilized world, affecting as it does the capability of mankind to govern themselves, and dealing a fearful blow against republican institutions: Therefore,

Resolved, That we, the congregation " Ohabei Shalom," of the city of Boston, deeply deplore this sad event, and we humbly bow to our Heavenly Father, praying this last, his " greatest sacrifice " of all will suffice " the monster moloch," and that the Lord our God will be pleased to sanctify the death of our Chief Magistrate to the end that no more victims shall be required to end this unholy war.

Resolved, that with grief and horror we noticed the attempted double assassination of the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Seward, and his family, one ripe in years, wisdom and honor; that this attempted assassination is scarcely less to be deplored than that of the Chief Magistrate, whose death the nation now mourns, and that no words can convey the deep sorrow which we feel within us that the first officer of the country should thus be cut off from among us at the moment when his wisdom and prudence were about to lead us out of the chaos of war to the paradise of peace.

Resolved, That we deeply sympathize with the bereaved family of the late most worthy Chief Magistrate, and that no words of ours can convey the deep shock, the thrill of horror, the unspeakable agony with which the sad tidings were received by our community. But we hope that He who tempers the winds to the shorn lamb — He who was from the " beginning " " the protector " of the " widow and orphan," will also vouchsafe to be the protector of the family of the lamented dead (dead in the flesh, but living in the hearts of his countrymen). May he temper their grief, and let them remember, and let us hope, that the good deeds done by him whilst on earth will intercede for him before the throne of Almighty God, and that the throne of martyrdom be sanctified unto him.

Resolved, That the synagogue shall be draped in mourning for thirty days and that a prayer for the dead shall be chanted every Sabbath day and Mondays and Thursdays during that time.

Resolved, That on the day of the funeral of the lamented dead,

a funeral sermon shall be preached in the synagogue, and that

we, the members of this congregation, unanimously resolve to close our places of business on that day for the purpose of keeping it as a day of mourning.

Resolved, That a copy of the above resolutions be forwarded to the widow of the lamented President, as also to the family of the Secretary of State; that they be sealed with the seal of the congregation and signed by the president and vice-president and secretary.

Resolved, That the above resolutions be entered on the minutes of the congregation and published in the Post, Journal, and Herald, newspapers of this city.

Done the 19th day of Nisan, of the year of the creation 5260 — April 16, 1865.

S. Mtebs, President.

[Seal.] S. Steinburg, Vice-President.

N. Ehrlich, Secretary.

The Boston Traveller oi April 20, 1865, notes that " Solemn and appropriate services were held at both the Jewish Synagogues," the second house of worship being undoubtedly that of the Reform Congregation Adath Israel of which Eev. Joseph Schoninger was rabbi. There were at this time two other synagogues in Boston, Mishkan Israel, Rev. Alexis Alexander rabbi, and the Dutch Jews' synagogue, the rabbi of which is unknown.

The United Hebrew Congregation of St. Louis, A. S. Isaacs, president, ordered their place of worship draped in mourning and that the members wear the usual badge of mourning for thirty days. Tlie congregation was addressed by Dr. Henry Vidaver. At the Synagogue B'nai Israel in the same city Rev. Mr. Kittner spoke. The Hebrew Young Men's Literary Association of St. Louis adopted resolutions drawn up by a committee composed of S. H. Lazarus, J. R. Jacobs, and A. S. Aloe which were published in the Missouri Republican of April 19, 1865. The Congregation Emanu-El of San Francisco was addressed on the day of the President's death by Rev. Dr. Elkan Cohn, who was handed a despatch announcing the assassination just as he was going

into his pulpit to deliver the weekly sermon. Eev. B. H. Gotthelf addressed the Congregation Adath Israel of Louisville. Congregation Miekve Israel of Philadelphia adopted resolutions in which Lincoln was described as

One of the best and purest presidents, who like the law-giver Moses brought a nation to the verge of the haven of peace, and like him was not allowed to participate in its consummation.

In the Brevard Street Synagogue, Detroit, Michigan, Eev. Dr. Isidore Kalisch delivered an eloquent address dwelling especially on Lincoln's proclamation of emancipation and likening him to Moses. He also referred to the President's tolerant views, citing as an instance his action in reference to the appointment of Jewish Chaplains for the army.

According to the Chicago Evening Journal of May 2, 1865, the Jews were represented in the funeral procession in that city by the Hebrew Benevolent Association and Congregation Bikur Cholim. The establishment of Stein, Kramer and Company draped their store elaborately and a portrait of Lincoln, heavily draped, occupied a place in the window. Foreman Brothers displayed a motto reading :

" FiBST IN THE Race that led to Glory's Goal."

Say Nicolay and Hay :

The President's body rested in the Court House In Chicago for two days under a canopy of sombre richness inscribed with that noble Hebrew lament: " The Beauty of Israel is Slain upon the High Places."

Two congregations in Albany, N. Y., were conspicuous in the demonstrations. Eev. Max Schlesinger spoke at the Temple Anshe Emeth, and the Congregation Beth El held a special meeting at which elaborate resolutions were adopted. These were published in full in the Evening Journal of that city of April 20 and the Argus of April 21, 1865. This congregation voted to hold services three times on the day of the funeral, first at 6 a. m. for morning prayers, at 10 a. m. for a sermon by the Eev. J. Gotthold, rabbi of the congregation, and at 6 p. m. for evening prayers.

The resolutions of the Washington Literary and Dramatic Association, adopted on April 18, 1865, were published in full in the Washington National Intelligencer of April 24. They were drawn up by a committee composed of S. Wolf, Julius Lowenthal, F. P. Stanton, A. Hart, and J. Stralitz, and read :

By the death of Abraham Lincoln the nation has sustained an Irreparable loss, freedom her brightest and purest champion, humanity her greatest benefactor, who, more than any other whose name history transmits, deserves the poet's tribute of being " A man take him for all in all we ne'er shall look upon his like again." He has immortalized the country over which he so worthily presided by ever remaining true to freedom and the constitution affected by his inspiration; his heroism, statesmanship and kindness of heart during the trying ordeal of this accursed rebellion will be the marvel, and command the admiration of future ages as they have aroused the fervent homage of the present; the Emancipator stands side by side in our affection and esteem with the Father of his country.

While we mourn this great loss we utter our respectful protest against any leniency towards the responsible leaders of this accursed deed; this is yet and ever shall be a government of the people, more slow to anger but sure to avenge; we extend to Andrew Johnson, the President of the United States, our assurances of esteem and confidence and readiness to sustain him in all acts that will redound to the glory and perpetuity of our beloved country.

Eesolutions were drawn by a committee of the Hebrew Benevolent Society of New York, composed of P. Frankenheimer, Philip Spier, M. Mayer, I. S. Solomons, and I. Phillips.

District Grand Lodge No. 2 of the order of B'nai B'rith representing the States of Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Michigan, Tennessee, Illinois, and Wisconsin called the assassination " a futile attempt to overthrow the grand principles of freedom and to place in its stead anarchy with its attendant misery." The Executive Committee of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites resolved that

The Israelites of the United States are deeply sensible of the loss humanity has sustained in the painful death of the lamented President; that the loss strikes us with peculiar solemnity and significance at this momentous period of the National history when we behold so nigh the end of that unhallowed combination against the government to the hastening of which the good, the

honest Abraham Lincoln, contributed so largely, and with all the zeal, the sincerity and the prudence of his kind heart, his clear practical judgment, his steadfast unfaltering fidelity to the Union.

J. H. Montefiore, President of London Board of Deputies, wrote a letter of condolence to the Hon. Charles Francis Adams, the American Minister in London, requesting him to convey it to Mrs. Lincoln and the United States Government. In the House of Commons, Benjamin Disraeli spoke of the President's death in seconding the address to the Crown.

Jewish citizens in several of the seceded States also joined in paying homage to the deceased President. In Richmond, Va., Rev. M. J. lilichelbacher of the Synagogue Beth Ahaba devoted a sermon to the assassination which he characterized as a most horrible crime and expressed his satisfaction that it had not happened in Richmond. At Memphis the military commander of the Federal forces, having assumed control of the demonstrations, two Jewish congregations united with other denominations in a joint service held in the city park, these being Congregations Israel, Rabbi Tuska, and Beth El, Rabbi Joel Alexander. In the funeral procession in that city appeared Eupiirates Lodge, No. 35, Order B'nai B'rith, with its entire membership of 1G7, Samuel Schloss acting as marshal. Rev. Dr. Bernard Illoway addressed the Congrega-tion Shaarey Chesed of New Orleans. The Congregation Termini Derech of New Orleans draped their synagogue in mourning and was addressed by Colonel Philip J. Joachimsen of New York. Citizens of all classes held a memorial meeting in Charleston, S. C, at which Governor Aiken presided. Samuel Hart, Sr., and Benjamin M. Seixas were members of a Committee of Fifty to draft resolutions. Unmoved by this

toucliing manifestation of a fallen foe the New York Tribune correspondent at Charleston, S. C, in a venomous letter to his paper assailed the majority of the Committee of Fifty as sympathizers with the Confederate cause, Hart and Seixas being with others specifically designated as "still violent secessionists at heart."

The official minutes of the Lincoln Monument Association of Springfield record among tiie very fii'st contributors to the fund the " Hebrew Citizens of Alton, HI.," followed shortly thereafter by the Hebrew Congregation of St. Joseph, Mo., and the Hebrew Congregation of Philadelphia.

Dr. C, H. Liebermann, a practicing physician of Washing-ton, was one of the nine medical men at the death-bed of

Lincoln, and his portrait is among the forty-seven persons in Alonzo Chappel's painting, The Last Hours of Lincoln, executed in 1867. From the prospectus of a steel-plate engraving of this painting we learn :

Lincoln's family physician, Dr. Stone and Surgeon-General Barnes accompanied by assistant Surgeon-General Crane were in early attendance, and later he was visited by Doctors Hall and Liebermann, and other eminent physicians, all of whom agreed that the wound was unto death.

Numerous contemporary newspapers referred to Dr. Liebermann's presence on this occasion and his name is mentioned in various books treating of the assassination. Neighbors of Liebermann in Washington are of the impression that he was a Jew, although unaffiliated with Jewish organizations. He was born in Eiga, Russia, September 15, 1813, and died in Washington, March 27, 1886.

The flight, pursuit and remorse of Lincoln's assassin have been vividly portrayed by Emma Lazarus in a poem of five stanzas entitled " April 27th, 1865." She chose for her title the date of Booth's capture and death, inadvertently given a day in advance of the actual date. These verses first appeared in 1867 in Poems and Translations Written between the

Ages of Fourteen and Seventeen. Owing to their ambiguous title their existence has escaped the notice of most students of Lincoln.

Inspired by the death of Lincoln, Judah Eoswald of Baltimore wrote a poem in Hebrew called " Lincoln's Amnesty," the same being published in the Jewish Messenger of June 24, 1865.

In its issue of May 25, 1865, this journal published an appreciation of Lincoln in Hebrew by Isaac Goldstein. In translation this reads:

ACROSTIC

On Abraham Lincoln, Assassinated Nisan 18th, 5625.

My heart overflows with a good speech. I address my work unto a king. Psalms, XLY. 2.

I.
Happy art thou, Lincoln, Who is like unto thee!

Among kings and princes thou art exalted.
Much thou did'st with an humble spirit.
Thou art like a unique person in the land.
Who among princes is like Lincoln?
Who shall be praised like him?

II.
Thou hast also a name among heroes!
Thy right hand has achieved prowess against them.
Thou hast girded on the sword of the slain.
Thou hast drawn the bow by night and by day.
One Father has created us, thou hast said;
Therefore thou hast proclaimed Freedom in thy land.
The black people thou hast redeemed into Freedom:
Forever they will praise and bless thy name.

Who among princes is like Lincoln, and who can be praised like him?

Isaac Goldstein, the Levite.

Eulogies of Lincoln were pronounced by the rabbis of many synagogues, and some of these were printed in the Israelite, the Jewish Messenger, the Occident, and daily news-

papers. Of these eulogies none has been preserved in perma-nent form with the exception of the following :

Liebman Adler, Address (in Funf Reden), Chicago, 1866.

David Einhorn, Trauer Rede, Philadelphia, April 19, 1865.

Henry Hochheimer, Predigt, April 19, 1865; Feat- und Fasttag, Baltimore, June 1, 1865.

Sabato Morais, An Address, Philadelphia, April 19, 1865; A Discourse, June 1, 1865.

Benjamin Szold, Vaterland und Freiheit, Baltimore, June 1, 1865.

Philip J. Joachimsen, An Address, New Orleans, April 29, 1865.

Jonas Bondi, Trauer-Predigt, New York, April 19, 1865.

Lincoln's Clemency.

No phase of Lincoln's administration surpasses in interest

the chapters dealing with the appeals to executive clemency. The importunities of pardon seekers and his habitual yielding to their entreaties in the face of earnest protests gave rise to much harsh criticism, but this rarely swerved him from his predetermined course of action.

An exceptional instance of Lincoln's denial of a pardon was narrated by the late Eabbi Benjamin Szold, of Baltimore, in the case of a Jewish deserter in General Meade's army. Stopping at Washington on his way to Eappahannock station Eabbi Szold sought an audience with the President with a view of obtaining a pardon for the condemned man. Lincoln being engaged at a cabinet meeting at the time, Dr. Szold sent in his Bible with the passage from Deutoronomy xx, 8, marked, at the same time making his plea for the soldier. Presently the President emerged with the Bible in hand, laughing heartily, " the tears rolling down his cheeks," according to an account of the visit published in the Baltimore Herald May 24, 1896. Several other soldiers in General Meade's army, — Catholics and Protestants, — were awaiting execution at this time for a similar offence and the President inquired of the Eabbi whether he was interceding for the Jew only or for all the deserters. Lincoln refused to interfere

but gave Dr. Szold a letter to General Meade asking that every courtesy be shown the bearer. Meade firmly refused to waive the death penalty on the ground that it would be a bad example for the army and a serious precedent for the future, lilore fortunate in his effort to save the life of a Jewish deserter was Simon Wolf, of Washington, who paid a midnight visit to the President for that purpose. In a recent address in Baltimore he said :

The scene when I called upon Mr. Lincoln is indelibly impressed on my memory and gave evidence of the luminous spirit, humanity and charity which characterized the great President. Deserters at that period were numerous, soldiers were needed and stern measures were demanded to preserve discipline in the decimated ranks of the Army of the Potomac. Secretary Stanton and the Commanding Generals were continually complaining of the President's leniency. The execution in this instance was fixed for the following day. I was accompanied by " Tom " Corwin, the distinguished Ohio statesman. Mr. Lincoln listened patiently to the pleadings of both but stood firm. At last I pleaded with him on lines which 1 knew he could not resist. The President turned in his chair and rang a bell. The Secretary answered the call and he ordered a stay of execution. The young soldier subsequently led the forlorn hope at the battle of Cold Harbor, and fell in his tracks with the flag of his country wrapped

around him. A monument to his memory has since been erected. When I subsequently told the President of the tragic end of the boy he had so nobly pardoned, he was affected to tears. And this is the man whom a partisan press denounced as a " baboon " and an " ignoramus."

In the archives of the War Department is recorded the remarkable experience of David Levy, who was granted a pardon by Lincoln under peculiar circumstances. Levy in December, 1902, applied to the Pension Bureau for a pension, which was refused on the ground that his name appears on the books of the War Department as a deserter. The records show that Levy first enlisted on April 19, 1861, in the 16th Pennsylvania cavalry, serving until July 23, 1861, when he was mustered out. He again enlisted August 19, 1861, and

deserted February 22, 1863. This desertion was fatal to his claim for pension under the Act of Congress, and he was so informed. He immediately wrote to the Bureau that he was pardoned for that desertion by President Lincoln and as evi- dence of the fact he forwarded to the Pension Office a small card, such as Lincoln habitually used in the course of his official business, whereon was written in his well-known handwriting :

If David Levy shall enlist and serve faithfully for one year or until otherwise honorably discharged I will pardon him for the past.

Jan. 12, 1865. A. Lincoln.

Upon receipt of this Eugene F. Ware, the Commissioner of Pensions, ordered that the pardon be recognized. This card Levy subsequently presented to Mr. Ware, who is now its owner.

In the Century Magazine, December, 1895, may be found numerous orders of Lincoln in reference to the appeals of pardon-seekers, including that of Abraham Samuels, arrested in Virginia in the fall of 1864 while trying to pass through the Union lines to obtain medical supplies for the Confederate army. Samuel's defense was that he "was simply trying to escape from the South." The matter was referred to Lincoln who endorsed the papers as follows:

It is confessed in this case that Samuels when arrested had on his person a paper prima facie showing that he was going North to obtain medical supplies for the rebels. Will the oflBcer in

conmmand at Fort Monroe please give him an opportunity of trying to prove that this was not his real object and report the evidence, with his opinion on it, to me?

A. Lincoln.

After taking considerable testimony the President on December 10, 1864, issued this order :
Let the prisoner Samuels be discharged.

A. Lincoln.

Diligent research fails to reveal the identity of Samuels.
4

Of exceptional interest was the arrest and imprisonment in Washington, 1864, of Goodman L. Mordecai, of South Carolina. He was the son of Benjamin Mordecai, one of the most prominent citizens of Charleston, and was then in his 26th year. He had received an honorable discharge from the Confederate Army, and had been an occasional contributor to the Southern press. Intending to visit Nassau in the interest of a prominent blockade company, he left Eichmond bound for Washington, fortified with passports from Judah P. Benjamin, and the city authorities. Eeaching Washington, he was arrested, and, refusing to take the oath of allegiance, was imprisoned for several months. He then sent for Samuel A. Lewis, an uncle of his fiancee, Miss Ada Jackson. Lewis was editor of the Hebrew Leader, and Vice-President of Mt. Sinai Hospital, New York. He also appealed to Dr. I. Zacharie, whose close relations with Lincoln will be referred to later on, who took immediate steps for his release. He called on the President and successfully accomplished this result. In return for this act of kindness young Mordecai accompanied his benefactor to the White House to thank Lincoln for his consideration. Describing this interview, Mr. Mordecai told the writer :

Zacharie unconsciously informed Lincoln that I had fought against the Government and that my father was the first contributor to the Southern Cause having been a subscriber in the sum of $10,000 soon after the secession of South Carolina. The President then grasped my hand and answered: " I am happy to know that I am able to serve an enemy." My release followed, on condition that I would not return to the South during the war. Proceeding to New York I found myself under the constant surveillance of the Federal detectives. I then called upon General Dix to whom I showed the President's order for my release which he examined with care and at once dismissed me, remarking: " I

bow to higher authority! "

On Lincoln's birthday, 1901, Mr. Mordecai contributed to the New YorJc Tribune a detailed account of his arrest and release, which was printed the following day. In the article

he ventured the statement that " one of the greatest, grandest characters in history was Abraham Lincoln."

Lincoln's course in this case occasioned a scandalous editorial in the anti-administration organ — the New York World, of September 24, 1864, its caption being "Mr. Lincoln's Unionism and Bunionism." Dr. Zacharie is held up as a man who had been courted and flattered by high oflBcials because of his intimacy with the President. He, it alleges, " has often left his business apartment to spend an evening in the parlor with this favored bunionist." Zacharie is said to have " enjoyed Mr. Lincoln's confidence perhaps more than any other private individual." The World broadly intimates that Mordecai's release was obtained for a consideration and suggests that " there must be a reason for this remarkable intimacy between an obscure toe-nail trimmer and the Chief Executive of a great nation."

Noteworthy Incidents.

Several noteworthy incidents marked Lincoln's visit to New York when en route to Washington on February 19, 1861. Passing down Broadway in his barouche he may have noticed the establishment of Isador Bernhard and Son decorated with a banner with the device : " Welcome Abraham Lincoln ; we beg for Compromise," The same night at the Astor House he greeted J. Solis Eitterband of the New York bar, President of the Young Men's Eepublican Club of the City of New York, who had made many speeches in the campaign, marched with the " Wide Awakes " and worked enthusiastically for the election of Lincoln and Hamlin. On the following day Lincoln was officially received at the New York City Hall where he was welcomed by Mayor Fernando Wood. An impromptu reception followed in the course of which the Mayor announced the presence of " Mr. Cohen " of Charleston, probably J. Barret Cohen, remarking as he did so that the gentleman was " outside the jurisdiction," bearing in mind the fact

that South Carolina had, sixty-two days before, passed an

ordinance of secession. Whether Mr. Cohen's visit was prompted by admiration or curiosity does not appear in the Tribune account of the presentation, published the following day (February 20, 1861). At any rate, Mr. Lincoln extended a cordial greeting to the gentleman from South Carolina, observing as he did so that " the matter of jurisdiction makes no difference at all."

Lincoln's various calls for troops met with prompt response from the Jews, the names of GOOOof that faith being recorded by Simon Wolf in The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen, as having served in the cause of the Union. The actual number serving was probably double that figure. Numerous appointments and promotions in the military service attest Lincoln's appreciation of the services rendered by the Jews.

He appointed Major Leopold Blumenberg, of Maryland, Provost-Marshal of the third Maryland District, and President Johnson subsequently promoted him Brevet-Brigadier-General. Edward S. Solomon, a lieutenant in an Illinois regiment, was ultimately brevetted Brigadier-General and commended for " the highest order of coolness and determination under very trying circumstances " in the battle of Gettysburg. After enlisting as a private in an Indiana regiment Frederick Knefler rose to be Brevet-Major-General, the highest rank attained by any Jew in the Federal Army. In the first battle of Bull Eun, in 1861, Colonel Max Einstein commanding a Pennsylvania regiment covered the retreat of the Union Army, and was subsequently appointed by President Lincoln United States Consul at ISTuremburg, Bavaria. President Lincoln appointed Adolph A. Mayer of the Fourth New Mexico Volunteers Inspector-General of Volunteers. Among the recipients of Medals of Honor, authorized by Congress and approved by President Lincoln, were a large number of Jewish soldiers, both commissioned and non-com-

missioned ojBBcers, and privates. Colonel Marcus M. Spiegel of the 67th Ohio Infantry had been recommended for promotion to the grade of Brigadier-General but died of wounds received at Vicksburg before the appointment could be made.

Conspicuous in manifestations of loyalty was Uriah P. Levy, of the United States Navy, the owner of Monticello, the former home of Thomas Jefferson. Calling on Lincoln at the opening of the war, he placed his entire fortune at his disposal. The offer being declined, he subscribed liberally to tlie war loan. Levy died March 22, 1862, devising a large portion of his estate in Virginia and the city of New York

to the people of the United States, for the maintenance, at Monticello, of an agricultural school for the children of deceased warrant-officers of the United States Navy. Mr. Fessenden of Maine, in a speech in the United States Senate shortly after Levy's death, estimated the value of the property so devised at $300,000. The constitutionality of this bequest gave rise to considerable discussion in the Senate. Litigation resulted in a reversion of the property to Levy's heirs (see Levy V. Levy, 33 N. Y. Reports, 97).

A touching story is told of Lincoln's visit to the bedside of a dying soldier of twenty-five, Lieutenant-Colonel Leopold C. Newman of the 31st New York Infantry. Newman's leg had been shattered by grapeshot in a battle near Fredericksburg, Va., early in 1863. He was carried to the National Hotel, in Washington, where, it has been asserted, Lincoln called to see him bearing with him a commission as Brigadier-General, Newman died shortly afterwards.

Mr. Simon Wolf, in his The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen tells this incident, his authority being, so he informs the writer, a soldier of Newman's command who was present at Newman's death. Colonel Frank Jones, Newman's superior officer, at present attached to the War Department, states in reply to this that he has no knowledge of Lincoln's visit or of Newman's promotion, nor do the records of the

Department show any such promotion. That Newman's advancement was at least contemplated seems quite probable, inasmuch as there appears in the Israelite of July 3, 1863, the statement :

Had Newman recovered he would have received his Commission as Brigadier General which had been already written out for him.

The Occident said in its issue of September, 1864:

One Colonel Newman of New York obtained the honorary title of Brigadier General after he was mortally wounded;

and in reviewing the record of Jewish soldiers shortly after the close of the war took occasion to say:

We do not believe that more than one officer, a Lieutenant Colonel when wounded was promoted to a Brigadier General, just before his death.

Unfortunately the identity of the officer is not disclosed.

Early appreciation of Lincoln's place in history is evidenced by an incident at a festival given by the Jewish women of Pittsburg, Pa., for the benefit of the Sanitary Commission on December 9, 1863. Inspired by the recent victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, which were doubtless regarded as harbingers of early peace, Jacob Affelder offered the following toast, which was published in the Israelite a few days later:

Abraham Lincoln, the noble Pilot, called by the voice of the people to the position of danger and responsibility, when traitors' hands had directed the ship of State toward the breakers of National Destruction. Nobly has he buffeted the waves of Disunion, until now with the assistance of Providence and our gallant Army and Navy he has brought us within sight of our longed for peace. His name will be synonymous with Patience, Honesty and Justice.

President Lincoln was evidently in good humor when visited by Mr. Simon Wolf with an invitation to attend the celebration of the 300th anniversary of Shakespeare's birth in 1864 by the Young Men's Literary Association of Washington. Captain Isaac N. Gotthold of the 42d New York In-

fantry accompanied him. Mr. Lincoln, says Mr. Wolf, was drinking a cup of coffee when the two called. On learning the object of their visit he said :

" Well, boys, what are you going to play? "

Wlien he was told "Hamlet," he said:

" Why could I not be the grave digger of the evening; for am I not a fellow of infinite jest? "

" Unfortunately," says Mr. Wolf, " the President could not come, but he sent a check for $25."

For the purpose of introducing abroad certain publications from his pen bearing upon the mineral resources of the United States, Julius Silversmith, of California, an eminent metallurgist, sought the endorsement of President Lincoln. He presented letters of introduction from Governor James W. N"ye, of Nevada, and United States Senator John Conness, of Oregon, both of whom assured Mr. Lincoln that Mr. Silversmith's mission was an important one, likely to induce a large immigration. They further stated that his encouragement would be highly appreciated by the loyal people of the western

side of the continent. Mr. Lincoln, while not to be swerved from his usual policy of caution in dealing with strangers, endorsed Governor Nye's letter as follows :

Not personally knowing Mr. Silversmith I cheerfully endorse what Governor Nye says of him.

A. Lincoln,

April 30, 1864.

On the letter of Senator Conness he wrote:

I do not personally know Mr. Silversmith but Senator Conness who writes the above is habitually careful not to say what he does not know.

April 30, 1864.

A. Lincoln.

The original letters above quoted are in the possession of the Hon. Simon W. Eosendale, of Albany, N. Y.

Silversmith lived in San Francisco for some years before the Civil War. In the directory of that city for 1858 his

occupation is given as " assistant teacher at the Emanu-El Institute." During 1860-61-62 he was the editor and proprietor of the Mining and Scientific Press. In 1866 he wrote a Practical Hand-Booh for Miners, Metallurgists and Assayers, which is recognized as a standard work in the profession. Silversmith died in Chicago in 1894.

To Edward Eosewater belongs the distinction of having with his own hands transmitted to the world from the telegraph oflSce of the War Department in Washington Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation of January 1, 1863, He met the President twice that day and in the evening attended a ball at the White House. Eosewater came from Bohemia in 1854 at the age of thirteen. He was successively peddler, clerk and bookkeeper. At the age of eighteen he became a telegraph operator. In the Chicago Tribune, September 11, 1893, he tells, in an authorized interview, of a visit of the President to the War Department on December 13, 1863, Eosewater being the only telegraph operator on duty. General Burnside was at this time preparing to attack the strongly intrenched army of Lee at Fredericksburg, Va. Lincoln,

evidently recalling Burnside's confessed incompetency to command the Army of the Potomac, as expressed to himself and others, and filled with forebodings of disaster, went to the telegraph office in his slippers at 8 a. m., and remained there all day. Eosewater did all the telegraphing for him, some by dictation and some from notes. The President's fears proved well-founded, Burnside's force of 100,000 men being overwhelmingly defeated with a loss of over 10,000 killed and wounded.

Eosewater was attached to the United States Military Telegraph Corps 1861-1863 and transmitted General Pope's despatches from various battlefields. He subsequently became manager of the Pacific Telegraph with headquarters in Omaha, Feb. Later he founded the Omaha Bee, which he conducted from 1871 to the time of his death in 1906.

The late Myer S. Isaacs, at one time judge of the Marine

Court of ISTew York City, attended a reception at the White House in February, 1865. He was accompanied by A. S. Solomons and his daughter Zillah, This interesting account of what he saw Mr. Isaacs wrote for the Jewish Messenger o-ver the signature " M/'

The President kindly assisted in the welcome and entertainment of the lady guests. We were presented and cordially greeted, Mr. Lincoln being particularly engaging in his remarks to the little daughter of the gentleman accompanying me, saying that he liked to see the children, and inquiring their names and whether he had seen them before. He is by no means so awkward as his pictures represent him; unusually tall, a head and shoulders above those around he had, of course, to stoop when speaking to most of his visitors, but his countenance strongly expressive of good nature as well as of resolution, an index of his heart, and nobody leaves the Executive Mansion without being fascinated by the kindly amiable bearing of the President. I was particularly struck with this, and in the demeanor of the numerous visitors of humble appearance, private soldiers, widows and other relatives of unfortunate or distressed members of the Union armies, whom I saw congregated in the ante-room on a subsequent day and who waited with patience and confidence their turn for an interview, many remaining there for hours, as the President's time is pretty constantly occupied, and all satisfied that their petition, however unimportant to others than themselves, would receive the gentle attention of the Chief Magistrate; and even a refusal would be couched in such kindly and winning language that their love and confidence in his goodness

of heart would be diminished not at all.

With the passing years, Mr. Isaacs conceived a passionate admiration for Lincoln, seizing every occasion to extol his virtues and public record. As evidence of his earnestness and enthusiasm when discussing the war President it is interesting to note his indignation when the New York Times, shortly before his death, proposed the abolition of the Lincoln-Birthday holiday in that State on the ground that it was " a monument to legislative folly." This proposition elicited a scathing reply to the offending newspaper (February 20, 1903), reading as follows:

His unparalleled career from the modest Kentucky home to the White House, his devotion to country in the period of dire distress and danger, his tragic taking off, his immortal deeds, his trust in the common people, the lofty place he occupied among the leaders of men in modern times, entitle him to the distinc-tion due only to Washington and Lincoln — setting apart his natal day, for the study and appreciation of his character and achieve-ments, the inspiration that elevates the Nation, the lesson of a life dwelt upon wherever humanity feels sympathy for the op-pressed and downtrodden and honors unselfishness and devotion.

One of the vast army of civilians attracted to Washington in the early days of the Civil War was a young Englishman, Dr. Isachar Zacharie, who had attained considerable celebrity as a skillful chiropodist. By some means he was introduced to Lincoln and very friendly relations resulted, their intimacy going so far, it is alleged, that Zacharie was entrusted with confidential missions to Savannah and- New Orleans, being subsequently sent to Eichmond in the role of peacemaker, a statement which should be accepted cum grano sails.

In a letter to his wife, dated Fortress Monroe, September 23, 1863, Zacharie notes his intention of leaving the following day "for Dixie," under flag of truce; for what purpose does not appear. He expresses concern about his reception by the people of the South, hopes they will listen to him, and inti-mates that he may be long absent. Samuel Zacharie, a son, accepts this letter as evidence of his father's visit to Eichmond on behalf of President Lincoln, insists that he had interviews with Jefferson Davis and Judah P. Benjamin, but offers noth-ing in corroboration of his actual presence in Eichmond or interviews with the Confederate leaders.

Of Dr. Zacharie's close relations with Lincoln there is little doubt. Whether these went beyond the bounds of professional

intercourse cannot be determined, the only evidence of their acquaintance being a document in the handwriting of Lincoln now in the possession of the Zacharie family which reads as follows :

Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with, great success and considerable' addition to my comfort.

A. Lincoln.
Sept. 2, 1862.

Dr. Zacharie's strong foothold in political and social circles in the National Capital was the subject of a column editorial in the New York Herald, October 3, 1862, under the caption " The Head and Feet of the Nation." Zacharie is described as

A wit, gourmet and eccentric, with a splendid Roman nose, fashionable whiskers and eloquent tongue, a dazzling diamond breast-pin, great skill in his profession and an ingratiating address, a perfect knowledge of his business, and a plentiful supply of social and moral courage.

Secretary Stanton, it adds, was unable to resist such a combination of eloquence when Zacharie called to see him with a proposition to treat the feet of the soldiers and he even proposed the raising of a corps of chiropodists to accompany the various armies. " Prior to that," says the Herald, " he had trimmed the feet of President Lincoln and all his Cabinet." After the war Dr. Zacharie resumed the practice of his profession in the city of New York, and subsequently in London. In England he founded a branch of Free Masonry, known as the Order of the Secret Monitor, in which he wielded much influence. He died in London in 1897, at the age of seventy-two, his death being extensively noticed by the American press, special prominence being given to his relations to Lincoln.

One of Lincoln's ardent admirers was a South Carolinian, Septima M. CoUis, the daughter of David C. Levy, later a Philadelphia banker. She contracted a romantic marriage with Charles H. T. Collis, captain of an Independent Company known as the Zouaves d'Afrique, of Philadelphia, and accompanied him to the front, her experience being recorded in a little volume A Woman's War Record. Being presented to President Lincoln, while the Army of the Potomac was on the Eappahannock, she was struck by his curious attire. She wrote:

He wore a dress suit, his swallow tail coat being a terrible misfit, and it puzzled me very much to tell whether his shirt collar was made to stand up or turn down — it was doing a little of both.

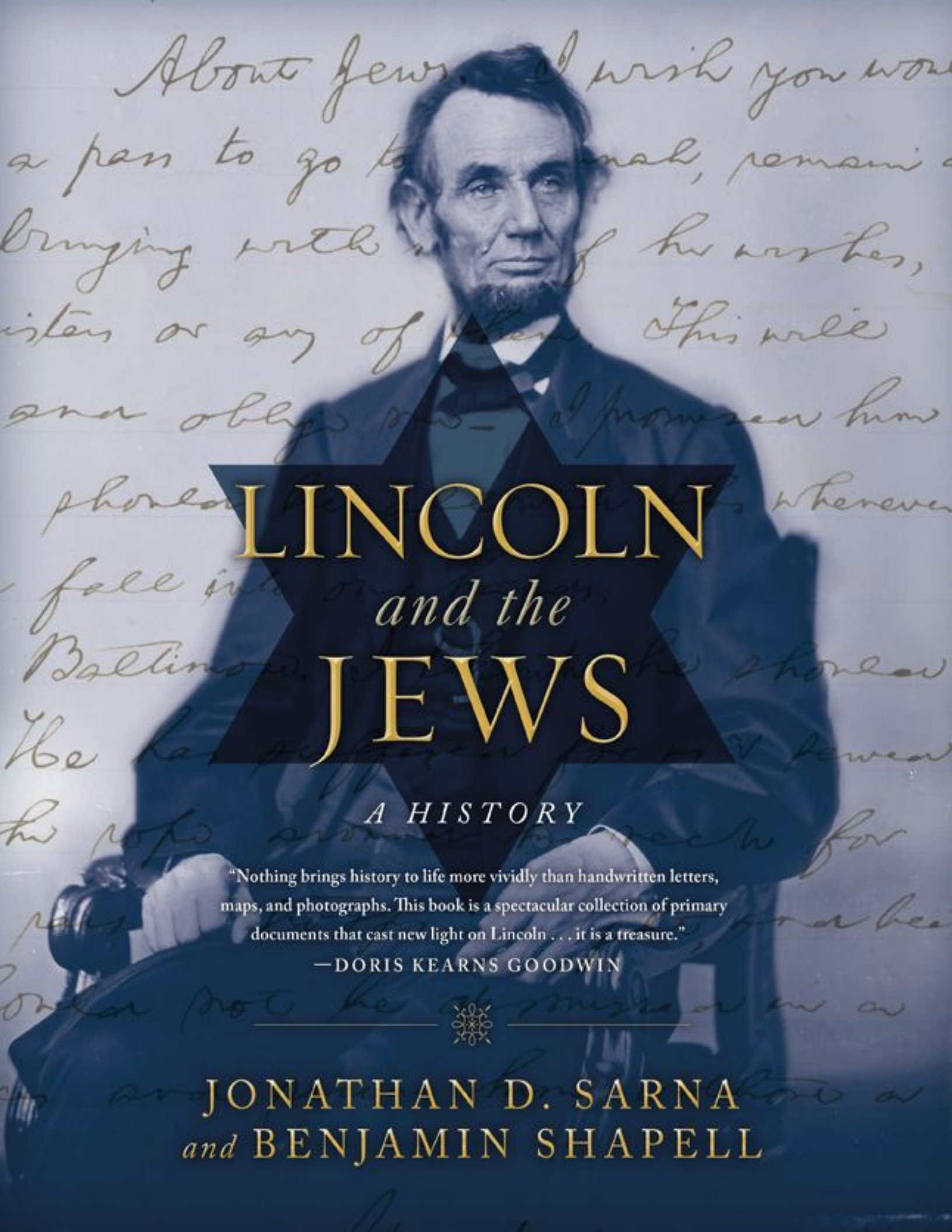
Another Jewess who recorded her impressions of Lincoln was Eose Eytinge, the actress. Accompanied by Wallack and Davenport she went to the White House in response to an invitation from the President, who had witnessed their performance. In her Memoirs she makes the following record of this visit:

When I was presented to the President he took my hand, and holding it while he looked down upon me from his great height said: " So this is the little lady that all us folks in Washington like so much! " Then with a portentous shake of his head but with a twinkle in his eye, he continued, " Don't you ever come around here asking me to do some of those impossible things you women always ask for, for I would have to do it and then I would get into trouble."

At a social function Miss Eytinge relates she met Secretary Seward by whom she was not favorably impressed because " he was stately, cold and dignified, whereas she found Lincoln simple, warm-hearted and free spoken."

President Lincoln's entry into Eichmond in 1865 was witnessed by Sir Moses Ezekiel the eminent sculptor, a native resident of that city, who had served in the Confederate Army. The then budding artist recognizing the President's presence in Eichmond as an historic event, made at this time a close study of Lincoln. This enabled him some thirty-five years later to execute for Nathaniel Myers of New York a striking bust of the great Emancipator.

Note. — ^Additional data on the subject-matter of this monograph, not now accessible, are reserved for a future publication.



LINCOLN *and the* JEWS

A HISTORY

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JONATHAN D. SARNA *and* BENJAMIN SHAPELL

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE WITH CHARITY FOR ALL

LINCOLN AND THE JEWS

A HISTORY

JONATHAN D. SARNA AND
BENJAMIN SHAPELL

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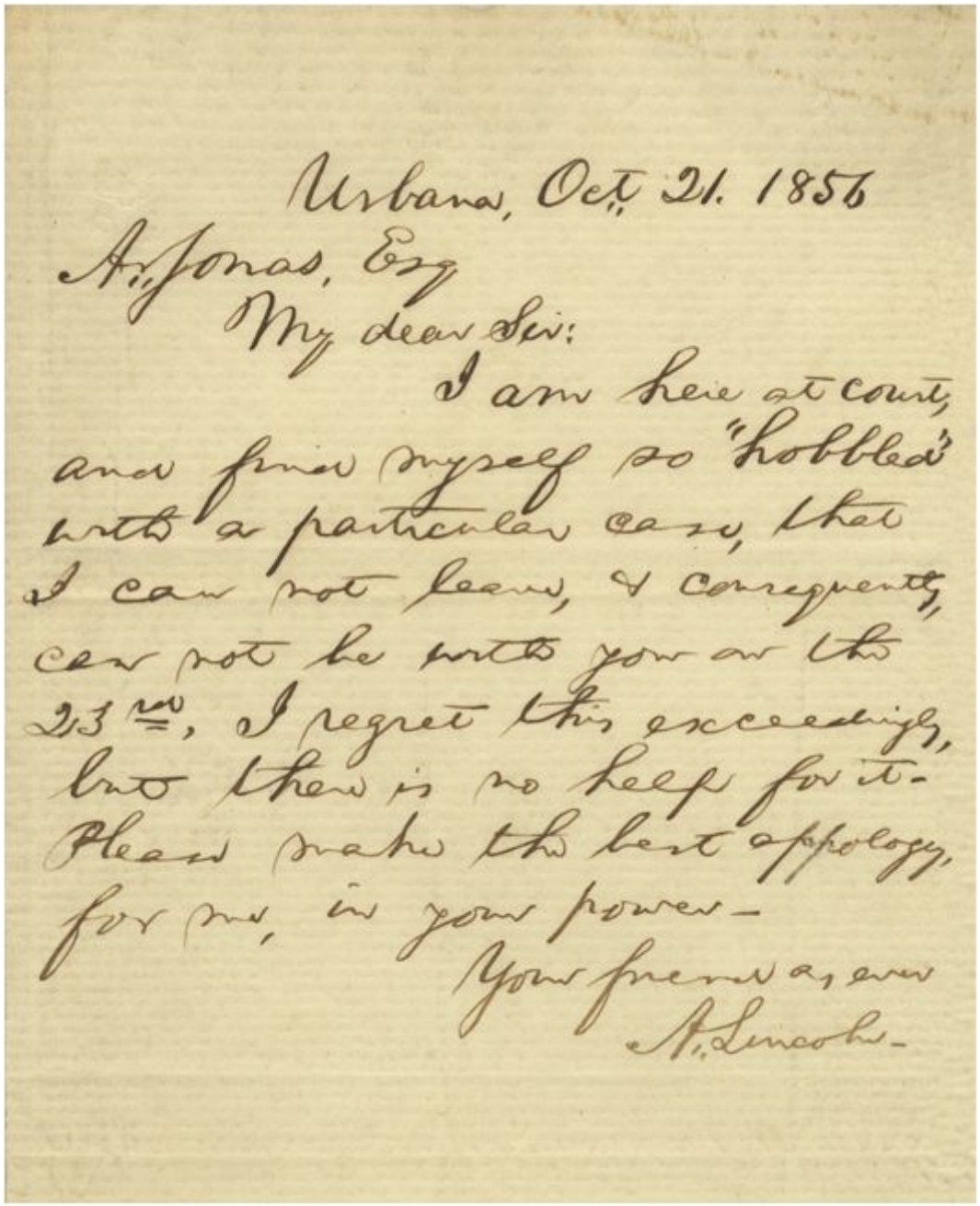
To my wonderful parents, David and Fela Shapell, who made this book possible.

Benjamin Shapell



Urbana, Oct. 21. 1856

A. Jonas, Esq

My dear Sir:

I am here at court, and find myself so "hobbled" with a particular case, that I can not leave, & consequently, can not be with you on the 23rd, I regret this exceedingly, but there is no help for it. Please make the best apology, for me, in your power—

Your friend as ever

A. Lincoln—

ABRAHAM LINCOLN TO ABRAHAM JONAS, OCTOBER 21, 1856

(see here).

FOREWORD

In the field of manuscript collecting, documents are traditionally prized for statements of grand historical fact. While I deeply appreciate those historic letters, I have always, however, been fascinated by the "other" letters of U.S. presidents; letters with an interesting turn of phrase; letters that express humanity, compassion, modesty, fragility, and irony. Letters one seldom comes across or reads about, such as presidents referring to the White House as a prison, or excoriating other presidents, or lamenting their failure to get reelected, or one, Benjamin Harrison, anxiously looking forward to "my discharge" and getting "out of this House." And then, too, there are ironically prophetic letters, such as President-elect James Garfield, writing, "Assassination can no more be guarded against than death by lightning." He would die at the hands of an assassin after only six months in office.

But in the thirty-five years I have been collecting, it is Lincoln, more than anyone else, who has most intently absorbed my interest. He was a self-made man, unschooled but not uneducated, who, with determination, persistence, and firmness of purpose, demonstrated that anyone could rise to, meet, and overcome the challenges of life. Despite the war's heavy toll on him and the country for four long years, the presidency to Lincoln was, as historian Stefen Lorant once wrote, a "glorious burden." Lincoln loved the presidency, finding humor where he could amid military and personal setbacks.

In reading through Lincoln's vast canon of collected writings, I find myself using the same word—*fascinating*—over and over again. His letters and writings are interwoven with jewels, full of wisdom, poetic flair, and marvelous turns of phrase. And while some of these letters are more recognizable than others—the first and second inaugurals, the Gettysburg Address, or his letter to Grace Bedell about growing a beard, it is still those "other" letters—the ones most Americans do not know about—that truly impress me. "'And this too shall pass away'—Never fear," Lincoln writes to comfort

his campaign manager after losing his 1858 Senate race against Stephen A. Douglas. Or, on the eve of his assured election to the presidency, humbly expressing, "I am not a man of great knowledge or learning." Later, Lincoln, sticking to his principles, uses a coarse but effective phrase: "Broken eggs can not be mended. I have issued the Emancipation Proclamation and can not retract it."

Many of Lincoln's finest words were reserved for the generals who consistently disappointed him: to Major General George Meade, for allowing Robert E. Lee's defeated army to escape from Gettysburg ("I do not believe you appreciate the magnitude of the misfortune involved in Lee's escape. He was within your easy grasp, and to have closed upon him would, in collection with our other late successes, have ended the war"); about General of the Army of the Potomac George McClellan's slowness to engage the enemy ("If General McClellan does not want to use the army, I would like to borrow it for a time"). But in "other" letters to lesser-known generals, an even more complex relationship emerges between the commander in chief and his highest-serving men. Lincoln, regretting the pain he has caused a general by dismissing him, writes: "I bear you no ill will; and I regret that I could not have the example without wounding you personally." Or, in a poetic outburst to General Robert Milroy: "I would be glad to see Gen. Milroy were it not that I know he wishes to ask for what I have not to give."

Robert Louis Stevenson said: "To be wholly devoted to some intellectual exercise is to have succeeded in life." Collecting for me is the passion that constantly infuses my thoughts. It is the tireless, daily adventure of constructing something piece by piece, of drawing strength from history; it is the focus on building something unique and complementary and anchored to themes. I have been privileged to have acquired over the years—and include in this volume—some truly remarkable examples from Lincoln's pen, many formerly held in some of the greatest private collections ever assembled, including those of Oliver Barrett, Phillip Sang, and Malcolm Forbes, as well as new and great discoveries that have emerged from hidden estates or obscure auctions far beyond the beaten path, where their importance was often overlooked.

It is, in fact, those "overlooked" letters that have formed the genesis of a particular thread in my collection of "other" Lincoln documents: the barely known relationship between Lincoln and the Jews. One day, thirty years ago, I discovered something amazing: Lincoln knew Jews. Despite the minuscule number of Jews who lived in the

"Western frontier," as Illinois was then considered, Lincoln still managed to run into Jews and they into him.

I first discovered the Lincoln-and-Jews relationship in an auction catalog when I acquired the "hobbled" letter (chapter 2), where Lincoln revealingly expresses his frustration, and no doubt embarrassment—at having to defend a wayward nephew accused of thievery. The recipient of the letter was one Abraham Jonas, who, I would come to learn, was a lifelong Jewish friend who supported, campaigned for, and helped engineer Lincoln's successful run for the presidency. It is the only known letter from Lincoln to Jonas in private hands, and a great favorite of mine.

As I came across letter after letter in which Lincoln expresses humility, biblical imagery, compassion, and respect for a people and a religion, I was transformed as a collector. Lincoln never wrote, "You are one of my most valued friends" to anyone, except to his friend and confidant Abe Jonas. And when the latter lay dying in 1864, it was Lincoln who immediately took pen to paper and ordered Jonas's son, Charles, a Confederate officer and prisoner of war, paroled for three weeks "to visit his dying father."

I am fortunate to include many examples of Lincoln and the Jews in my collection, most of which are included in this book. In my research over the years, I have found dozens more, housed in major public institutions, and all revealing the inescapable truth of the depth and breadth of this relationship and Lincoln's interest in the causes important to Jews. It was not during the war that Lincoln met and interacted with Jews for the first time but rather as a young man in Illinois, thirty years before. And over the course of his tragically foreshortened life, as this book shows, he represented Jews, befriended Jews, admired Jews, commissioned Jews, defended Jews, pardoned Jews, consulted with Jews, and extended rights to Jews. His relationships with Jews were not exploitative but warm and genuine, and went further and deeper than those of any previous American president.

We meet Issachar Zacharie, Lincoln's foot doctor, for whom Lincoln wrote three testimonials attesting to Zacharie's skill; amazingly, two of the handwritten cards were written during Lincoln's most historic week as president—the week he issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation—and one on the actual day itself, September 22, 1862. Lincoln almost always found time for Zacharie, who, the *New York World*

wrote, “enjoyed Mr. Lincoln’s confidence more than any other private individual” and even sent him on peace missions to the South during the war.

It was Lincoln who, for the first time, appointed Jewish military chaplains to serve the thousands of Jewish soldiers fighting for the Union, attended Jewish-themed plays, some multiple times, and, in the midst of his greatest trial, the secession of the Southern states, found parallels in the Old Testament with a line from Daniel, referring to the “troub’lous times” as Civil War loomed and the lions that were also surrounding him.

When Jews faced their own troublous times during the war, Lincoln acted with characteristic tolerance and inclusion. With anti-Semitism swirling through the military and the War Department, Lincoln did not flinch, whether in reversing an edict by his most successful general—Grant’s General Orders No. 11—or deflecting offensive and odious comments from other generals, including the immensely successful William Tecumseh Sherman. Through all this, Lincoln was the Jews’ most stalwart protector. In that respect, interestingly enough, he very much resembled Harry Truman, as both presidents desperately tried to find an end to a terrible war while at the same time trying to give the Jews, as Lincoln famously said, a “leg up” when it came to returning to their Promised Land. Perhaps it is not a coincidence, then, that both men had close Jewish friendships starting at a young age.

With more than 16,000 Abraham Lincoln books published and with hundreds more appearing every year, the question is constantly asked by historians: Is there anything new to say about Lincoln? This book is my obvious answer, being only the third or fourth work of its kind in over a hundred years. The subject of Lincoln and the Jews is still unknown to most. In 1961, a major exhibition in New York on Jews during the Civil War, including Lincoln’s relationships with Jews, opened to mark the occasion of the hundredth anniversary of the beginning of the war. Now, on the occasion of the hundred and fiftieth anniversary marking the end of the war and Lincoln’s assassination, this book reveals fresh discoveries and revelations of Lincoln’s profound and unusual relationship with Jews to a new generation of readers. So I take the liberty of borrowing a single line from a letter Lincoln wrote in response to a compliment on his second inaugural speech which best expresses my inspiration for this project: “it is a truth which I thought needed to be told.”

In order to illustrate the full depth of the story of Lincoln and the Jews—when Lincoln first learned about Jews, respected them as individuals and considered them, as

a group, entitled to full equality—we have chosen to introduce, by visual evidence, high-quality images of the documents, letters, photographs, lithographs, ephemera, and artifacts that catch the eye, enhance the story, and capture history, something never before accomplished for this subject.

On the last day of his life, Lincoln, according to his wife Mary's later recollections, turned his thoughts to Jerusalem, telling her, ironically, of his wish to see Jerusalem before he died. As a young man, Lincoln had seen the moral failings and indignations of slavery but now wondered, with right seemingly on the side of the North, why the bloody Civil War had lasted four long years. "Both read the same Bible, both pray to the same God," he intoned in his second inaugural, and yet, both the North and South had tolerated the institution and its cruelties for years before the war. In the end, Lincoln had no answers for the suffering and God's hidden purposes, yielding to a half verse from Psalms (part of the Jewish Shabbat liturgy), "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether," which immediately precedes his more famous conclusion "With malice toward none, with charity for all." Perhaps Lincoln thought the answers could be found in Jerusalem, where God dwells, as do his "righteous judgments." Sadly, he would never find out.

Benjamin Shapell

INTRODUCTION

In central Jerusalem, close by streets named for the medieval Jewish luminary Moses Maimonides and the modern Hebrew writer Peretz Smolenskin, and abutting the American consulate, lies a crooked street named for Abraham Lincoln. When questioned about what he did for the Jewish people to merit a street named for him in Jerusalem, even those Jerusalemites familiar with Lincoln's biography shake their heads and shrug.

Lincoln and the Jews provides the first full-scale answer to that question, based on newly discovered documents and years of painstaking research. It shows that Lincoln consorted with a wide range of Jewish friends and acquaintances, some of whom, like Abraham Jonas and Issachar Zacharie, he came to know well. It is impossible to point to any previous American president about whom like claims might have been pressed.

The fact that Abraham Lincoln was intimately acquainted with Jews mattered. Robert Putnam, a political scientist at Harvard, observes that "having a religiously diverse social network leads to a more positive assessment of specific religious groups, particularly those with low thermometer scores." "When birds of different feathers flock together," he concludes, "they come to trust one another."[1] Precisely because Lincoln, for fully half his life, had Jewish friends and acquaintances, he repeatedly intervened on Jews' behalf—most famously in 1862, when he overturned Ulysses S. Grant's order expelling "Jews as a class" from his war zone. "I do not like to hear a class or nationality condemned on account of a few sinners," Lincoln explained.[2] Experience had taught him to trust Jews, even when those around him displayed ugly prejudices against them.

Lincoln's life coincided with the emergence of Jews on the national scene. When he was born, in 1809, scarcely 3,000 Jews lived in the entire United States, most of them concentrated in half a dozen East Coast port cities. Growing up in Kentucky and Indiana, he probably encountered no living Jews; the only Jews he knew at that time

were in the Bible. By the time of his assassination in 1865, by contrast, large-scale immigration, principally from central Europe, had brought the Jewish population of the United States up to more than 150,000. Jews, by then, had spread from coast to coast, and Lincoln encountered them frequently; many other Americans did, too.[3]

Lincoln's interactions with Jews thus form part of a much larger history. It is, in microcosm, the story of how America as a whole began to come to terms with its growing Jewish population and how Americans and Jews were both changed by that encounter. Lincoln, we shall see, was personally broadened by his encounters with Jews and also worked to broaden America so that Jews might gain greater acceptance as equals nationwide. Thanks to his personal intervention, for example, the military chaplaincy was widened to embrace non-Christians. He himself appointed the first Jewish chaplains to the armed forces, and he placed many other Jews into positions of authority as well. Remarkably, he justified one such appointment with the statement, "We have not yet appointed a Hebrew,"[4] a sign that he had made the inclusion of Jews a priority.

Lincoln also subtly changed his personal rhetoric in response to Jewish sensitivities. Early on, and as late as 1862, he reflexively described America in Christian terms and characterized Americans as a "Christian people."[5] Later in his presidency, however, he increasingly took note of the presence of non-Christians in the United States. His Gettysburg Address and deeply religious second inaugural bespoke a conscious effort to redefine America through phrases like "this nation under God" that embraced Jews and other non-Christians as insiders.

Lincoln's willingness to embrace Jewish Americans as insiders paralleled his far better known efforts to abolish slavery and grant legal equality to black Americans. In the mid-nineteenth-century, persecution of Jews and persecution of blacks were frequently linked in the popular mind. A Canadian religious enthusiast named Henry Wentworth Monk, for example, specifically urged Lincoln to "follow the emancipation of the Negro by a still more urgent step—the emancipation of the Jew."[6] Sir Moses Montefiore of England similarly linked Lincoln's efforts to liberate slaves to his own efforts to liberate Jews from oppression. Two plays in Washington that the Lincolns are known to have attended, *Gamea* and *Leah,* likewise employed the theme of anti-Jewish persecution in ways that contemporaries considered highly relevant to the situation of blacks. To Lincoln, the connection between eradicating the persecution of blacks and

ending the persecution of Jews must have seemed obvious. Underlying both, to his mind, was a common philosophy: a passionate belief that "all men are created equal."

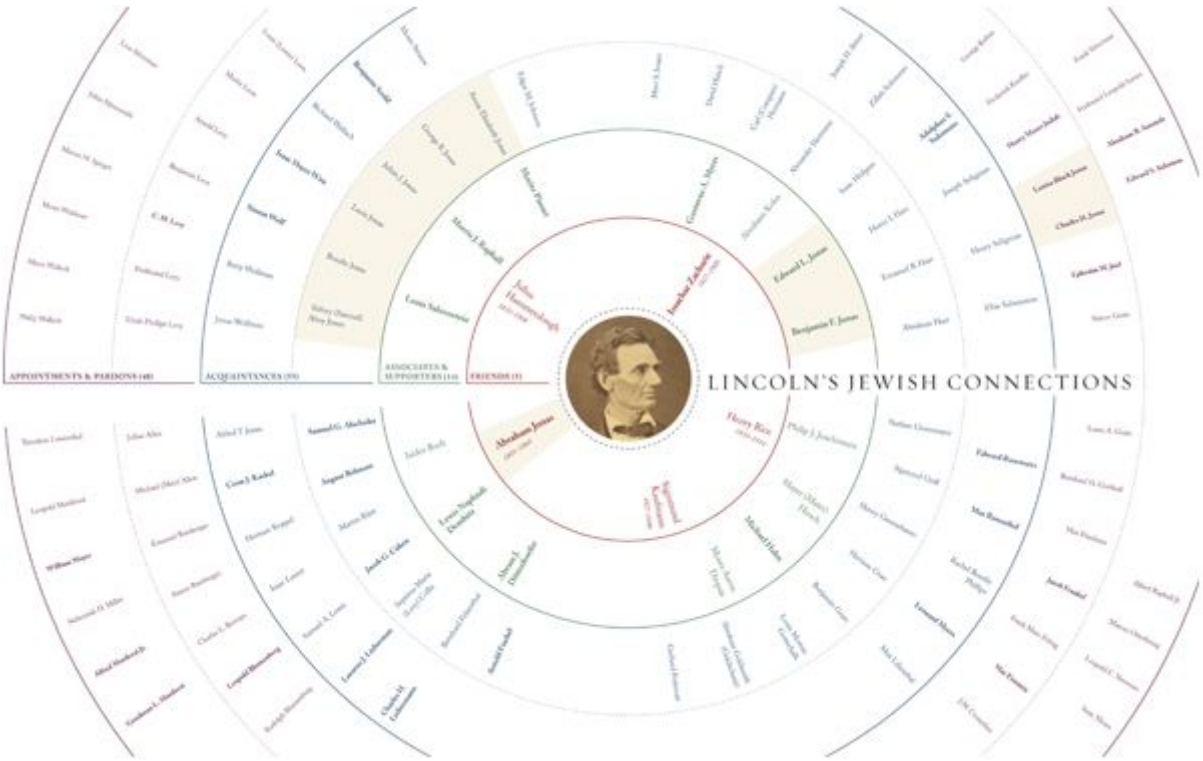
Lincoln's interactions with Jews, we shall see, developed and changed over the course of his lifetime. That is why this book, unlike any previous study of Lincoln and the Jews, proceeds chronologically. Chapter 1 examines Lincoln's upbringing, his church's uncompromising opposition to missionizing Jews, and some of what he learned about Jews from the Bible, schoolbooks, and current events. Chapters 2 and 3 trace his earliest Jewish friends and acquaintances in Illinois, particularly his close and important relationship with Abraham Jonas, and recount the role Jews played in advancing Lincoln to the White House. Chapters 4 to 7 detail Lincoln's interactions with Jews during his presidency, beginning with a controversy over his first inaugural address and continuing with episodes such as his leadership in the battle to open the chaplaincy up to non-Christians, the countermanding of Ulysses S. Grant's General Orders No. 11, and other lesser-known episodes that reveal much about his character. For the first time, this book recounts in full the mysterious story of Lincoln's chiropodist, Issachar Zacharie, and the grisly story of Beverly Ford, where General George Meade ordered a Jew, two Catholics, and two Protestants shot for desertion while a rabbi, priest, and minister looked on. Chapter 7 concludes with the memorable Passover of 1865, which began joyfully amid news of General Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House and ended tragically following Lincoln's assassination by John Wilkes Booth. Finally, the epilogue traces Jewish involvement in Lincoln's funeral and in the subsequent memorialization of Lincoln continuing down to contemporary times.

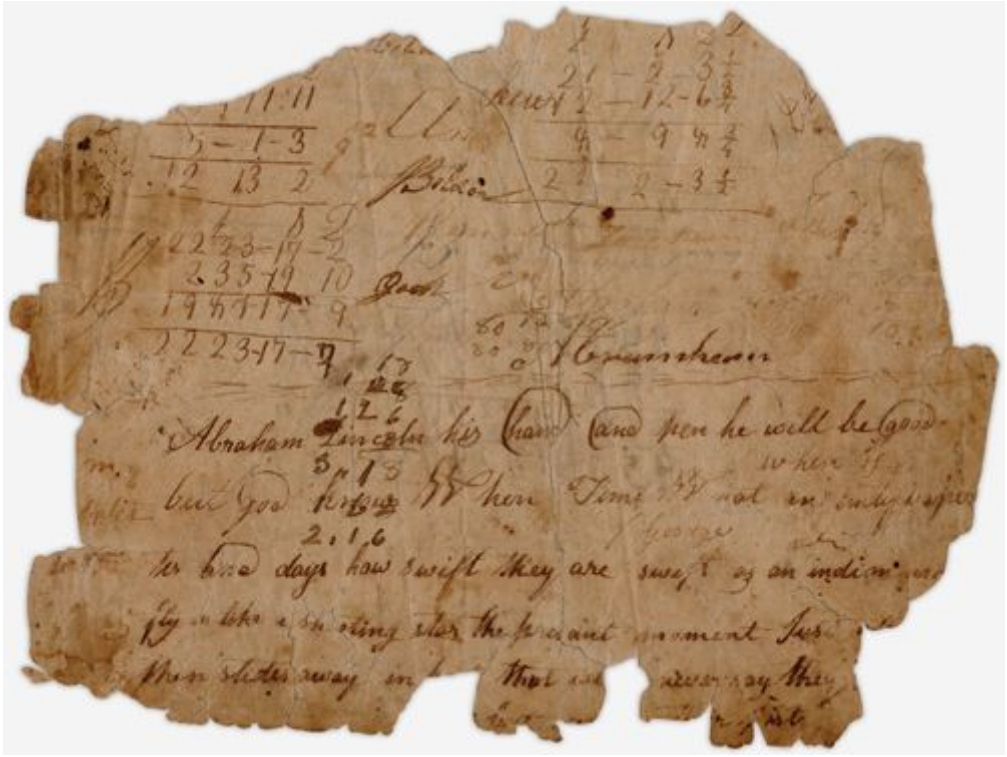
As part of her memorialization, Mary Lincoln recounted in 1866 that her husband had hoped to visit Palestine after his second term as president came to an end. The introduction of steamships, which made long-distance travel safer and more pleasurable, inspired many Americans of that time to make the trip. Herman Melville and Mark Twain published celebrated books based on their travels to the Holy Land, and Civil War figures like Ulysses S. Grant and William Seward toured there as well. Lincoln, had he lived, could easily have joined them.[7]

Perhaps the naming of a Jerusalem street in Lincoln's memory aimed to compensate for this thwarted presidential desire to visit Palestine. If so, that would have been highly appropriate. But Lincoln Street also memorializes the fact that so many American Jews

considered Abraham Lincoln to be their friend. As this book demonstrates, he promoted the inclusion of Jews into the fabric of American life and helped to transform Jews from outsiders in America to insiders.

Jonathan D. Sarna


LINCOLN'S JEWISH CONNECTIONS



A RARE PAGE OF LINCOLN'S CHILDHOOD "SUM BOOK," LATE 1825

His education, Lincoln said, was deficient: it lasted, formally, but a year. At sixteen years old, Lincoln created a personal notebook, known then as a sum book. Here, amid arithmetical calculations, he also writes a piece of doggerel, daydreaming about his future: "Abraham Lincoln his hand and pen he will be good but God knows When."

Shapell Legacy Partnership

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROMISED LAND … WHOSE STONES ARE IRON AND OUT OF WHOSE HILLS THOU MAYEST DIG BRASS

1809–1830

In all likelihood, Abraham Lincoln never met a Jew while he was growing up. No Jews lived in Hardin County, Kentucky, where he was born in 1809. Nor is there any record of a Jew living in the wilds of Spencer County, Indiana, where the Lincolns moved in late 1816. The entire Jewish population of the United States at that time did not exceed 3,000, with the vast majority of those Jews living in a small number of East Coast port cities.[1]

A few intrepid Jews, to be sure, had cast their eyes to the west. By 1812, Simon and Hyman Gratz owned Mammoth Cave in Kentucky, just fifty miles from where Lincoln was born. In 1819 Benjamin Gratz settled in Lexington, Kentucky. Samuel Judah, the first Jewish graduate of Rutgers and a respected attorney, moved to Vincennes, Indiana, at about that same time and became active politically. Within a few years, Cincinnati, Ohio, would become the fastest-growing Jewish community in the United States. But no Jewish community or formal Jewish organization existed anywhere in Kentucky or Indiana while the Lincolns lived there, and the family's poverty and isolation probably discouraged any wayfaring Jewish peddlers from stopping at their door. It is most likely, therefore, that Abraham Lincoln only heard stories about Jews during his first two decades of life.[2]

The first Jews that Abraham Lincoln undoubtedly heard about were found in the Bible. He took pride in his own biblical name, Abraham, recalling the biblical progenitor of the Jewish people as well as his paternal grandfather, Abraham, who had been brutally murdered by Indian raiders.[3] His uncle, Mordecai, likewise bore an

illustrious name from the Bible. Lincoln, as a youth, also became familiar with the biblical figures of Moses and Job, whose life stories in some ways paralleled his own. Indeed, "Father Abraham," as his countrymen would come to call him, may well have been America's most biblically literate president. Throughout his life, he regularly quoted from the Bible in letters, talks to juries, political speeches, and even in day-to-day conversation. He lauded the Bible as "the best gift God has given to man."[4] Like his Puritan ancestors (and unlike Catholics of his time), he considered the Hebrew Bible an equal partner with the New Testament. He quoted, and referenced, the Old Testament about a third more times than he did the New; and in referencing the Deity some 420-plus times, used the phrase "Savior" but six. Likewise, according to the *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln,* he mentioned Christ directly only once—"when Christ suffered on the cross—when Moses led Israel through the Red-Sea—nay, even, when Adam first came from the hand of his Maker—then as now, Niagara was roaring here…" He never referred directly to Jesus.[5]

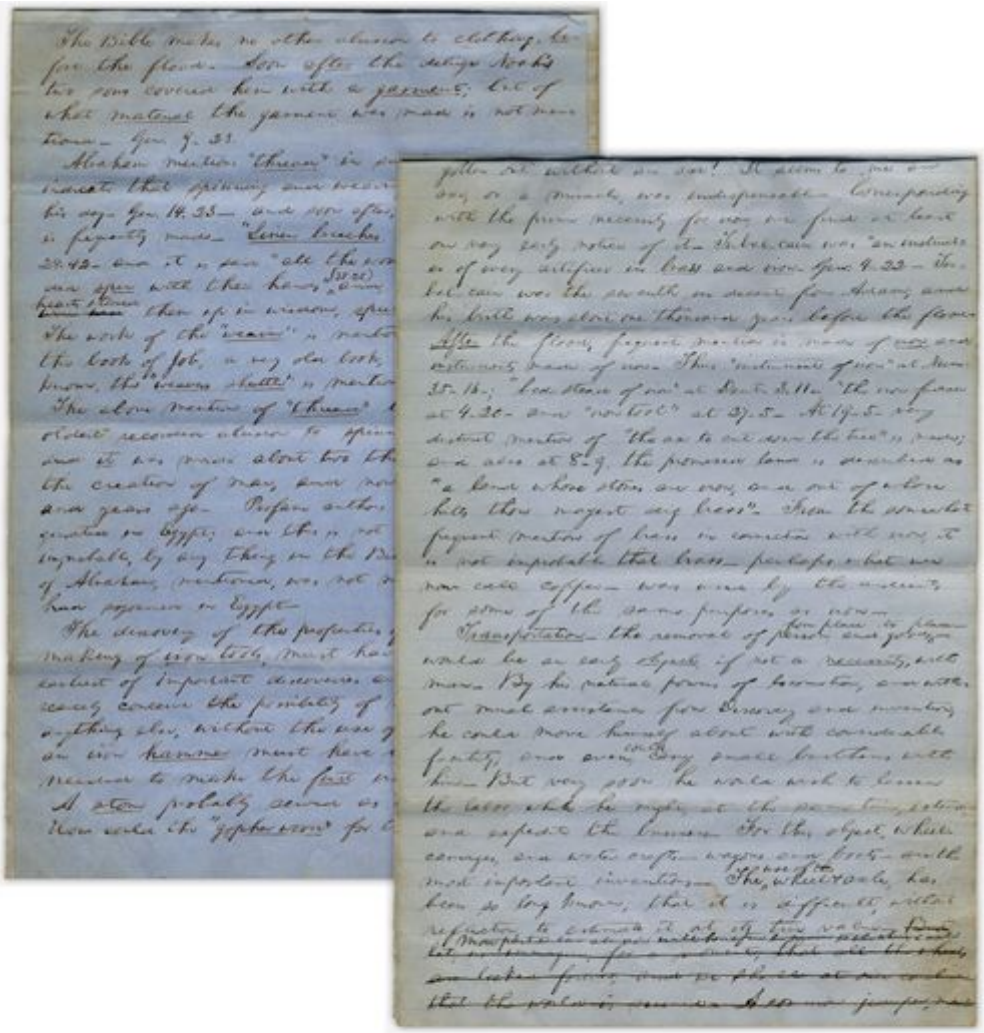
Lincoln's parents, Thomas and Nancy, like many Old School Calvinists, considered the Bible inerrant and infallible, the source of Divine Truth. "We believe the Old & New Testaments are the words of God," the constitution of his parents' Pigeon Creek Baptist Church declared. The Bible, their church taught, contained everything "necessary for man's salvation" and supplied all that was required for "faith and practice."[6] In Lincoln's home, as in so many others of his day, life was lived by the "Bible alone."[7]

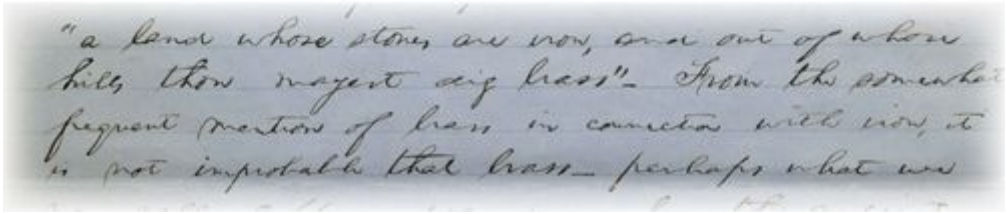
The Bible was also part of Lincoln's more extended patrimony. His earliest American ancestor, Samuel Lincoln, born in 1622 in the village of Hingham, seventeen miles from Norwich, in East England, sided with the Puritan vicars of his village against the Church of England, and like so many others of his time, crossed the ocean in search of greater independence, congregational autonomy, and economic opportunity. Hingham, Massachusetts, where he built his new home (its name serving as a bridge between his old home and his new one), was a Puritan community deeply influenced by the teachings of John Calvin. Its citizens, like those of Boston, felt especially elected by God. They viewed themselves as part of God's new Israel, characterized by devotion to Scripture ("about as close to literal Biblicism," the Puritan scholar Perry Miller once wrote, "as one can come"[8]), rugged individualism, and a religious commitment to hard work and manual labor. They were fascinated by Jews, and many in the town bore

names from the Hebrew Bible. This was especially true of the Lincolns in Hingham, whose names included Abner Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln, Amos Lincoln, Benjamin Lincoln, Enoch Lincoln, Isaac Lincoln, Jeremiah Lincoln, Josiah Lincoln, Levi Lincoln, Mordecai Lincoln, Perez Lincoln, Samuel Lincoln, and Solomon Lincoln.[9]

Growing up in Kentucky and Indiana, Abraham Lincoln knew next to nothing about his Hingham ancestors, but his world, like theirs, was suffused with the Bible. In fact, he learned the English of the King James Bible long before he could read its words for himself. He recalled listening to his mother as she recited Psalms while she worked. He heard the words of Scripture preached in church and was drilled, as all good children were, in the Ten Commandments.[10]

Actual copies of the Bible were expensive and scarce in the frontier regions of Kentucky and Indiana when Lincoln was a boy. Whether his parents owned one at that time is uncertain. In any case, his father and many of the Lincolns' neighbors were functionally illiterate. So an oral culture prevailed. Churches encouraged the repetition of Scripture word for word following the preacher. Storytelling, in which Thomas and later Abraham Lincoln excelled, consumed a good deal of leisure time. Schools—known as "blab schools"—required students to repeat their lessons aloud, relying heavily upon memory and rote learning. The goal of preachers and teachers was to train the memory, to instill it with lessons for life; Abraham Lincoln's own life was shaped by those lessons.




"a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose
hills thou mayest dig brass"- From the somewhat
frequent mention of brass in connection with iron, it
is not improbable that brass- perhaps what was

FIRST LECTURE ON DISCOVERIES AND INVENTIONS

The three most important advances in human development, Lincoln said in a nine-page lecture first delivered early in 1858—and repeated, with small revisions, four times over the next year—were writing, printing, and the discovery of America. What most impresses is that while delivered at the invitation of Christian groups, the lecture evidences that the basis of Lincoln's thinking on the world's most important discoveries and inventions was overwhelmingly rooted in the Old Testament; the New Testament is mentioned a scant twice. With commanding ease, Lincoln refers to Old Testament characters and events—including Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Jerusalem—nearly fifty times and spans four out of what he called "the five books of Moses." On describing God's hidden gifts in "the promised land," Lincoln invokes a passage from Deuteronomy: "a land whose stones are iron and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."

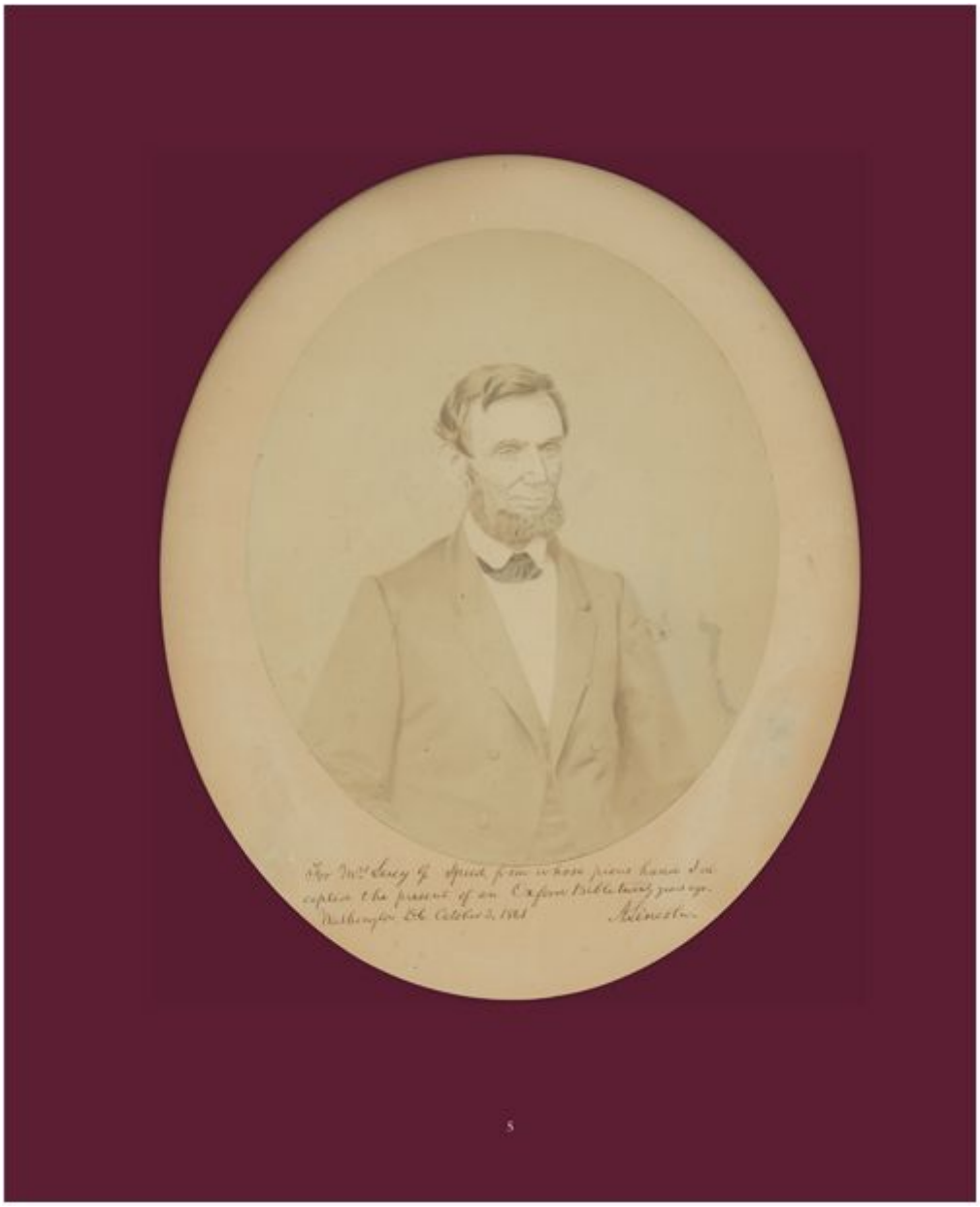
Meisei University, Tokyo

Lincoln was also deeply influenced by the schoolbooks that he read and studied as a youngster. Precisely because they were few in number and he read them aloud to himself, those books became deeply imprinted upon his memory. One of them, which he is said to have described as "the best schoolbook ever put into the hands of an American youth,"[11] was Lindley Murray's *The English Reader* (1799). Written by a Pennsylvania Quaker who settled in England, it included well-chosen selections of prose and poetry, many by Scottish Enlightenment writers, and was designed to train students in reading as well as in "some of the most important principles of piety and virtue." A selection that summarized the biblical Book of Esther, for example, described Haman ("a very wicked minister") as "an Amalekite, who inherited all the ancient enmity of his race to the Jewish nation." It contrasted him with "Mordecai the Jew" who, "with virtuous indignation," refused to pay Haman homage. Haman's passions, the text explained, were "so violent and black … that he resolved to exterminate the whole nation to which Mordecai belonged." Fortunately, the "conspicuous justice of God" resulted in Haman's "fall and punishment."[12]

The positive estimation of the Jews found in this selection, especially as contrasted with the fate meted out to Haman, reflected the tone of the volume as a whole. Even as it trumpeted Christianity and the New Testament, *The English Reader* also promoted the virtues of religion in general, as well as values like gratitude, integrity, and gentleness to which all could aspire. It praised the beauties of the Psalms ("delivered out as services for Israelites under the Law, yet no less adapted to the circumstances of Christians under the Gospel") and raised up as an example the "clemency and amiable character" of Joseph in the Book of Genesis. It expressed "indignant sentiments" against slavery ("human nature's broadest, foulest blot") and preached "the duty of forgiveness." The absence of overt anti-Jewish sentiments here—in contrast, for example, to those found in William McGuffey's *Eclectic Third Reader* (1837)—may have influenced Lincoln's later attitude toward the Jews. The values he gleaned from Lindley Murray's *English Reader* became ones that, as president, he would internalize and espouse.[13]

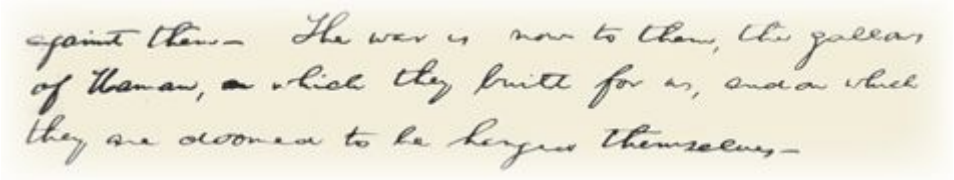
As for living, breathing Jews, what most distinguished Abraham Lincoln's upbringing from that of most other Americans of his day was that his parents and members of their church evinced no interest whatsoever in converting Jews to Christianity (or, for that matter, in bringing the gospel to the unchurched anywhere).

Instead, they fatalistically believed in predestination, in "election by grace given us … before the world began."[14] While America as a whole blazed with religious awakenings and witnessed the creation of countless benevolent organizations that encouraged missions and conversions to promote "truth and righteousness," the Calvinist Baptist church to which Lincoln's parents belonged disdained such movements and considered them utterly futile. One "not elected from the foundation of the world," these so-called Primitive Baptists believed, "was as changeless and as hopeless as if he were already in the bottomless pit."[15]



"FOR MRS. LUCY G. SPEED, FROM WHOSE PIOUS HAND I ACCEPTED THE PRESENT OF AN OXFORD BIBLE TWENTY YEARS AGO."

In 1841, a young and depressive Lincoln had been counseled by Lucy Speed, mother of his best friend Joshua, about the healing effects of the Bible—and faith. Remembering her advice to him twenty years later and now one month into his first term as president, Lincoln, for the only known time in his life, personally inscribes a photograph, here with a twenty-word note of gratitude to Lucy.
Shapell Manuscript Collection



"THE [MEXICAN] WAR IS NOW TO THEM, THE GALLOWS OF HAMAN," JUNE 12, 1848

A line showing Lincoln's familiarity with a portion of Judaic literature less known to most Christians; here Lincoln uses the metaphor of Haman hanging on the gallows, the first of two times that Lincoln would do so in his writings.
The Abraham Lincoln Association

The American Society for Evangelizing the Jews, established in 1816 in the very month that the Lincolns settled in Indiana, optimistically believed that Jews could be changed. It called upon Americans to "make every possible and proper exertion … to bring the Jews to the acknowledgement of Jesus Christ of Nazareth as the true Messiah." Reorganized as the American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews, in 1820, the missionary organization attracted support from the likes of Elias Boudinot, former president of the Continental Congress; John Quincy Adams, a future president of the United States; the heads of Yale, Princeton, and Rutgers universities; and countless other Americans, most of whom had never actually met Jews but worked tirelessly to promote their conversion.[16]

The parents and neighbors of Abraham Lincoln, in contrast, were known as anti-missionary Protestants and complained that missionary societies improperly arrogated to themselves powers that properly lay with God alone. One anti-missionary journal specifically charged that the work of the American Society for Meliorating the Condition of the Jews was "at variance with the providence of God" and that "nearly all the conversions yet affected through the instrumentality of men have proved only worthless." The fate of everyone, including Jews, had long since been decided by God and was not subject to change, missionary opponents like Lincoln's parents believed.[17]

Abraham Lincoln never joined his parents' church or, for that matter, any church in his lifetime, but the Baptist Calvinist atmosphere that pervaded his adolescence left an

indelible mark upon him. The conviction that all was predetermined, that "what is to be, will be, and no prayers of ours can reverse the decree," shaped his worldview.[18] That may be why he never associated himself with those who sought to Christianize the Jews or the Constitution. Skeptical of those who "knew" what God wanted, he preferred to make decisions based upon careful reasoning and then to let destiny play out on its own.[19]

Whether missionized or left alone, Jews knew that negative images of themselves and their faith circulated widely in the United States. Jews, even if few in number, commonly experienced prejudice on the part of their neighbors. The Constitution, of course, guaranteed Jews the free exercise of their faith and legal equality on the federal level. President George Washington, in a celebrated letter in 1790, promised Jews that in America they would not just be tolerated but would enjoy religious liberty as an "inherent natural right." "The Government of the United States," he forcefully declared, "gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance."[20] But the people of the United States, many of them raised in places where Jews were hated and distrusted, did not always follow the government's lead.

Executive Mansion,

that you were persecuted because you did not come from West-Point, and you repeat it in these letters. This, my dear general, is I fear, the rock on which you have split.

In the Winchester case, you were under General Schenck, and he under Gen. Halleck. I know by Gen. Halleck

LINCOLN TO ROBERT H. MILROY, JUNE 29, 1863

Lincoln, having for months been frustrated by General Milroy's disobedience and battlefield failures, reprimands him here by employing the Old Testament (Numbers 20:11). Referencing when Moses had faulted in his judgment upon hitting the rock in the desert, Lincoln tells Milroy, "This, my dear general, is I fear, the rock on which you have split." Like Moses, Milroy's mistake had thus irreversibly sealed his own fate.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

How much popular anti-Jewish prejudice reached the ears of Abraham Lincoln growing up in Kentucky and Indiana cannot be known, but a rare admission of the general situation facing Jews appeared in a German-American newspaper, *The Correspondent,* in 1820, when he was eleven years old. "The Jews are not generally regarded with a favorable eye; and 'Jew' is an epithet which is frequently uttered in a tone bordering on contempt," the newspaper reported. "Say what you will, prejudices against the Jews exist here, and subject them to inconveniences from which other citizens of the United States are exempt."[21] In some cases, such prejudices stood in tension with more positive personal experiences with Jews—a dichotomy, as it were, between the "mythical Jew" and the "Jew next door."[22] Still, as non-Christians, Jews

regularly were cast as outsiders in America; they stood apart from the mainstream and were deeply suspected.[23] Lincoln, we shall see, would work to change that. By the time of his death, he had done more than any previous president to promote Jews' advance in American society.

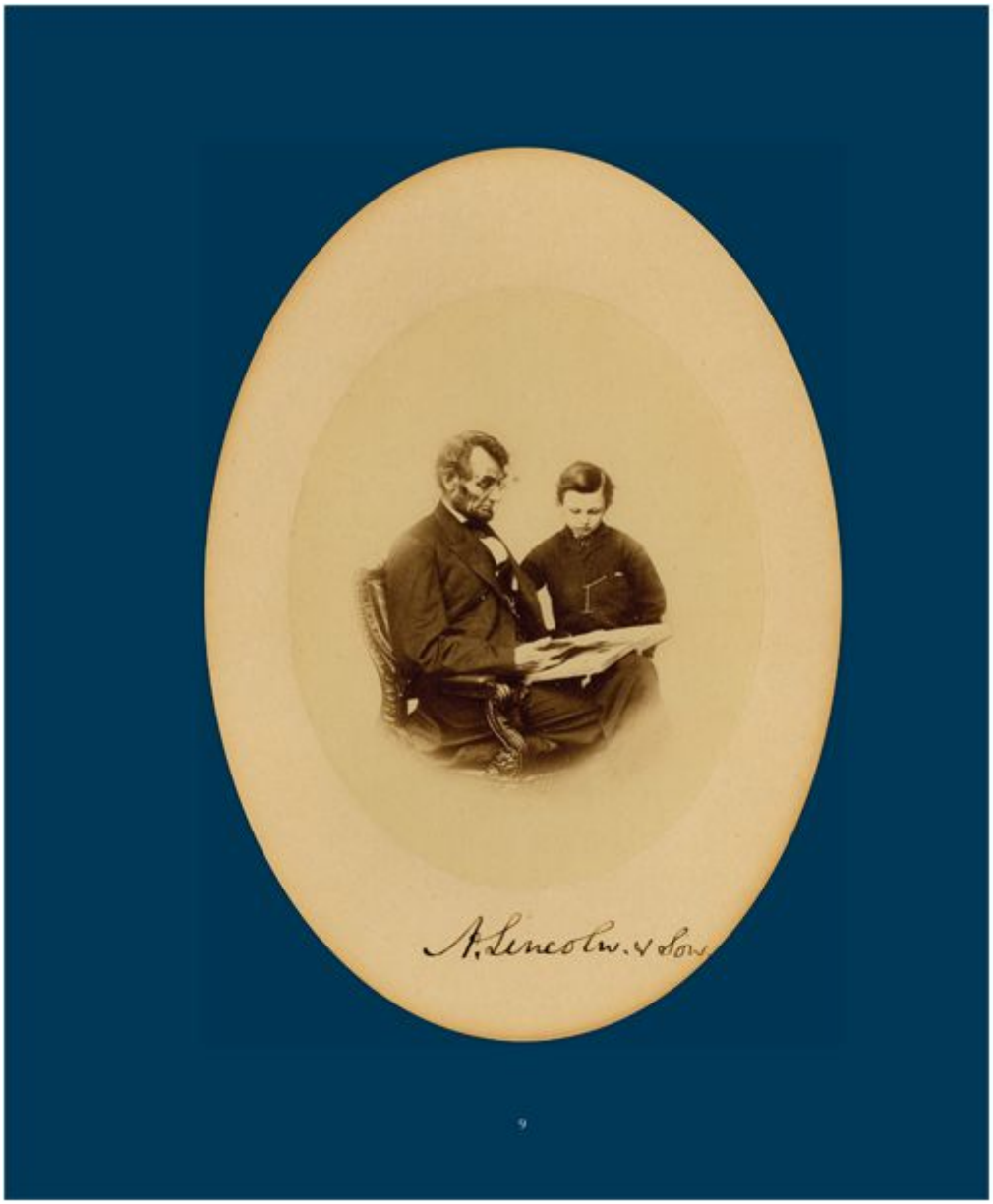
The painful position of Jews was illustrated, in 1809, just a few months after Lincoln was born, in North Carolina, when a legislator named Jacob Henry, married to a Christian, was threatened with expulsion from his seat in the House of Commons because, as a Jew, he did not accept the divine authority of the New Testament, as required by the state constitution. In a long, celebrated response, Henry declared that "if a man fulfills the duties of that religion, which his education or his conscience has pointed to him as the true one, no person, I hold, in this our land of liberty, has a right to arraign him at the bar of any inquisition." His colleagues, who liked him, agreed to let him keep his seat after that speech, but they refused to change the test oath that should legally have barred him. That remained on the books until after the Civil War.[24]

In Virginia, Thomas Jefferson, in the early nineteenth century, concluded from his wide readings that Jewish ideas of God and His attributes "were degrading and injurious" and that Jewish ethics "were not only imperfect, but often irreconcilable with the sound dictates of reason and morality." Writing to John Adams in 1813, he decried Jews' "wretched depravity of sentiment and manners"—a widely held view in America of that time. To be sure, he did not generalize from this ugly stereotype to the few Jews whom he knew personally. He saluted his friend Joseph Marx, for example, "with sentiments of perfect esteem and respect." He expressed what Marx described as "liberal and enlightened views" on Jewish affairs. In a remarkable letter to the Jewish leader Mordecai Noah, he even admitted that "the prejudice still scowling on your section of our religion … cannot be unfelt by ourselves." But so far as he was concerned, Jews were still outsiders. Though they remained so into the mid and late nineteenth century, Lincoln would never treat Jews as such, nor would he ever deride them in any of his writings as Jefferson had done in his letter to Adams.[25]

Perhaps the most broadly discussed controversy concerning American Jews while Abraham Lincoln was growing up took place in Maryland, where a community of over one hundred Jews was denied by state law the right to hold any "office of trust or profit" (including serving as lawyers and jurors) because they would not execute a "declaration of belief in the Christian religion." For twenty-eight years, beginning in

1797, efforts were made to change that provision—so at odds with the spirit of the U.S. Constitution[26]—but rural legislators stood fast, fearing the growing power of Baltimore (where most of Maryland's Jews lived). Opponents of the so-called Jew Bill laced their arguments with anti-Jewish rhetoric and derided Jews and their supporters as "enemies of Christianity." Finally, after newspapers and politicians across the country weighed in, a bill permitting Jews to substitute a declaration of belief "in a future state of rewards and punishments" passed, in 1825, by one vote. It became law on January 5, 1826.[27]

Whether, as a teenager, Abraham Lincoln followed the Maryland Jew Bill controversy or any other episode involving Jews is doubtful but impossible to know for certain. Most likely, his youthful image of the Jew was primarily shaped by what he learned at home, from his parents' church, and from his own reading. Based heavily upon Scripture and hearsay, his understanding of Jews and Judaism lacked the benefit of any real-world experience with the Jewish people. That he would only begin to acquire when he moved to Illinois and met Jews for the first time.



“A. LINCOLN AND SON.” FEBRUARY 9, 1864

One of only two known signed images of this famous photograph—“A. Lincoln and Son.”—has also become a testament to Lincoln’s personal convictions. Journalist Noah Brooks noted, “Lincoln explained to me that he was afraid that this picture was a species of false pretense. Most people, he thought, would suppose the book a large clasped Bible, whereas it was a big photograph album ... Lincoln’s anxiety lest somebody should think he was ‘making believe to read the Bible to Tad,’ was illustrative of his scrupulous honesty.”

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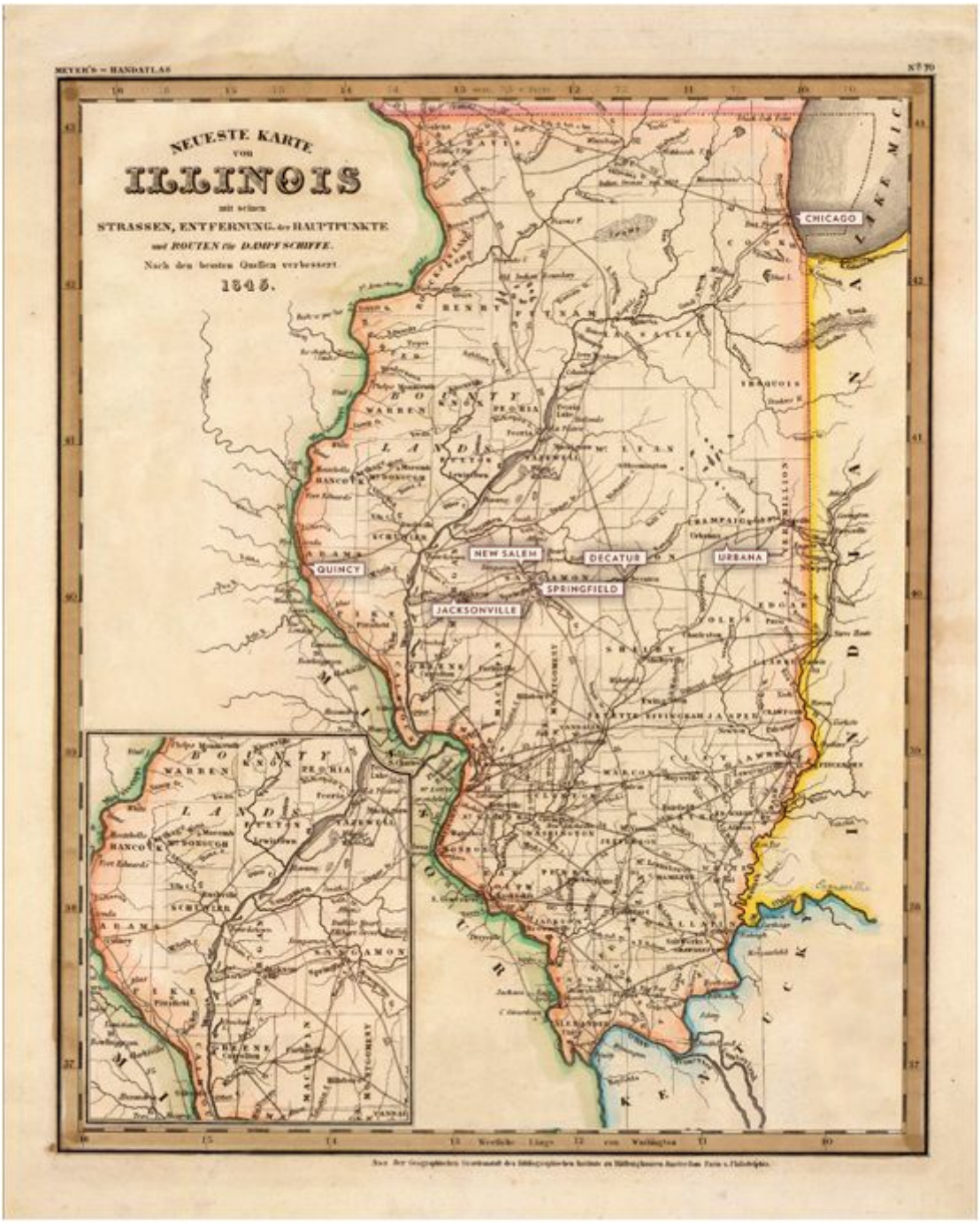


MAP OF ILLINOIS, 1845

The cities of Springfield, New Salem, Jacksonville, Quincy, Decatur, and Urbana were not only stops on Lincoln's legal circuit, but were also the main locations of Lincoln's early interactions with Jews.
David Rumsey Map Collection, with Shapell Manuscript Collection

CHAPTER TWO

AND THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY—NEVER FEAR

1830–1858

Jews preceded Abraham Lincoln's parents in seeking their fortune in Illinois. Back in 1773 and 1775, Jewish merchants—among them several members of the Franks family, Bernard and Michael Gratz, Joseph Simon, and Levi Andrew Levi—formed part of a land company that purchased title from "certain chiefs of the Illinois Indians" to substantial portions of southern Illinois and Indiana. They paid what in today's money would be less than one million dollars. After many years of legal wrangling, the U.S. Supreme Court, in a unanimous 1823 decision written by Chief Justice John Marshall, voided the purchasers' title. Private purchases of Indian land were illegal, the Court ruled, for only the government held the right to sell Indian land. The Jewish merchants lost their entire investment.[1]

Thomas Lincoln proved somewhat more fortunate when he arrived in Illinois in 1830. The land that he settled, on the north bank of the Sangamon River, near Decatur, was undeveloped and available. Aided by his son Abraham, now twenty-one years old and free of legal obligations to his parents, he built a log cabin, a smokehouse, and a barn, broke up acres of land for farming, and put up a fence. Henceforward, Illinois would be the Lincolns' home.

Abraham Lincoln soon relocated to the recently established village of New Salem, Illinois, farther west on the bank of the Sangamon River, partly to get away from his difficult father, and partly to strike out on his own as an adult. There he lived and worked. From there he set forth to defend his land against Indian "invaders" by enlisting to fight in the Black Hawk War.

Once he returned, in 1832, he made his first run for public office from New Salem—and lost. Subsequently, he served as postmaster of New Salem, participated in a public debating society, surveyed land, and frequented public meetings. "Every one

knew him; and he knew every one," a local politician recalled.[2] As a result, in 1834, when Lincoln ran for public office again, he was elected to the Illinois state legislature. There, in February 1837, he helped to determine that the capital city of Illinois would be relocated from Vandalia to Springfield. Two months later, on April 15, having passed the bar, he left New Salem and moved to Springfield himself. His life would be exactly half over.

MUSTER ROLL OF CAPTAIN ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S BLACK HAWK WAR COMPANY, APRIL 28, 1832

Lincoln later called his 1832 election as captain by his fellow soldiers "a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since." But this win laid the groundwork for a loss, as he was still an active candidate for the Illinois State Legislature. When finally mustered out, his horse was stolen, and he had to canoe and walk home—losing valuable campaign time and thus the election.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Chartered as a city in 1840, Springfield grew rapidly over the next twenty years; its population, which was less than 2,500 when Lincoln came to town, practically quadrupled. Many of the city's newcomers had emigrated from the German states, including a few Jews. By 1858, at least one prominent Jewish business considered Springfield its home: Hammerslough and Brothers Clothing, on the north side of the Public Square.[3]

Julius Hammerslough (1832–1908), who headed the family firm, had immigrated to the United States from Hannover in Lower Saxony, clerked in Baltimore, and, in his twenties, established himself in Springfield. There he became one of Abraham Lincoln's numerous acquaintances; likely, Lincoln purchased clothes in his store. Years later, the *New York Times,* in an obituary, described Hammerslough as a "warm friend of Abraham Lincoln." The industry paper *Men's Wear,* after his death, elevated him into

one of Lincoln's "closest friends." Isaac Markens, in his seminal 1909 publication, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* recorded that Hammerslough visited Lincoln "frequently at the White House" and once accompanied Mrs. Lincoln's sister, Elizabeth Edwards, to Washington, and also attended Lincoln's first inauguration.[4]

Hammerslough, who was twenty-three years Lincoln's junior, probably admired Lincoln more than he actually befriended him. Hammerslough and Brothers Clothing prospered during the Civil War, helping to outfit thirty-nine regiments of infantry and nine regiments of cavalry mustered into the Union army and trained at nearby Camp Butler. Subsequently, according to the firm's reports, its military trade "assumed a fabulous dimension," and by 1864 the Hammerslough name was supposedly known "to all the western armies, by each corps, division and by most every soldier." Having prospered, Julius Hammerslough, in 1868, sold his store to his brother-in-law, Samuel Rosenwald (father of the merchant prince Julius Rosenwald of Sears Roebuck fame), and removed to New York. There he became "one of the most prominent clothing manufacturers in the United States, widely known throughout the entire industry." He also founded and headed the Clothiers Association of New York.[5]

Hammerslough, throughout his life, was a proud and engaged Jew. In his twenties, in Baltimore, he served as secretary of Baltimore's Hebrew Assistance Society. In 1865, when Springfield's Jewish community grew large enough to support a synagogue, he became its first president. When funds were sought for a memorial to Lincoln in Springfield, he assumed the role of "special agent" to the "Hebrews" and, as we shall see, requested "their favorable action."[6] According to Markens, who interviewed him, Hammerslough was among those who met the body of the slain president on its return to Springfield.

In interacting with Hammerslough, Abraham Lincoln undoubtedly knew that he was a Jew; everybody in Springfield did. That is why it is so extraordinary that others considered Hammerslough (and he considered himself) to be a friend of Lincoln's. Comparatively few Christians in mid-nineteenth-century America boasted Jewish friends. Fewer than one American in 200, after all, was Jewish. Lincoln, we have seen, had no Jewish friends growing up and mostly knew Jews through the Bible. But once he did meet Jews, he displayed no prejudice whatsoever against them—no religious hatred, no antipathy to them as immigrants, no desire to convert them. To the contrary, the Jews he befriended during his years in Springfield shaped a positive assessment of

Jews on his part. He came to know them as neighbors, clients, and political allies. By the time of his death, he had acquired far more Jewish friends and acquaintances than any American president before him.

POSTMASTERS

POSTMASTERS IN LINCOLN'S AMERICA were responsible not only for the transmission of private correspondence but also for the circulation of newspapers, magazines, and government documents. They were in a uniquely advantageous position to exchange information and control the flow of news. The postmaster could also peruse all the printed material that others received, a benefit of which Lincoln took advantage in helping to educate himself. With the mail delivered to the post office a few times a week and people generally coming to call for it in person, the postmaster also had occasion to meet his fellow citizens regularly—that is why politicians coveted the job. Since it not only carried a government salary but also permitted the postmaster to send and receive personal letters for free and to get one daily newspaper delivered for free, it became a plum patronage position.

From the perspective of those friends and acquaintances, the fact that they had interacted with a future president of the United States, however briefly, was absolutely breathtaking. In central Europe, where they had grown up, the idea that a mere Jew could interact on friendly terms with a future national leader would have been considered laughable. So-called Court Jews, who served as intermediaries between Jews and the government, almost never fully befriended the leaders with whom they interacted; they feared them. Jews who managed estates for aristocratic lords likewise knew "their place" (if not, the lord had his dogs remind them of it).[7] To speak of Lincoln as a friend, the way Hammerslough and many others did, bespoke the democratic ethos that distinguished America from aristocratic Europe. It underscored what Jews could accomplish under freedom.

Before he met Hammerslough, Lincoln had already known Louis Salzenstein, a Jewish storekeeper and livestock trader in Athens (pronounced ay-thens), Illinois, some seven miles from New Salem. Born in the village of Halsdorf in Hessen, Germany, about fifteen miles from Marburg, "Old Salty," as he was later dubbed, moved to Athens around 1843 and became a successful merchant. He was, many believe, the first Jew that Abraham Lincoln ever encountered. As a young man, Lincoln is said to have "often stopped at his store and his residence."[8] Salzenstein's store served as the regional post office. Later, Lincoln represented Salzenstein in a minor lawsuit and

represented his litigious kinsman, Elias Salzenstein, in several lawsuits.[9] Salzenstein's clerk, Morris Myers, also a Jew—the families had known each other back in Halsdorf—had two sons, Albert and Louis, who would later purchase Hammerslough's store from Samuel Rosenwald and develop it into Myers Brothers, the largest department store in Springfield. In death, Louis, Elias, and other members of the Salzenstein and Myers families lie buried not far from Abraham Lincoln in Springfield's Oak Ridge Cemetery.[10]

During his Springfield years, Abraham Lincoln maintained far closer connections to another member of the Jewish faith: Abraham Jonas.[11] In all likelihood, Jonas was the first Jew whom Lincoln came to know well; he was the only recorded person in fact whom Lincoln *ever* directly called "one of my most valued friends."[12] The two men shared much in common. Both were named Abraham and known as "Abe." Both had familial roots in England. Both became renowned for their fair-mindedness and wit. Both were postmasters. Both served as Illinois legislators and as country lawyers. Both revered Henry Clay. Both developed into masterful orators. And both began their political lives as Whigs and moved on to become staunch Republicans. Exactly when they first met is uncertain, but for more than two decades they were friends and political allies.

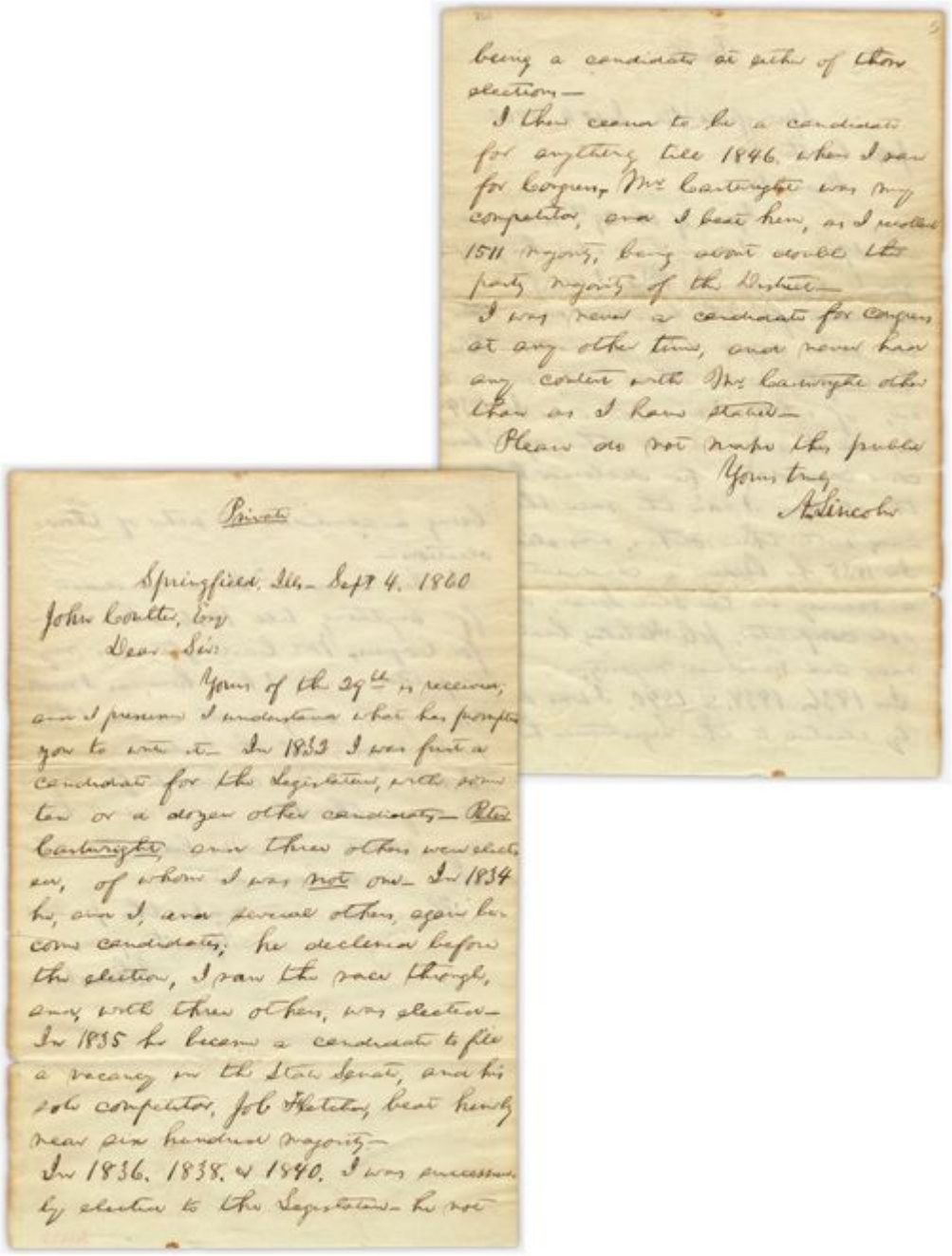
Born about 1801 into an Orthodox Jewish family in Portsmouth, England, Abraham Jonas followed in the footsteps of his older brother, Joseph, and immigrated as a teenager to the United States, settling in Cincinnati in 1819. Joseph Jonas, the first long-term Jewish settler in Cincinnati, had preceded him there two years earlier. "The fiat had gone forth," Joseph later reported, "that a new resting place for the scattered sons of Israel should be commenced, and that a sanctuary should be erected in the Great West, dedicated to the Lord of Hosts, to resound with praises to the ever-living God."[13]

As if to underscore the religious character of their mission, Joseph and Abraham traveled to New York and married Rachel and Lucia Orah, the daughters of Shearith Israel's venerable religious leader, Gershom Seixas, the foremost Jewish "minister" of his time in North America. Soon afterward, in an effort "to conform as near as possible to the worship and ceremonies of our holy religion," the brothers, in 1824, helped to form Cincinnati's first Jewish congregation, Bene Israel. It is remembered as "the oldest synagogue west of the Alleghenies."[14]

A year later, tragedy struck—the kind of frontier tragedy that Lincoln in his early life knew all too well. First, Abraham and Lucia Orah lost their firstborn son. Then Lucia herself passed away, on June 17, 1825, at the age of twenty. Baby and mother were laid to rest in the city's first Jewish cemetery on the corner of Chestnut Street and Central Avenue in Cincinnati. Abraham must have been devastated by the loss. Years later, after he married Louisa Block, the orphaned daughter of a prominent Jewish pioneer of Richmond, Virginia, and Cape Girardeau, Missouri, he named his firstborn daughter, Lucia.[15]

Subsequently, Abraham Jonas left Cincinnati for the small community of Williamstown, Kentucky, on the road to Lexington about 150 miles northeast of where Lincoln was born. There he opened a store. Striking out on his own, he also embarked upon two pursuits that would claim much of his energy over the next decades: He founded a Masonic lodge and he plunged into politics. Freemasonry offered Jonas a forum where he could interact on an equal footing with non-Jews, emphasizing morality, charity, and belief in a Supreme Being, but nothing overtly Christian. Jews had been Masonic leaders in cities like Newport and Boston in the late eighteenth century, and leading Jews of Jonas's own day, like the New Yorker Mordecai Noah, were Masons as well. In America, unlike in Germany, Jews faced no discrimination in Masonic circles. So it was that in 1827, Jonas, who had once been a Master Mason in Cincinnati, founded Grand Lodge No. 85 and became its first Worshipful Master. Six years later, he was elected Grand Master of the Kentucky Grand Lodge, the highest Masonic position in that state.[16]

"... three others were elected, of whom I was <u>not</u> one..."



Private

Springfield, Ills. Sept 4. 1860

John Coulter, Esq

Dear Sir:

Yours of the 29th is received, and I presume I understand what has prompted you to write it. In 1832 I was first a candidate for the Legislature, with some ten or a dozen other candidates. Peter Cartwright, and three others were elected, of whom I was not one. In 1834 he, and I, and several others, again became candidates; he declined before the election, I ran the race through, and with three others, was elected. In 1835 he became a candidate to fill a vacancy in the State Senate, and his sole competitor, Job Fletcher, beat him by near six hundred majority. In 1836, 1838, & 1840, I was successively elected to the Legislature. In not

being a candidate at either of those elections.

I then ceased to be a candidate for anything till 1846, when I ran for Congress. Mr Cartwright was my competitor, and I beat him, as I trusted, 1511 majority, being about equal to the party majority of the District. I was never a candidate for Congress at any other time, and never had any contest with Mr Cartwright other than as I have stated.

Please do not make this public.

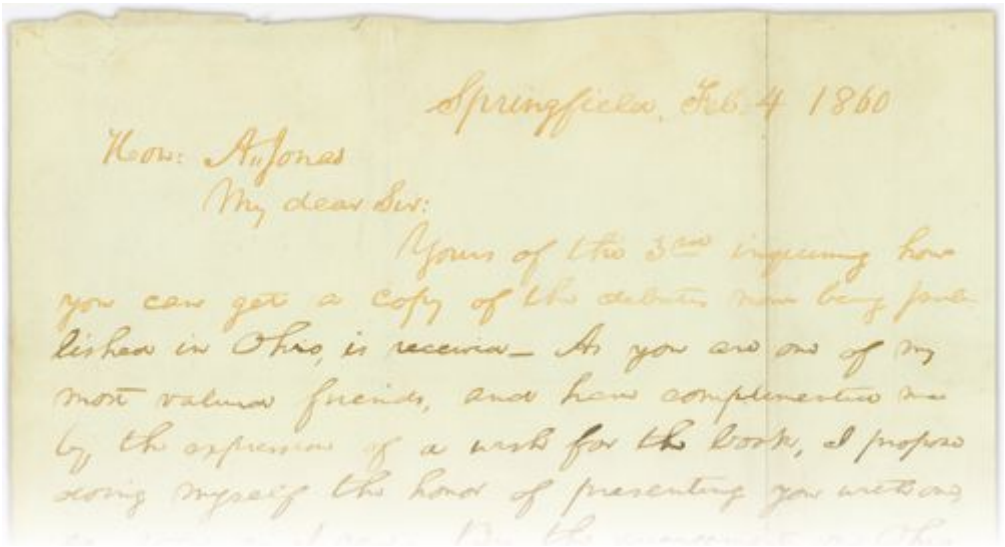
Yours truly

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO JOHN COULTER, SEPTEMBER 4, 1860

In an autobiographical sketch written while running for president in 1860, Lincoln noted that his 1832 loss for the State Legislature was the only time he was ever beaten by a direct vote of the people. Lincoln blamed no one and made no excuses; here, with the presidential election now just two months away, he was forthright about his loss twenty-eight years before, stating that four out of the fifteen candidates were elected, "of whom I was <u>not</u> one." At the same time, he noted his successes in the campaigns of 1834, 1836, 1838, and 1840.

Shapell Manuscript Collection



Springfield, Feb. 4 1860

Hon: A. Jonas

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 3rd inquiring how you can get a copy of the debates now being published in Ohio, is received. As you are one of my most valued friends, and how complimentary to me by the expression of a wish for the book, I propose doing myself the honor of presenting you with

"ONE OF MY MOST VALUED FRIENDS"

A striking example of the close Lincoln-Jonas bond. Lincoln, always a careful and self-conscious wordsmith, uses, for the only known time, a phrase directly acknowledging Abraham Jonas as "one of my most valued friends." Jonas was among the first to suggest in 1858 that Lincoln be the Republican nominee for president in 1860.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

Abraham Jonas

Wells Family

His election came at a bad time. A wave of anti-Masonic sentiment swept the country in the late 1820s and early 1830s, following the disappearance of William Morgan, who had allegedly threatened to expose Freemasonry's "secrets" by publishing its rituals. Jonas might have feared that as a Jew and a Mason, his reputation would have taken a pounding, but he actually emerged unscathed. In fact, his personal popularity led to his election to the Kentucky House of Representatives.[17]

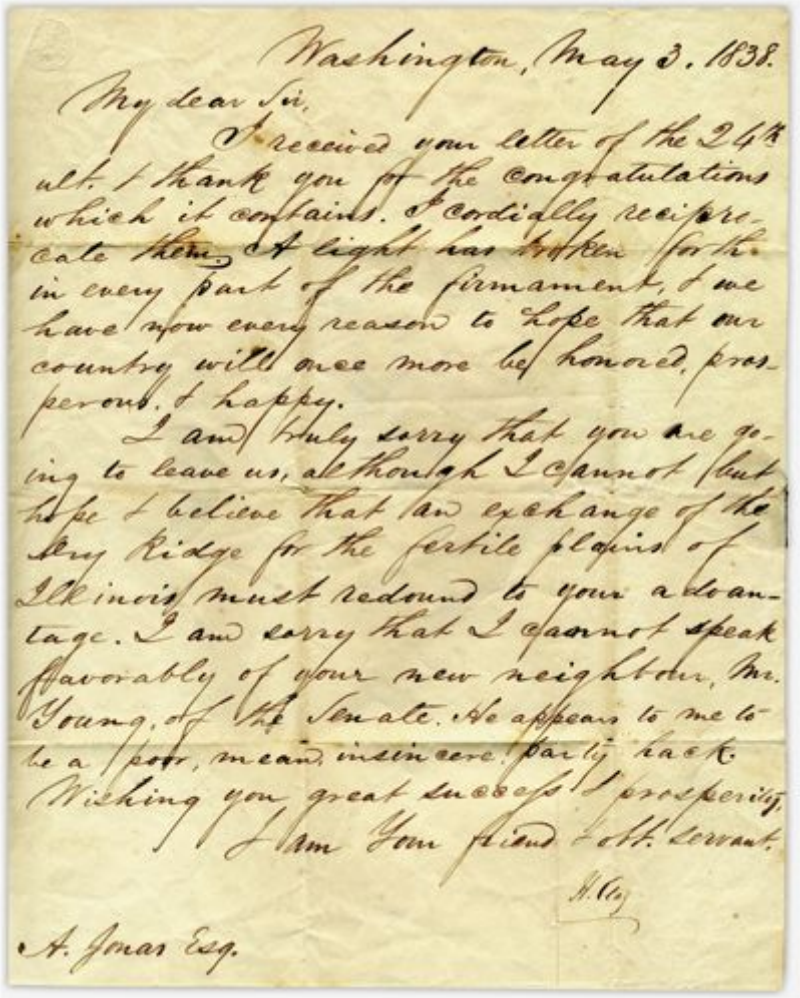
As a state legislator, Jonas encountered the greatest Kentucky politician of the day, Henry Clay, thrice speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives and thrice defeated for the presidency of the United States. Jonas idolized him, as did Lincoln, who met Clay at about the same time, and eulogized him in 1852. To Lincoln, indeed, Clay represented "my beau ideal of a statesman."[18] Lincoln and Jonas followed Clay into the Whig Party, studied his oratory, agreed with him concerning the evils of slavery and the need for the government to compensate slave owners in return for freeing their slaves (compensated emancipation), and both sought to emulate his political style. "All legislation, all government, all society, is formed upon the principle of mutual concession, politeness, comity, courtesy; upon these, every thing is based," Clay taught his mentees.[19] Lincoln and Jonas internalized that great lesson. The full extent of Jonas's interactions with Clay remains unknown. Upon hearing the news of Jonas's upcoming move to Illinois, he wrote, "I am truly sorry that you are going to leave us, although I cannot but hope & believe that an exchange of the Dry Ridge for the fertile plains of Illinois must redound to your advantage."[20] In 1842, four years after Jonas had settled in Quincy, Illinois, a growing commercial city at the point where Illinois met the Mississippi River, Clay still corresponded with him and noted, "we … miss you very much."[21]

The two would not meet again for several years. Meanwhile, Jonas devoted his early years in Quincy to his business and to Freemasonry. He opened a general store, established another business some fifteen miles away in Columbus, Illinois, and engaged in a fruitless effort to boost Columbus by opening a Masonic lodge there and by campaigning to upgrade the village (today home to approximately one hundred people) into a full-fledged county seat. He also helped to establish the Grand Masonic Lodge of Illinois and in 1840 was elected Most Worshipful Grand Master of that lodge. He was becoming known.[22]

"COMPENSATED EMANCIPATION"

COMPENSATED EMANCIPATION aimed to eliminate slavery by having the government pay slaveholders for the loss of their slave property. First touted by Henry Clay, the plan was aggressively supported by President Lincoln starting in 1862. He argued that this plan would not only end the war if adopted by the southern states, but would be far cheaper for the government than the cost of a prolonged war. Strategically, hoping to bring the war to an early conclusion, Lincoln first approached the border slave states still in the Union, arguing that their adoption of his plan would dash the Confederacy's hopes that these crucial four states (Maryland, Missouri, Kentucky, and Delaware) would secede and join them. The border states rejected compensated emancipation but remained in the Union. Meanwhile, some in the North insisted that slaveholders were undeserving of compensation and that the whole plan was unconstitutional. In the end, Washington, D.C. was the only territory in the United States that actually ended slavery through compensated emancipation. The District of Columbia Compensated Emancipation Act, signed by Lincoln on April 16, 1862, provided Union slaveholders with up to $300 per freed slave, which resulted in freedom for 3,185 slaves.

Lincoln, with his fine memory and sharp political instincts, doubtless took notice. It would also not likely have escaped his notice that Jonas, presumably influenced by his personal experience as a religious outsider and by his family ties with Mormon prophet Joseph Smith's Hebrew teacher, Joshua Seixas, displayed extraordinary sympathy toward local Mormons. Forced from their homes in Missouri, the Mormons had settled in the Illinois city of Commerce, which, in 1840, they renamed Nauvoo. As Grand Master of the Masons, Jonas permitted the establishment of a Masonic lodge in Nauvoo. He presided personally at the lodge installation (with the Mormon Prophet, Joseph Smith, serving as chaplain) and then initiated Smith into the Masonic order and instantly ("on sight") raised him to the rank of Master Mason, a rare honor.[23] "I hope and trust that the people of Illinois have no disposition to disturb unoffending people who have no disposition but to live peacefully under the laws of the country and to worship God, under their own vine and fig tree," Jonas declared, employing the same biblical metaphor that George Washington had used in his famous letter to the Jews of Newport.[24] Lincoln, characteristically, was much more reserved and said nothing about Mormonism until 1857.[25]



Washington, May 3. 1838.

My dear Sir,

I received your letter of the 24th ult. & thank you for the congratulations which it contains. I cordially reciprocate them. A light has broken forth in every part of the firmament, & we have now every reason to hope that our country will once more be honored, prosperous & happy.

I am truly sorry that you are going to leave us, although I cannot but hope & believe that an exchange of the Grey Ridge for the fertile plains of Illinois must redound to your advantage. I am sorry that I cannot speak favorably of your new neighbor, Mr. Young, of the Senate. He appears to me to be a poor, mean, insincere, partizan hack.

Wishing you great success & prosperity,

I am Your friend & obt. Servant.

H. Clay

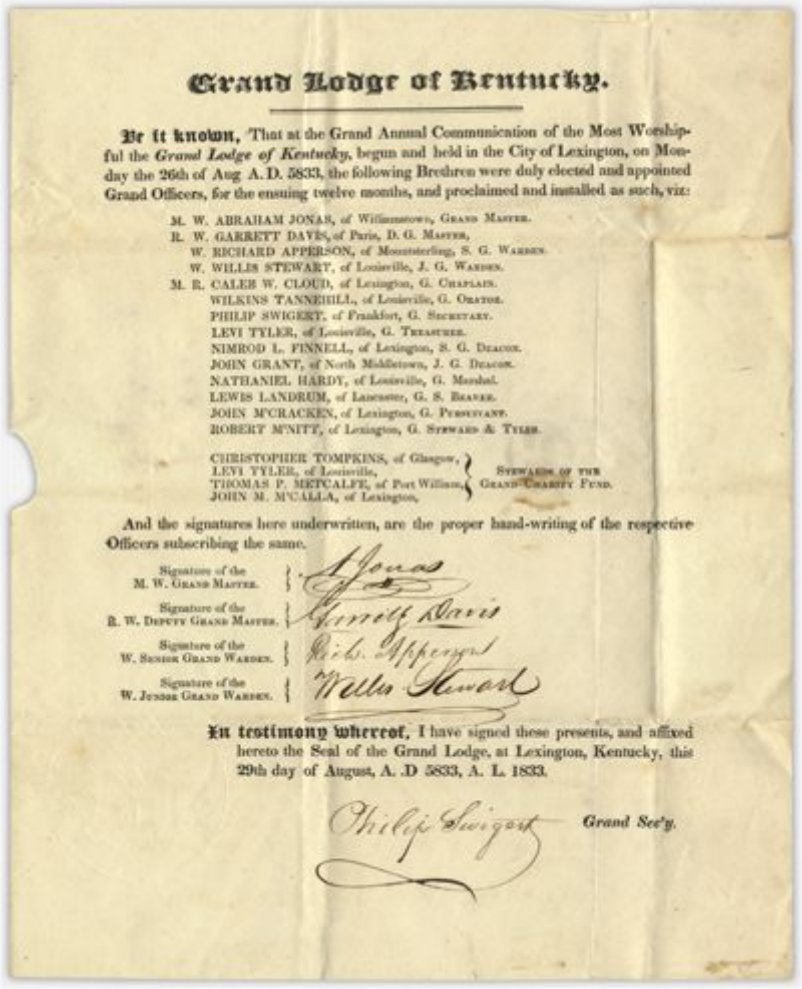
A. Jonas Esq.

HENRY CLAY TO ABRAHAM JONAS, MAY 3, 1838

For Abraham Jonas, like Lincoln, Henry Clay was his "beau ideal of a statesman." That Clay held Jonas in high regard, as well, is evidenced in this letter. Four years later, he would remark that Jonas is still very much missed.

Wells Family

Following the murder of Joseph Smith in 1843, Jonas, at the behest of the governor, courageously traveled both to Nauvoo and to surrounding non-Mormon communities, in a failed attempt to promote peace and restore order.[26] He was by then a familiar figure in the region and (with help from Mormon voters) had won a seat in the Illinois General Assembly.



Grand Lodge of Kentucky.

Be it known, That at the Grand Annual Communication of the Most Worshipful the *Grand Lodge of Kentucky*, begun and held in the City of Lexington, on Monday the 26th of Aug A. D. 5833, the following Brethren were duly elected and appointed Grand Officers, for the ensuing twelve months, and proclaimed and installed as such, viz:

M. W. ABRAHAM JONAS, of Williamstown, Grand Master.
R. W. GARRETT DAVIS, of Paris, D. G. Master,
W. RICHARD APPERSON, of Mountsterling, S. G. Warden.
W. WILLIS STEWART, of Louisville, J. G. Warden.
M. R. CALEB W. CLOUD, of Lexington, G. Chaplain.
WILKINS TANNEHILL, of Louisville, G. Orator.
PHILIP SWIGERT, of Frankfort, G. Secretary.
LEVI TYLER, of Louisville, G. Treasurer.
NIMROD L. FINNELL, of Lexington, S. G. Deacon.
JOHN GRANT, of North Middletown, J. G. Deacon.
NATHANIEL HARDY, of Louisville, G. Marshal.
LEWIS LANDRUM, of Lancaster, G. S. Bearer.
JOHN M'CRACKEN, of Lexington, G. Pursuivant.
ROBERT M'NITT, of Lexington, G. Steward & Tyler.

CHRISTOPHER TOMPKINS, of Glasgow,
LEVI TYLER, of Louisville,
THOMAS P. METCALFE, of Port William,
JOHN M. M'CALLA, of Lexington,
} Stewards of the Grand Charity Fund.

And the signatures here underwritten, are the proper hand-writing of the respective Officers subscribing the same.

Signature of the M. W. Grand Master. A Jonas
Signature of the R. W. Deputy Grand Master. Garrett Davis
Signature of the W. Senior Grand Warden. Rich. Apperson
Signature of the W. Junior Grand Warden. Willis Stewart

In testimony whereof, I have signed these presents, and affixed hereto the Seal of the Grand Lodge, at Lexington, Kentucky, this 29th day of August, A. D 5833, A. L. 1833.

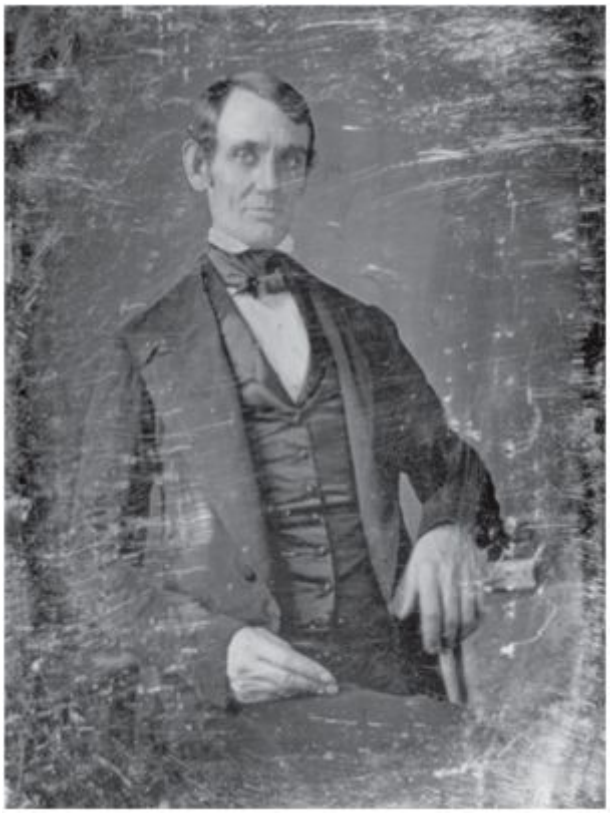
Philip Swigert Grand Sec'y.

A MASONIC DOCUMENT SIGNED BY ABRAHAM JONAS IN HIS CAPACITY AS GRAND MASTER OF THE GRAND KENTUCKY LODGE, AUGUST 29, 1833

Unlike some fraternal organizations, Freemasonry did not bar Jewish participation. Jonas founded this Kentucky chapter in 1832 and later would go on to found the Masonic Lodge in Quincy, Illinois, in 1846. Lincoln, who was not a Mason, was said to have nonetheless professed respect for the fraternity.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

No later than February 22, 1843, on Washington's Birthday, Abraham Jonas and Abraham Lincoln are known to have been in the same place at the same time. Whether or not the two men had met previously, this is the first recorded instance of them being together in the same location.[27] The annual commemoration of Washington's Birthday was celebrated that year in Springfield's Hall of Representatives. The Springfield Cadets attended, the Masons attended, many legislators attended, and Abraham Lincoln —no longer a legislator but still full of political ambitions—attended as well, with Jonas, a celebrated orator, delivering one of the principal addresses that day.

Jonas at that time was busy transitioning from commerce to the law. He read law with Orville Hickman Browning, one of Quincy's first and greatest lawyers, a handsome, well-bred Kentucky native who had moved to Quincy in 1831. Browning, in 1843, served as Jonas's colleague in the Illinois General Assembly; both men were Whigs.[28] Jonas also befriended Henry Asbury, another Kentuckian, who had likewise trained under Browning and then became his legal associate. In time, Asbury would leave Browning's firm and on June 1, 1855, become Jonas's law partner.[29] Both Browning and Asbury were friends with Abraham Lincoln—Browning and Lincoln had been friends since at least 1838.[30] Once admitted to the bar, on December 20, 1843, Jonas joined this circle and Lincoln befriended him as well.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN SPRINGFIELD, 1847

The earliest known image of Lincoln, then congressman-elect from Illinois. It is the first of 126 photographic images—40 beardless, 86 bearded—and the only one in which his hair is combed.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

As lawyers, Browning, Asbury, Jonas, and Lincoln all spent substantial amounts of time out of town, defending clients in Springfield, or in one of the scattered circuit courts. There, lawyers met and interacted, opposing one another in court and merrily fraternizing after court adjourned. Spending long hours in each other's company, they

sized one another up, entertained one another (always a Lincoln forte), and talked politics.[31]

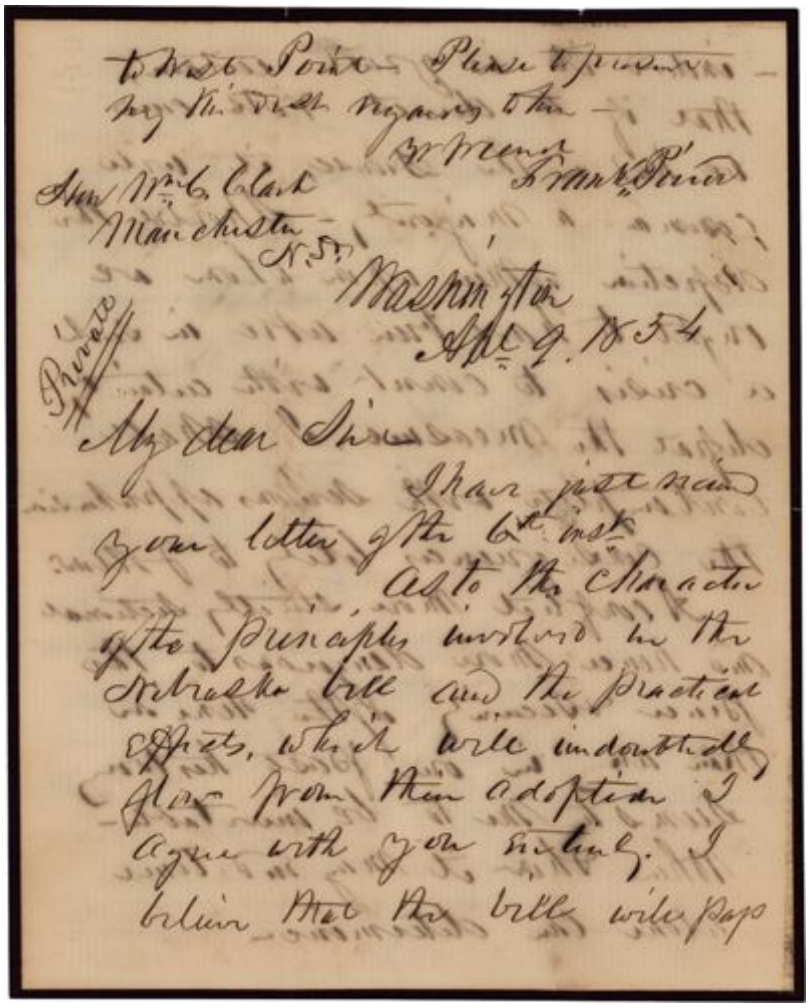
That Jonas became part of this select fraternity is no small matter. Dark eyed, slender, with black hair and an aquiline nose, he was always marked as a Jew. Gustav Koerner, a Lincoln acquaintance and an attorney in Belleville, Illinois, who served with Jonas in the General Assembly and later described him as "perhaps the best debater and the best politician on the Whig side," did not fail to mention his "Jewish extraction."[32] Nor, by the late 1850s, could anyone else have missed this fact, for the law offices of Jonas and Asbury in Quincy occupied a floor in the Jonas Building at the south-east corner of Fifth and Hampshire, one floor above S. & E. Jonas Hardware, operated by his brothers, and one floor below the Congregation B'nai Abraham synagogue, which the Jonas brothers had helped to establish.[33] Abraham Jonas, unlike some of his brothers, was not an observant Jew. He delivered speeches on the Jewish Sabbath, ate nonkosher foods, and on at least one occasion in 1854 dined openly with Abraham Lincoln and others at an "oyster saloon."[34] But his Judaism was still common knowledge. He was a Jew at heart and in action. Neither his fellow Quincy lawyers nor Abraham Lincoln seem to have held it against him.

Evidence of this may be found in the fact that three Quincy lawyers—Browning, his partner Nehemiah Bushnell, and a third lawyer named Archibald Williams—all supported Jonas when, in 1849, his name was put forward for the position of postmaster—a patronage post. A local blacksmith named Harrison Dills likewise put his own name forward for that position and wrote Lincoln for support. But even Dills conceded that Jonas was "a first rate man." Indeed, in a follow up letter to Lincoln, he offered to drop his candidacy in Jonas's favor: "if thare [*sic*] is any chance for Mr J," he wrote, "let me pass." That, in fact, is what happened. Thanks to his Whig friends, Jonas served as postmaster of Quincy, under appointments from Presidents Zachary Taylor and Millard Fillmore, from 1849 to 1852.[35]

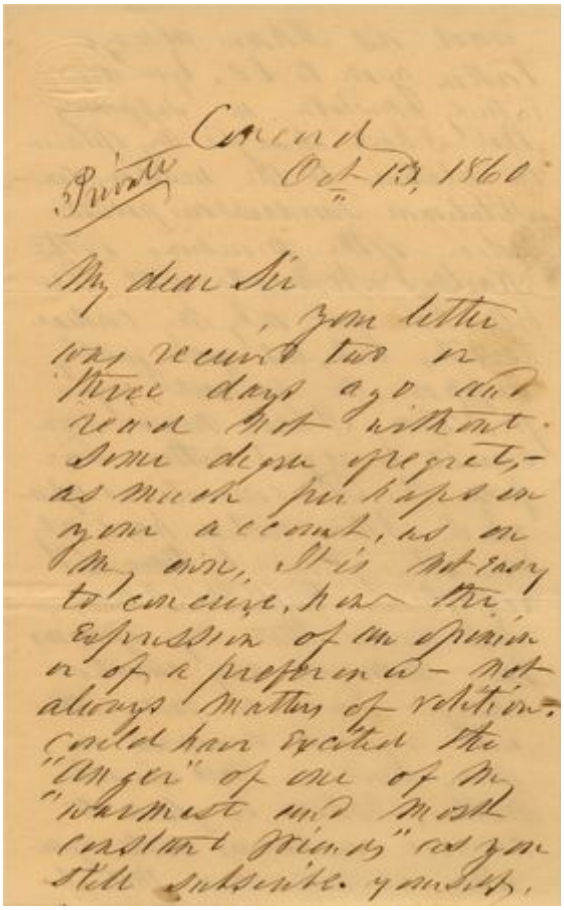
The patronage job rewarded Jonas for his contribution to the Whig Party. Thanks to his keen mind and formidable oratorical skills he had become a respected party operative and a much-in-demand speaker at political gatherings. Once the Democrats returned to power in 1852, with the election of Franklin Pierce, Jonas naturally lost his position, but his loyalty to the Whigs continued unabated. In 1853, he chaired the party meeting that nominated candidates for local elections in Quincy. A year later, with

national elections looming, he turned to the central question of the day—the extension of slavery into Kansas and Nebraska. Amidst what he described as probably "the warmest contest for Congress that we have ever had in this district," he personally "held forth for half an hour" on a cold, rainy night at a political meeting. He also sought to attract a more formidable speaker to boost Whig fortunes. So he wrote to Abraham Lincoln.[36]

"The bill had not only my cordial assent but ... my earnest approbation. I have never seen cause to regret either. Far from it."



PRESIDENT PIERCE ON THE KANSAS-NEBRASKA ACT, APRIL 9, 1854



Concord
Private Oct 13, 1860

My dear Sir
Your letter was received two or three days ago and read not without some degree of regret, — as much perhaps on your account, as on my own. It is not easy to conceive, how the expression of an opinion or of a preference — not always matters of volition — could have excited the "anger" of one of my "warmest and most constant friends" as you still subscribe yourself.

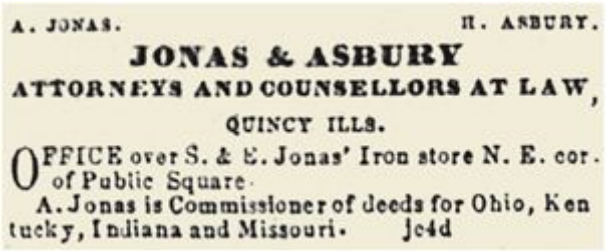
PIERCE DEFENDS THE ACT, OCTOBER 13, 1860

President Franklin Pierce, who signed the Kansas-Nebraska Act into law on May 30, 1854, here defends his support for the act. Six years later, on the very eve of rebellion, Pierce still stubbornly swore by "the wisdom, constitutional soundness and patriotic policy of the provisions" of the Kansas-Nebraska Act. "The bill had not only my cordial assent," he wrote, "but … my earnest approbation. I have never seen cause to regret either." Lincoln, Jonas, and the emerging Republican Party, however, thought differently. Lincoln would be elected president on the basis of his opposition to the expansion of slavery.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

HENRY ASBURY, IN UNIFORM AS PROVOST-MARSHALL OF THE QUINCY DISTRICT

A rare signed photo of Henry Asbury, Abraham Jonas's law partner for over twenty years. It was at a December 1858 meeting with publisher and power broker Horace Greeley in their law office that Asbury first suggested Lincoln's name as a possible presidential candidate, with Jonas immediately seconding the recommendation. Those two endorsements—the only of the evening—would, soon enough, prove instrumental in Lincoln's rise to the presidency.
Shapell Manuscript Collection


A. JONAS. H. ASBURY.

JONAS & ASBURY

ATTORNEYS AND COUNSELLORS AT LAW,

QUINCY ILLS.

OFFICE over S. & E. Jonas' Iron store N. E. cor. of Public Square.

A. Jonas is Commissioner of deeds for Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana and Missouri. jc4d

ADVERTISEMENT OF JONAS-ASBURY LAW OFFICES, JUNE 21, 1855

An advertisement in the Quincy Daily Whig *for the law practice of Abraham Jonas and Henry Asbury. Located in the Jonas family-owned building in Quincy, the site was a hive of activity in the 1850s. There was the S. & E. Jonas hardware store on the ground floor; the law offices of Jonas & Asbury on the second—where, on occasion, Abraham Lincoln had probably met with Jonas—and a nascent synagogue on the third.*
Courtesy of Quincy Public Library

Abraham Lincoln had declared himself "thunderstruck and stunned" by Congress's 1854 passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and President Pierce's signing of it into law.[37] The act repealed the Missouri Compromise of 1820, which Lincoln and many others considered vital to the limitation of slavery, and left it up to the territory's voters ("popular sovereignty") to decide the question of slavery in Kansas and Nebraska when

they applied for statehood. Previously, under the compromise engineered in part by Henry Clay in 1850, slavery in the lands acquired under the Louisiana Purchase had been banned above the Mason-Dixon Line, thirty-six and one-half degrees north of the equator. Now, with both pro- and antislavery advocates clamoring for access to the vast western territories captured in the Mexican War, as well as to the rich farmlands of the prairie; and with industrialists eager to complete the transcontinental railroad in 1854, Congress felt the need to find a different compromise so that these new territories could be opened up and settled—even with slave labor. Stephen A. Douglas, the wily Democratic senator from Illinois and formerly Quincy's representative in Congress, engineered what he thought would be a viable compromise, winning support from a majority of Democrats and Southern Whigs. But opponents of slavery's extension—including Abraham Jonas and Abraham Lincoln—were furious, for Douglas's "compromise" made possible slavery's extension all the way across the Kansas-Nebraska plains to the western shore. There it would have room to spread instead of dying out on its own, as they had previously expected. Lincoln, as a result, felt "aroused … as he had never been before."[38]

By the time Jonas wrote to him, on September 16, 1854, Lincoln had channeled this anger into action. He had immersed himself in the intricacies of the Kansas-Nebraska Act and took up the fight to reverse it. He lent support to the reelection bid of Congressman Richard Yates, who opposed the act. He debated Douglas's friend, John Calhoun, newly appointed surveyor general for the Kansas and Nebraska Territories. And he published an unsigned editorial in the *Illinois Journal* ridiculing the claim that the act did not "require slaves" to be sent into the territories. But he had not yet debated Douglas himself.[39] Moreover, his major statements in opposition to the Kansas-Nebraska Act still lay ahead. So it was extraordinarily prescient of Jonas to think to invite Lincoln to Quincy to counter Douglas and lend support to the Whig candidate, Archibald Williams, who was attempting to unseat Douglas's Democratic friend and successor in Congress, William A. Richardson. "[A]ll the Whigs here, would be much gratified if you could make it convenient and pay us a visit, while the little giant is here," Jonas wrote, using the nickname of the five-foot-four-inch Douglas. "It is believed by all who know you that a reply from you would be more effective, than from any other."[40]

Lincoln promised to come. But weeks before he arrived in Quincy, he took on the arguments of the "Little Giant" elsewhere, notably at the state fair in Springfield and in Peoria. Addressing large crowds, he focused on the immorality of slavery and on how it ran counter to basic tenets of the Declaration of Independence. The nation's founders, he insisted, sought to limit rather than to extend slavery. He called for the Missouri Compromise to be upheld. Audiences quickly warmed to this message. Privately, Douglas characterized Lincoln as "the most difficult and dangerous opponent that I have ever met."[41]

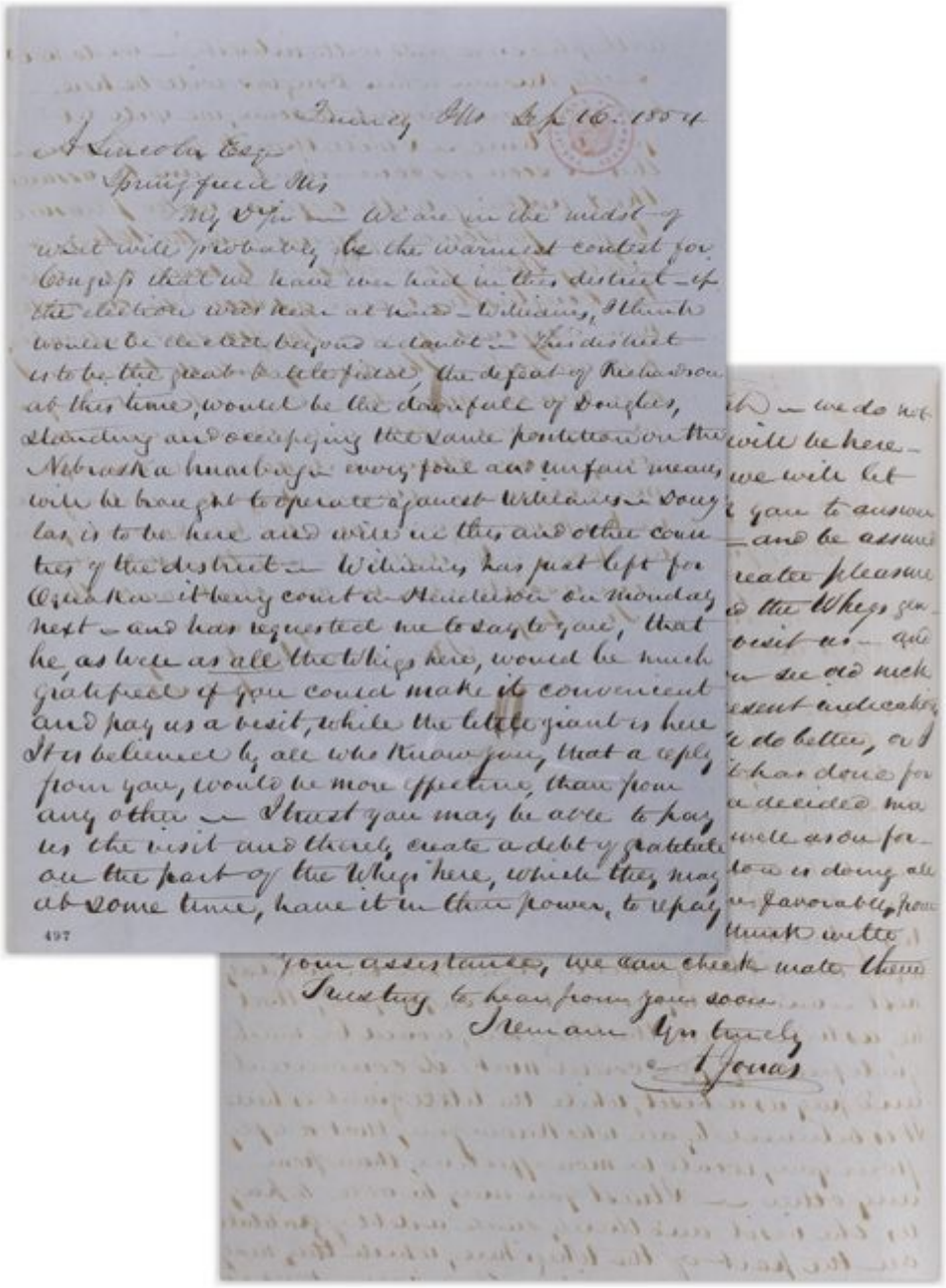
Lincoln arrived in Quincy on the night of October 31, just a week prior to Election Day. It was his first time ever in the city. Abraham Jonas, his host, accompanied him throughout his stay. Orville Hickman Browning took him to dinner and tea. Lincoln addressed a crowd on the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and after his speech, Jonas and others passed another hour with him and walked him to the Quincy House, where he spent the night.[42] The men doubtless talked politics. They knew that Williams's chances of winning were poor, though Lincoln hoped that his speech might give the Whig candidate "a little life."[43] One suspects that they likewise discussed the coming Illinois senatorial contest.

THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE AND POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY

THE MISSOURI COMPROMISE, passed in 1820, was an effort to preserve the delicate balance of power in Congress between states where slavery was permitted and ones where it was prohibited. Under its terms, Missouri entered the Union as a slave state and Maine as a free state. Except in Missouri, slavery was prohibited in the Louisiana Territory north of the 36° 30′ latitude line. In 1854, the Missouri Compromise was repealed by the Kansas-Nebraska Act, enacting what Senator Stephen A. Douglas (Illinois) called "popular sovereignty." It opened up the possibility that slavery would spread, since it left the issue of slavery to the vote of local residents.

Lincoln's candidates, Williams and Yates, both lost their election bids, but nationally, opponents of the Kansas-Nebraska Act, whom Lincoln had supported, did well—so well, that Lincoln in late 1854 felt emboldened to put his own name forth for the Senate. To win, he needed to secure a majority of votes from members of the state General Assembly who, in those days, were responsible for electing Illinois' senators. He turned to his political friends for help. Abraham Jonas responded at once and also

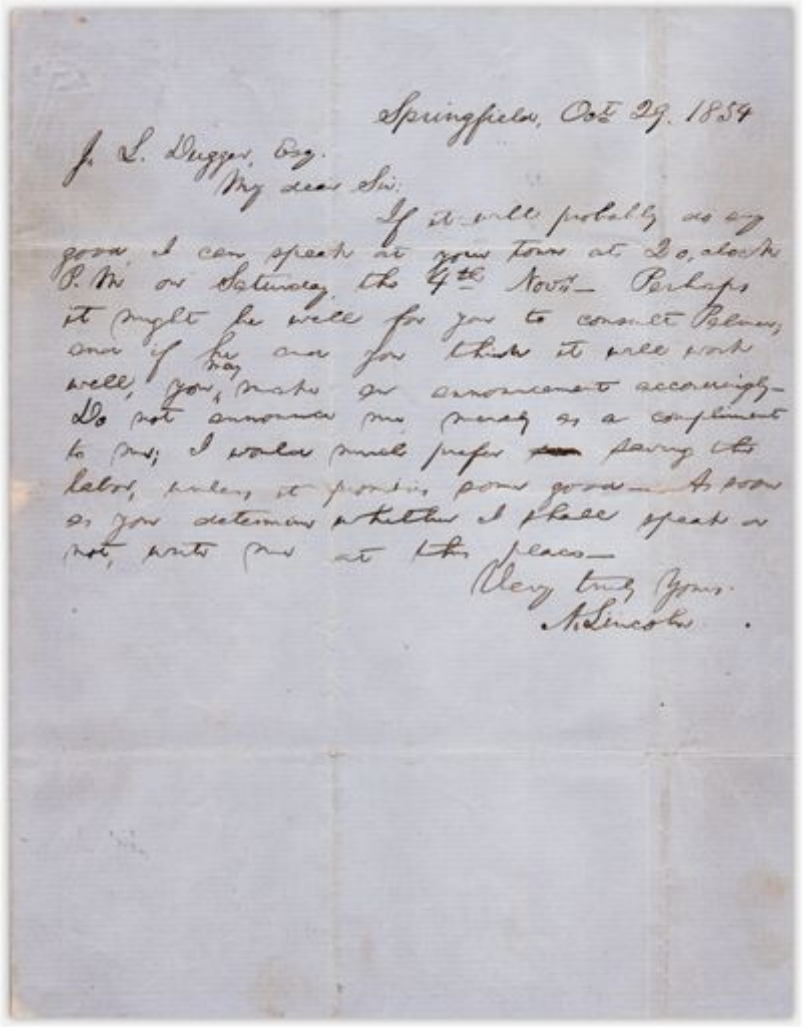
provided critical intelligence concerning other possible candidates, including himself. “I have no pretension for that or any other office at this time,” he reassured Lincoln, nor, he added, did his fellow Whig lawyers from Quincy, Orville Hickman Browning and Archibald Williams. “I should prefer you to any other,” he promised, “and should be pleased to render you any service in my power.”[44] As it turned out, Jonas’s support did not suffice to win him the position; Lincoln stood a few votes short. So, on the tenth ballot, Lincoln cannily directed his supporters to vote for the Democrat Lyman Trumbull, whom he knew to be as angry at the Kansas-Nebraska Act as he was. He decided, one of his biographers observes, that “the long-term cause of stopping slavery trumped his short-term ambition.” Trumbull, thanks to this move, was elected. Lincoln, meanwhile, swallowed his disappointment at being defeated, and within three years both he and Trumbull stood together in the ranks of the new Republican Party.[45]



ABRAHAM JONAS TO LINCOLN, SEPTEMBER 16, 1854

In the earliest known letter between the two men, Abraham Jonas invites Lincoln to speak against the Kansas-Nebraska Act in Quincy. By the terms of the explosive act, slavery would be allowed to spread into the Kansas-Nebraska territories—and the vast new lands captured in the Mexican War—by a vote of the majority of its inhabitants. Emotionally and politically transformed by the act, lawyer Lincoln rushed headlong out of the political wilderness into political activism, catapulting him from the plains to the presidency within six years.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Springfield, Oct 29. 1854

J. L. Dugger, Esq.

My dear Sir.

If it will probably do any good I can speak at your town at 2 o'clock P. M. on Saturday the 4th Nov.— Perhaps it might be well for you to consult Palmer, and if he can for think it will work well, you may make the announcement accordingly. Do not announce me merely as a compliment to me; I would much prefer ~~him~~ saving the labor, unless it promises some good— As soon as you determine whether I shall speak or not, write me at this place—

Very truly Yours.
A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN TO JEFFERSON L. DUGGER, OCTOBER 29, 1854

Lincoln arranges to speak against the Kansas-Nebraska Act in support of Whig candidate, Archibald Williams. On that road trip through Illinois, Lincoln spent two days with Abraham Jonas: October 31 and November 1.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Abraham Jonas and many other former Whigs joined them in that party, determined to halt the spread of slavery and promote the spread of freedom. Illinois Republicans eschewed radicalism and nativism, and attempted to build a broad-based coalition, focused around the issue of slavery's containment. They supported the Missouri Compromise, opposed the Kansas-Nebraska Act, and pledged to prevent the admission of any new slave states into the Union. This was likewise the position of explorer John C. Frémont, who became the Republican standard bearer in 1856. Lincoln and Jonas barnstormed on Frémont's behalf, with Lincoln reputedly delivering over fifty campaign speeches, though he did not know the candidate personally.

Jonas hoped that one of those speeches would be in Quincy during the crucial two-week period before the election, but at the last minute Lincoln begged off. "I am here at court, and find myself so 'hobbled' with a particular case, that I can not leave, & consequently, can not be with you on the 23rd," Lincoln wrote sorrowfully. "I regret this exceedingly, but there is no help for it." He asked Jonas to apologize in his name and signed the letter, "Your friend as ever."[46]

The word *hobbled*—set off with quotation marks—most likely clued Jonas as to the true reason why his "friend as ever" could not make it to Quincy. Family business had detained him in Urbana. Lincoln was working there to free his "hobbled" (he was literally crippled) ne'er-do-well stepnephew, Thomas Johnston (the son of his stepbrother, John D. Johnston), who had been jailed in Champaign for stealing a solid-gold watch from a local store owned by the family of William Green. Attorney Henry Clay Whitney of Urbana, one of the many young lawyers whom Lincoln befriended and assisted, recalled that after speaking at a mass meeting in the city, Lincoln had approached him, and the two of them went "on the sly" to the local jail to meet with the unfortunate Johnston, who also faced an earlier charge of theft. "I shall do what I can for him in these two cases," he quoted Lincoln as saying, "but that's the last. After that, if he wants to be a thief, I shan't help him any more."[47] Lincoln persuaded the judge and prosecutor to waive the larceny charges, if William Green and his family agreed not to press the case further, and then visited with the Greens, who, after hearing from Lincoln, seem to have taken pity on the crippled boy and forgave him for his crime. Accordingly, the case was dropped and Johnston released. The other charge of larceny against Johnston was settled in the same fashion. All of this took time, of course, and explains why Lincoln was "hobbled"—a double entendre—and precluded him from speaking in Quincy. The clever wordplay likewise bespeaks Lincoln's intimacy with Jonas. The quotation marks imply that the two men understood the unhappy family story behind the word *hobbled.* Lincoln had let Jonas in on what was otherwise an embarrassing family secret.[48]

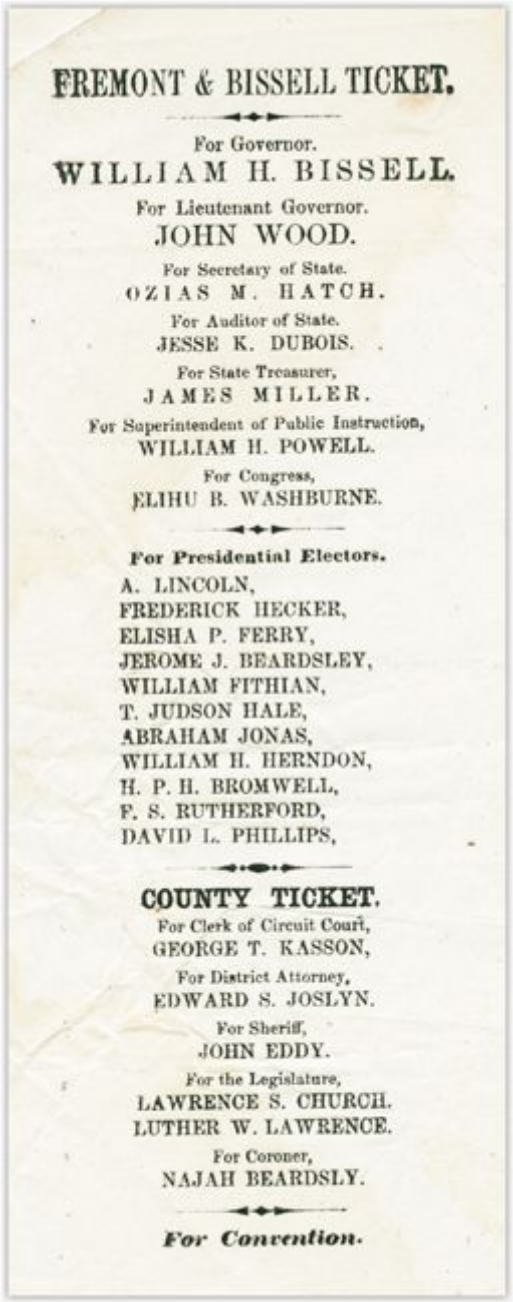
Lincoln and Jonas put their ideological friendship on display in a more public way when both appeared on ballots as Republican electors in 1856. But because of the third-party candidacy of former president Millard Fillmore, representing the anti-immigrant American (Know-Nothing) Party, the Democrat, James Buchanan, eked out a plurality in the state, garnering 44.1 percent of its votes.[49] Buchanan also won the national election

—with 45.3 percent of the vote. The election nevertheless proved beneficial to Lincoln, for Republicans won both the state governorship in Illinois and a majority in the General Assembly. As one of the Republican Party's most articulate spokesmen and strategists and runner-up for its vice presidential nomination, he was properly credited with this success, and thanks to press coverage of his speeches, his reputation outside of the state expanded as well. His admirers, like Abraham Jonas, looked to advance Lincoln's career.

Jonas soon had a new reason to admire Lincoln—one that was little known at the time and has been little remembered by biographers but that actually spoke volumes concerning the Republican hopeful's values, particularly his concern for racial justice. In the fall of 1856, a young man named John Shelby, one member of the small community of black residents in Springfield, Illinois (where there were but 171 black residents in 1850), traveled to St. Louis and hired himself out on a steamboat bound for New Orleans. Arriving in port, he clambered ashore without equipping himself with papers attesting to his status as a free person. He was promptly arrested and cast into prison. In New Orleans, it was a crime for blacks to be found on the street after dark without a written pass. While poor Shelby languished in jail, the steamboat that had hired him departed, leaving him at risk of being sold into slavery to pay off his prison expenses.[50]

Fortunately, Lincoln and Benjamin F. Jonas, the son of Abraham Jonas and a New Orleans attorney,[51] intervened to save him. Young Jonas, in an 1857 letter, indicated that he reached out to Lincoln after Shelby mentioned him as someone "who would take an interest in his behalf." He recognized the name Lincoln as belonging to "an old friend of my father," and contacted him. Benjamin Jonas's sister, Annie, by contrast, wrote some years later that it was Lincoln who actually took the first step, instructing her brother to free Shelby and to "charge the expense incurred to him." Lincoln's law partner, William Herndon, elaborated on that account (though without mentioning Jonas's name), recalling that Shelby's mother "came to us with the story of the wrong done her son and induced us to interfere in her behalf." According to him, the governors of Illinois and Louisiana both refused to act on the matter, so Lincoln and Herndon drew up a subscription list, "collecting funds enough to purchase the young man's liberty." What, in the end, is indisputable is that Lincoln dispatched to Jonas a draft for $69.30 (almost $1,700 in today's money) in order to redeem Shelby. This was enough to purchase his

freedom from prison, return him safely to Springfield, and pay off a local official. Both Jonas and Lincoln waived their fees. For Lincoln, who kept the whole matter private, the episode reflected his deepest principles, his belief that "all men are created equal."[52]



FREMONT & BISSELL TICKET.

For Governor.
WILLIAM H. BISSELL.
For Lieutenant Governor.
JOHN WOOD.
For Secretary of State.
OZIAS M. HATCH.
For Auditor of State.
JESSE K. DUBOIS.
For State Treasurer,
JAMES MILLER.
For Superintendent of Public Instruction,
WILLIAM H. POWELL.
For Congress,
ELIHU B. WASHBURNE.

For Presidential Electors.
A. LINCOLN,
FREDERICK HECKER,
ELISHA P. FERRY,
JEROME J. BEARDSLEY,
WILLIAM FITHIAN,
T. JUDSON HALE,
ABRAHAM JONAS,
WILLIAM H. HERNDON,
H. P. H. BROMWELL,
F. S. RUTHERFORD,
DAVID L. PHILLIPS,

COUNTY TICKET.
For Clerk of Circuit Court,
GEORGE T. KASSON,
For District Attorney,
EDWARD S. JOSLYN.
For Sheriff,
JOHN EDDY.
For the Legislature,
LAWRENCE S. CHURCH.
LUTHER W. LAWRENCE.
For Coroner,
NAJAH BEARDSLY.

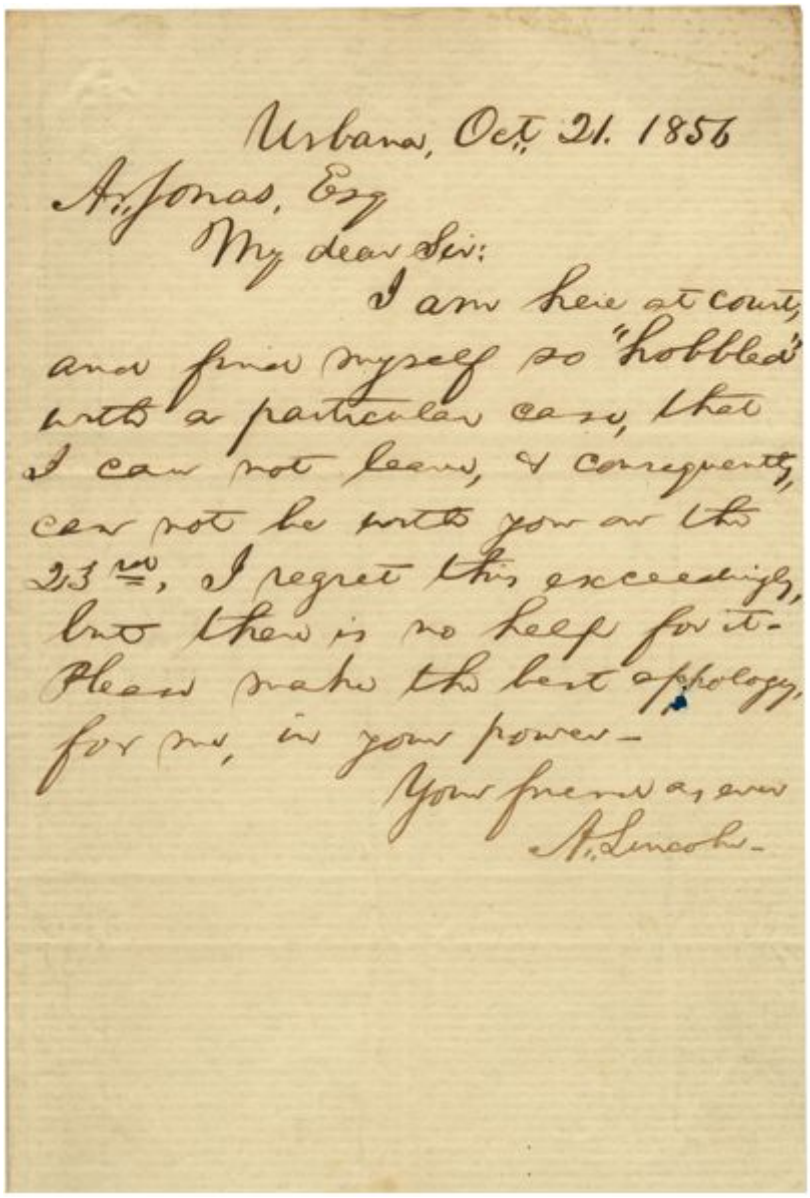
For Convention.

LINCOLN AND JONAS ON THE FRÉMONT BALLOT, 1856

Ballots in mid-nineteenth-century America generally listed the name of the presidential candidate at the top, and below it, those of the electors who had been elected to support him. In 1856, Lincoln and Jonas both appeared on the Illinois ballot as presidential electors under the Frémont ticket. Here Lincoln and Jonas represented the new Republican Party, which called itself, among other things, the "Anti-Nebraska Ticket." On Election Day, voters brought to the polling station the ballot of the candidate of their choice, gave their name

to the registrar, who checked that they were eligible to vote, and then dropped these preprinted ballots into the ballot box.
Rail Splitter Archives, New York City

"I am here at court and find myself so 'hobbled' with a particular case, that I can not leave."



Urbana, Oct. 21. 1856

A. Jonas, Esq

My dear Sir:

I am here at court, and find myself so "hobbled" with a particular case, that I can not leave, & consequently, can not be with you on the 23rd, I regret this exceedingly, but there is no help for it. Please make the best apology, for me, in your power—

Your friend as ever
A. Lincoln—

LINCOLN TO ABRAHAM JONAS: "HOBBLED," OCTOBER 21, 1856

Busy campaigning for the Republican ticket two weeks before the national election, Lincoln, having shared with Jonas an intimate family matter about a troublesome nephew of his, who was arrested for thievery, shares a humorous pun with Jonas about the situation. Getting the youth—who was, literally, crippled—out of jail, a sarcastic and frustrated Lincoln jokes, has "hobbled" his schedule, so that he cannot meet with Jonas as planned. He signed the letter: "Your friend as ever."
Shapell Legacy Partnership

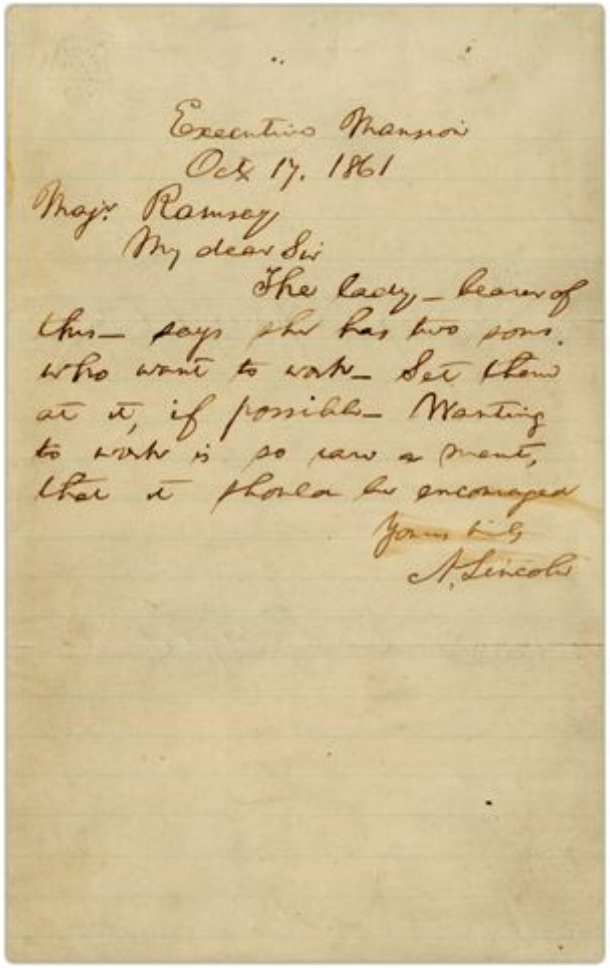
A VALUABLE LESSON FOR A WAYWARD NEPHEW: "WANTING TO WORK IS SO RARE A MERIT…"

HIS LIFE'S HISTORY, Lincoln said in an 1860 handwritten autobiographical sketch, could be summed up in a single sentence: "The short and simple annals of the poor." Had he chosen to elaborate, he might have added how it was, then, that a child of the impoverished frontier became president: "Work, work, work, is the main thing," he wrote in answer to an 1860 inquiry of how to obtain a thorough knowledge of the law. As much if not more than any other quality, Lincoln valued hard work—in contrast to the thievery of the nephew he was obligated to defend in court. Honest work was, he believed, the essential element in achieving individual success and social advancement.

Interestingly, Lincoln had, eight years before, been down a similar road with the boy's father—Lincoln's stepbrother—when Lincoln tried to lend a helping hand in the face of bad conduct: "You are not lazy, and still you are an idler. I doubt whether since I saw you, you have done a whole day's work in any one day." Lincoln biographer Carl Sandburg referred to the elder Johnston as "the most fascinating braggart and scalawag known to Lincoln's boyhood and youth."

Growing up on the Indiana frontier, Lincoln spent long days working with his father and as a hired hand to neighboring farmers. He taught himself the intricacies of land surveying; and when he decided to become a lawyer, he read and studied diligently; and when a lawyer, rode the circuit six months a year (when prairie lawyers traveled through large sections of Illinois to meet and advise clients who needed representation).

As president, he put in long hours attending to the countless details of running the country. But in running the vast federal bureaucracy, Lincoln discovered that not everyone in government shared his enthusiasm for tireless labor. So, when asked by a needy mother in October 1861 to supply army jobs for her eager boys, the new president was pleased to oblige with this letter of referral. "The lady—bearer of this—says she has two sons who want to work. Set them at it, if possible. Wanting to work is so rare a merit, that it should be encouraged." This brief but defining letter is one of the most personally revealing letters about Lincoln—the man.



Executive Mansion
Oct 17. 1861
Majr Ramsey
My dear Sir
The lady bearer of
this says she has two sons
who want to work. Set them
at it, if possible. Wanting
to work is so rare a merit,
that it should be encouraged
Yours truly
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO GEORGE D. RAMSEY: "WANTING TO WORK…," OCTOBER 17, 1861

Shapell Legacy Partnership

The Dred Scott case, decided by the U.S. Supreme Court on March 6, 1857, ruled otherwise. Speaking for the Court, Chief Justice Roger B. Taney pronounced blacks "so far inferior, that they had no rights which the white man was bound to respect." Constitutional freedoms, the Court decided, did not apply to blacks. As for the Declaration of Independence's assertion that "all men are created equal," the decision declared "that the enslaved African race were not intended to be included, and formed no part of the people who framed and adopted this declaration." Implicitly, it reduced blacks to a status below that of "all men" and doomed them to perpetual inequality.[53]

Lincoln, when this infamous decision came down, was out of politics. Having spent much of 1856 stumping for Frémont, he needed to focus on his law practice and rebuild his personal assets. But when Stephen A. Douglas, in a celebrated address, vindicated the Court's judgment, declaring that "the signers of the Declaration of Independence …

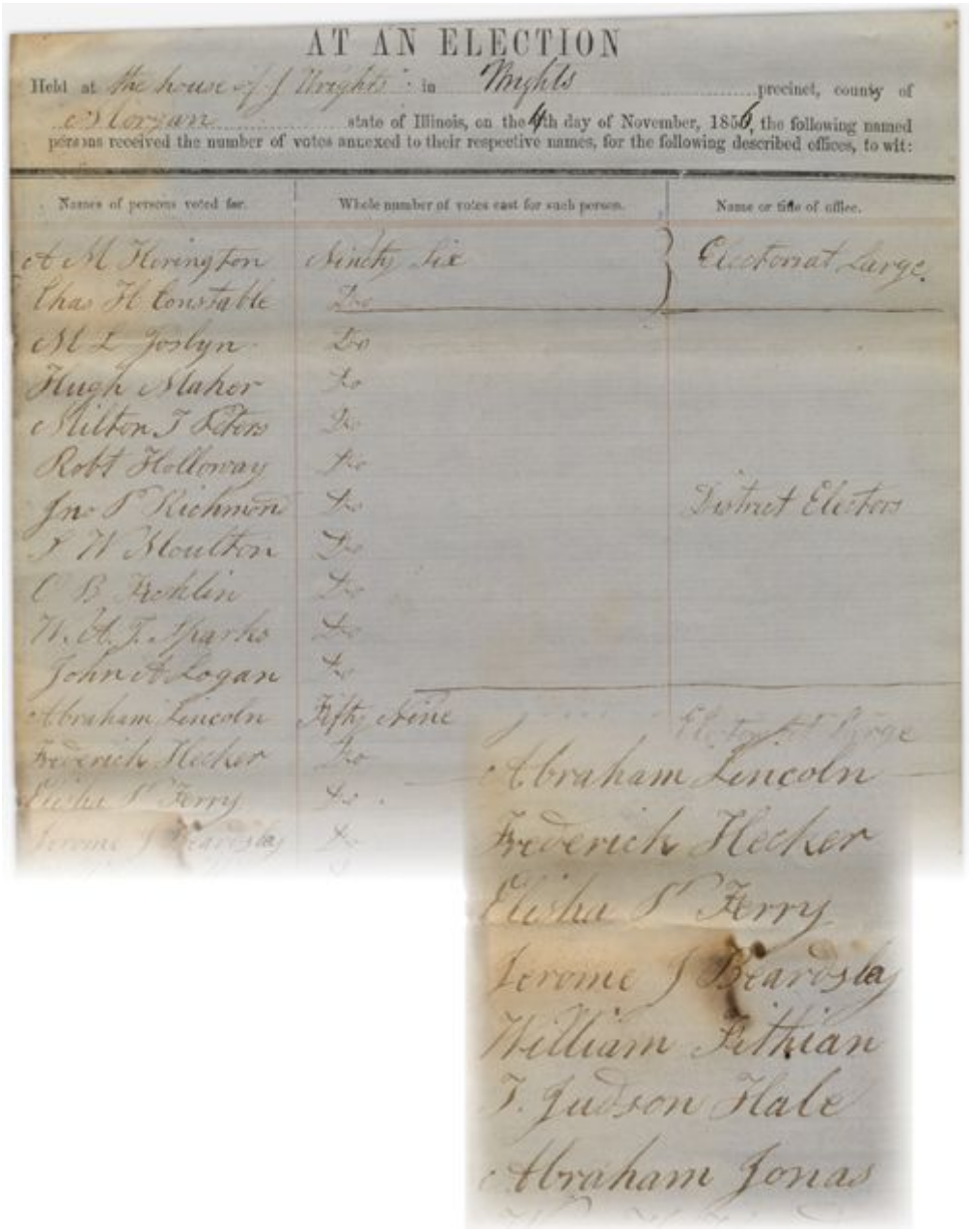
referred to the white race alone, and not to the African, when they declared all men to have been created equal," Lincoln felt compelled to reply. Douglas, he knew, would stand for reelection to the Senate in 1858, and he aimed to oppose him. Douglas's views, moreover, were anathema to Lincoln. He predicted, rightly, that the Dred Scott decision would one day be overruled and insisted that the Founders meant what they said when they celebrated the equality of all men. "They did not intend to declare all men equal in all respects," he conceded, but insisted that they did consider them "equal in 'certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.'" Thinking beyond the question of blacks, he looked forward to an America that viewed the goal of equality in terms of "progressive improvement." To him, the phrase "all men are created equal" was a "standard maxim for free society," something "constantly looked to, constantly labored for, and even though never perfectly attained, constantly approximated, and thereby constantly spreading and deepening its influence, and augmenting a happiness and value of life to all people of all colors everywhere."[54]

As Lincoln's law practice and professional reputation expanded and he was drawn back into politics, his circle of Jewish acquaintances expanded as well. Illinois' Jewish population was approaching 3,000 by the late 1850s, many of them involved in business and commerce. Several soon crossed Lincoln's path. A good example is Henry Rice, subsequently a leading figure in the manufacture and distribution of dry goods and in Jewish philanthropy. Born in 1834 in Bamberg, Bavaria, Rice arrived in the United States in 1850. Three years later, he settled in the small community of Jacksonville, Illinois, thirty-five miles from Springfield, and established a clothing store. Rice met Lincoln no later than 1857, when he served as a witness in a court case between Dewitt Gale and the local Morgan County Bank. Gale had sued the bank for nonpayment on a draft; the bank, which Lincoln defended, claimed that it had paid him in cash. Rice's testimony in the case does not survive, but Lincoln's client won the case.[55]

Years later, Rice recalled recommending Lincoln to several Cincinnati firms (probably ones belonging to Jewish relatives of his in that city) that required the services of an Illinois attorney. He also recalled meeting Lincoln again in Springfield following his election. As he recounted the story, the president-elect was on his way to the railroad station to pick up his wife and mentioned, in his typically folksy way, that Mary had been off on a shopping trip "to get some duds." Rice claimed to have called upon Lincoln once at the White House, where, he said, he was invited to stay for supper.

In 1861, as we shall see, Lincoln wrote a letter endorsing Rice for the position of sutler, a military storekeeper for the United States Army.[56]

As Lincoln traversed Illinois in 1858, as part of his campaign for the Senate, he continued to meet other Jews. In Chicago, he became acquainted with Henry Greenebaum, one of four prominent Jewish brothers who immigrated to the city from Eppelsheim, Germany, in the late 1840s. Greenebaum, in his twenties, served as a Democratic alderman in Chicago and had first met Lincoln in 1855. He remembered being "greatly impressed" by Lincoln's "congeniality," his "wealth of humor," and his "remarkable mental endowment." Lincoln, who served as judge in over 300 cases, presided in at least two cases concerning Henry Greenebaum's brother-in-law, German Jew Gerhard Foreman, in 1856 and 1857. In both cases, the court ruled in favor of Foreman's company. In 1858, Greenebaum later recalled, he "accompanied Lincoln on a walk during which he asked me for my support." Since Greenebaum, unlike many other politically engaged Chicago German Jews, was a Democrat and "strong political friend" of Stephen A. Douglas, he turned Lincoln down. Reflecting back years later, he described Lincoln as "the greatest man I ever met."[57]



AT AN ELECTION

Held at the house of J Wrights in Wrights precinct, county of Morgan state of Illinois, on the 4th day of November, 1856, the following named persons received the number of votes annexed to their respective names, for the following described offices, to wit:

Names of persons voted for.	Whole number of votes cast for such person.	Name or title of office.
A M Herington	Ninety Six	Electorat Large
Chas H Constable	Do	
M L Joslyn	Do	
Hugh Maher	Do	
Milton T Peters	Do	
Robt Holloway	Do	
Jno P Richmond	Do	District Electors
J W Moulton	Do	
C B Fichlin	Do	
W. A. J. Sparks	Do	
John A Logan	Do	
Abraham Lincoln	Fifty Nine	Electorat Large
Frederick Hecker	Do	
Elisha P Ferry	Do	
Jerome J Beardsley	Do	

Abraham Lincoln
Frederick Hecker
Elisha P Ferry
Jerome J Beardsley
William Pithian
T. Judson Hale
Abraham Jonas

ILLINOIS POLL BOOK, 1856

In 1856, Lincoln and Jonas were among the organizers of the new Republican Party in Illinois, and their names appear repeatedly in these poll books from various Illinois precincts, evidence of their passionate involvement—always on the same side—in politics. On Election Day, election officials carefully recorded all of the information concerning the election—the candidates, the people who voted, and the sum of the votes—in these individual poll books containing the names of all registered voters.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

Lincoln formally kicked off his campaign to unseat Douglas at a special Republican nominating convention held in Springfield on June 16, 1858. There he delivered one of the finest speeches of his life. “A house divided against itself cannot stand,” he proclaimed, quoting a well-known teaching from the Gospels.[58] “I believe,” he

explained, “this government cannot endure permanently half slave and half free.” Linking Douglas to what he portrayed as a conspiracy to secure slavery throughout the country, he sought to distance Illinois Republicans from Douglas. Ever distrustful of the leonine “Little Giant,” Lincoln insisted that Douglas was a determined opponent of human equality and a staunch advocate of slavery. (“For years he has labored to prove it a sacred right of white men to take negro slaves into the new territories.”) Quoting Ecclesiastes (9:4), he declared that “a living dog”—a modest reference to himself—“is better than a dead lion.” His own emotions, he knew, had been deeply stirred by slavery’s advances; Douglas, by contrast, was indifferent—“He don’t care anything about it.”[59]

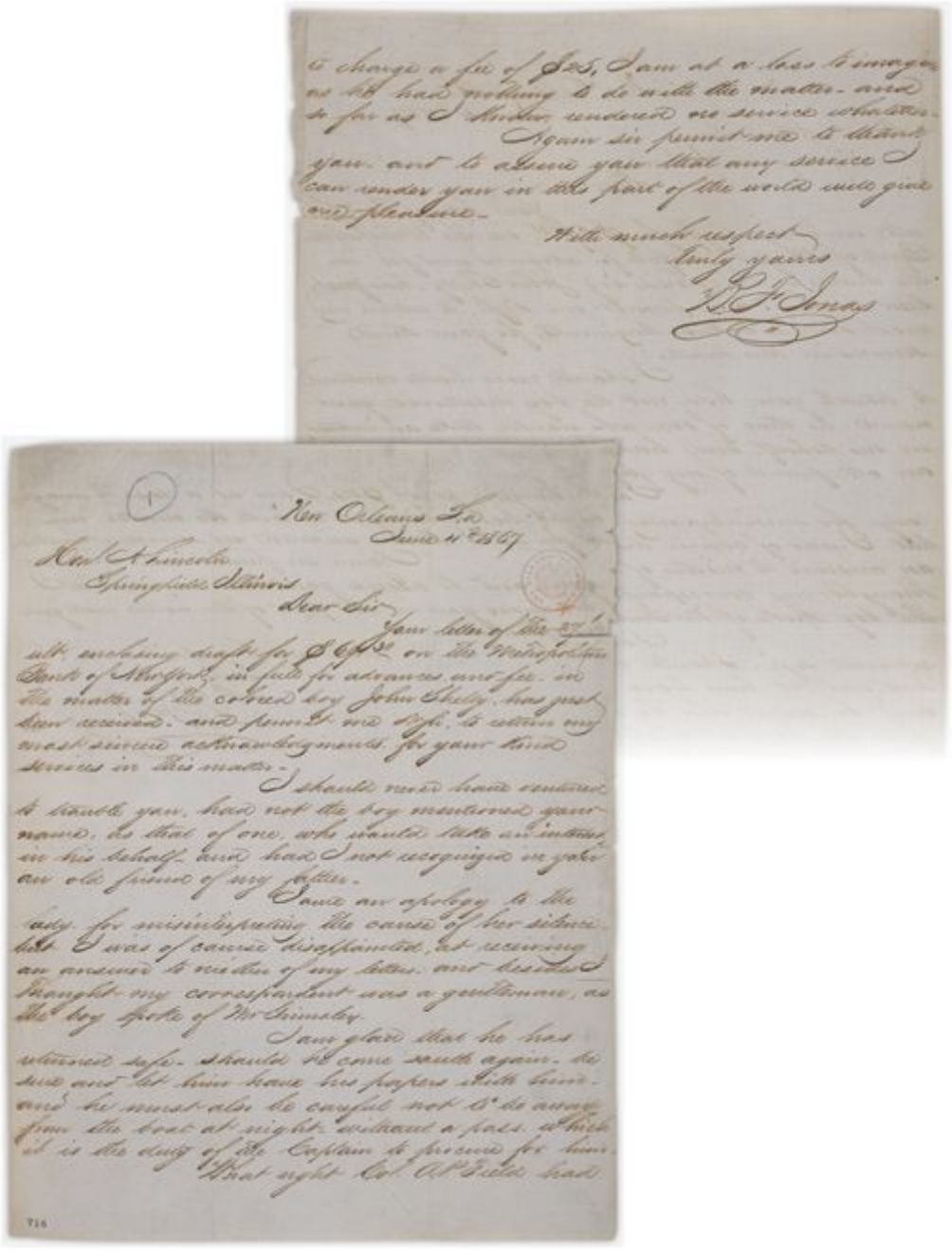
Abraham Jonas and his partner, Henry Asbury, strongly supported Lincoln. In July, Asbury sent the candidate probing questions concerning Douglas’s stance on slavery. He particularly urged him to press Douglas. “Don’t let him dodge here; he must come out here,” he coaxed, encouraging Lincoln to challenge Douglas to explain how slavery might be limited anywhere in the United States.[60] By the time the letter arrived, Lincoln and Douglas had agreed to a series of seven debates across the state of Illinois. The sixth debate was scheduled for Quincy.

Before then, Lincoln agreed to spend a day between his first and second debates on August 21 and August 27, respectively, in the village of Augusta, some forty-one miles from Quincy, where a Republican convention to select a congressional and state senatorial candidate was taking place and Jonas thought that one of Lincoln’s “sledge hammer speeches” would “effect wonders.” “My mind is at once made up to be with you at Augusta on the 25th,” Lincoln promised.[61]

Good to his word, he made the journey, and Abraham Jonas, along with his son Edward, spent time with him. Edward, subsequently the only one of Jonas’s sons to fight for the Union, never forgot his encounter with Lincoln, who was drawn to children. “While my father was speaking,” Edward recalled, “I suddenly felt a tickling behind my ear. Thinking it a bug or fly I slapped vigorously, but upon its being repeated several times, I became suspicious and turned suddenly and caught the fly. It was Mr. Lincoln with a straw in his hand. He made it all right at once by catching me up with his long arm, drawing me to his side and talking to me very entertainingly until his turn came to address the assemblage.” Lincoln went on to address more than 1,200 people on the

subject of slavery and then likely took counsel with the elder Jonas and Asbury concerning his forthcoming debate in Freeport, on August 27.[62]

While Lincoln and Douglas were busy debating, Jonas did not sit idle. He was busy campaigning on Lincoln's behalf. In late September, for example, he helped bring 5,000 people to Warsaw, about thirty-four miles from Quincy, to hear Senator Lyman Trumbull speak out for the Republican Party. When Trumbull was delayed, Jonas himself rose to speak, addressing the crowd for two hours, "in which," a sympathetic local paper reported, "he held his audience spell bound."[63]

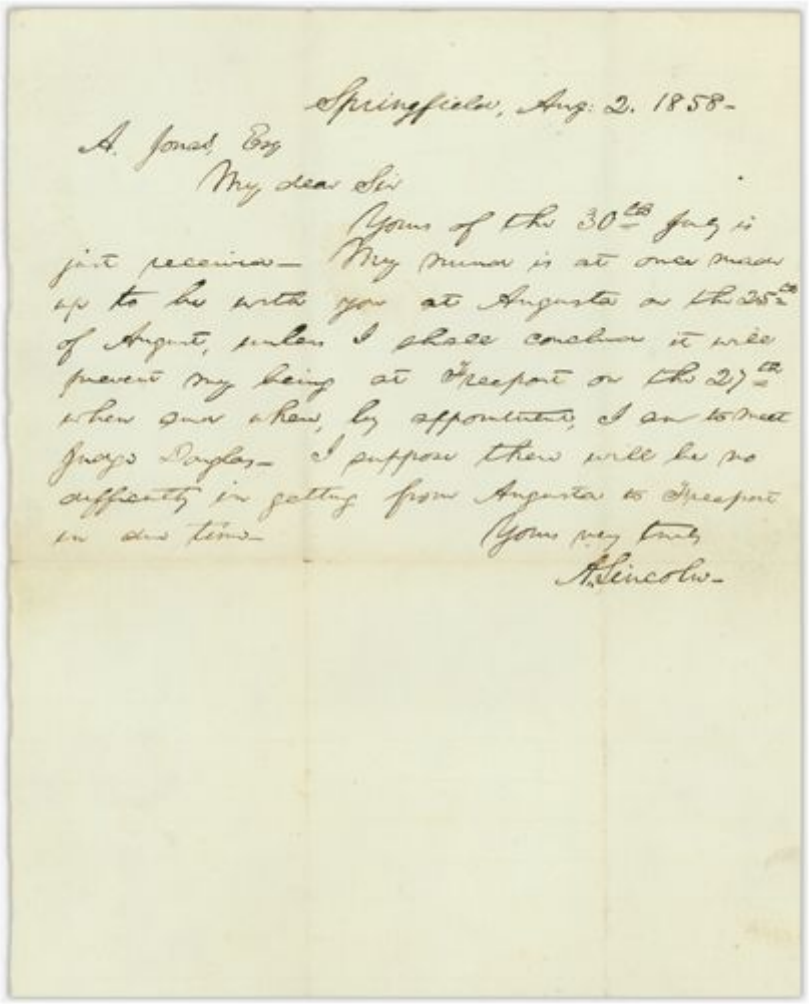


BENJAMIN JONAS TO LINCOLN, JUNE 4, 1857

Who wrote who first is unclear, but together Lincoln and Abraham Jonas's son, Benjamin, worked to get an unjustly held "free man of color" out of a New Orleans jail. Later the younger Jonas would, along with as many as four brothers, join the Confederacy. Nonetheless, he later recalled how "Mr. Lincoln always asked after us when he saw anyone from New Orleans during the war."

Courtesy of Library of Congress

"My mind is at once made up to be with you at Augusta on the 25th…"



Springfield, Aug: 2. 1858-

A. Jonas, Esq

My dear Sir

Yours of the 30th ult. is just received- My mind is at once made up to be with you at Augusta on the 25th inst. unless I shall conclude it will prevent my being at Freeport on the 27th- when and where, by appointment, I am to meet Judge Douglas- I suppose there will be no difficulty in getting from Augusta to Freeport in due time-

Yours very truly

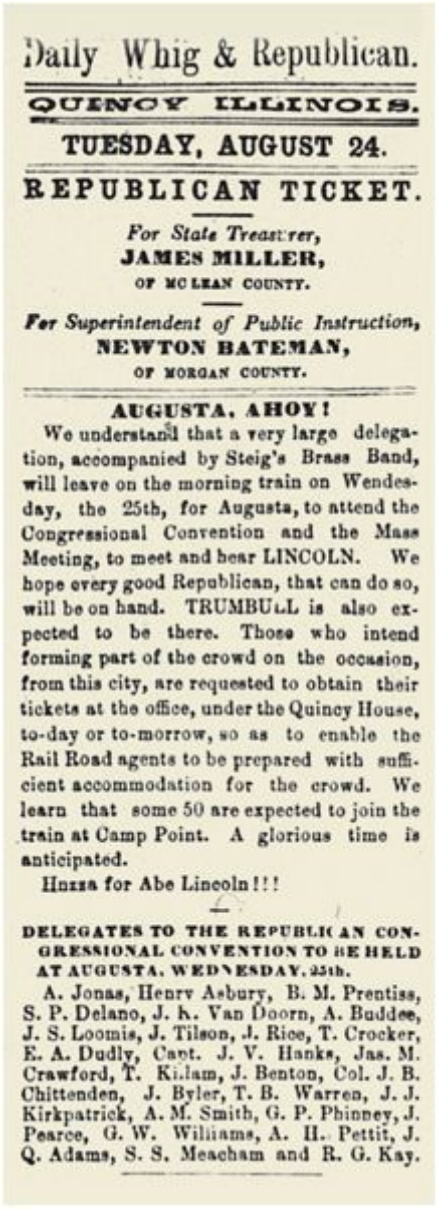
A. Lincoln-

LINCOLN TO JONAS, AUGUST 2, 1858

Summoned by Abraham Jonas in July 1858 to give another of his "sledge hammer speeches" on behalf of the Republican congressional candidates in Augusta, Illinois, Lincoln—although himself immersed in his own grueling race against Stephen A. Douglas for the Senate—heeded Jonas's political call to show up and speak. "My mind is at once made up to be with you at Augusta on the 25th," he replied here. It is noteworthy that Lincoln, who would first debate Douglas on the 21st and again, the second time, on August 27th, took Jonas's advice.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

When Lincoln arrived in Quincy to debate Douglas, on October 13, Jonas, as chair of the local Committee on Arrangements, was one of his hosts. The law office of Jonas and Asbury, according to a retrospective account, served as "a kind of Lincoln headquarters."[64] Contemporary newspaper advertisements, signed by Jonas, encouraged voters to travel to Quincy for the debate, to "hear the true principles of the Republican Party expounded and the unsound doctrines of the Douglas Democracy exposed."[65] Jonas, who appreciated the importance of pageantry, also made sure that when Lincoln arrived on the morning train from Macomb, an elaborate procession accompanied him to the courthouse. Following the debate, doubtless also at Jonas's initiative, a "splendid torchlight procession" brought him to the patrician home of Orville Hickman Browning, where he spent the night (though Browning himself was away at court in Carthage).[66] The debate itself did not break new ground but did offer Lincoln an opportunity to spell out in pithy fashion the difference, as he saw it, between his Republican Party and Douglas's Democrats: "the difference of opinion, reduced to its lowest terms, is no other than the difference between the men who think slavery a wrong and those who do not think it wrong. The Republican party think it wrong—we think it is a moral, a social and a political wrong."[67]



Daily Whig & Republican.

QUINCY ILLINOIS.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 24.

REPUBLICAN TICKET.

For State Treasurer,
JAMES MILLER,
OF MCLEAN COUNTY.

For Superintendent of Public Instruction,
NEWTON BATEMAN,
OF MORGAN COUNTY.

AUGUSTA, AHOY!

We understand that a very large delegation, accompanied by Steig's Brass Band, will leave on the morning train on Wendesday, the 25th, for Augusta, to attend the Congressional Convention and the Mass Meeting, to meet and hear LINCOLN. We hope every good Republican, that can do so, will be on hand. TRUMBULL is also expected to be there. Those who intend forming part of the crowd on the occasion, from this city, are requested to obtain their tickets at the office, under the Quincy House, to-day or to-morrow, so as to enable the Rail Road agents to be prepared with sufficient accommodation for the crowd. We learn that some 50 are expected to join the train at Camp Point. A glorious time is anticipated.

Huzza for Abe Lincoln!!!

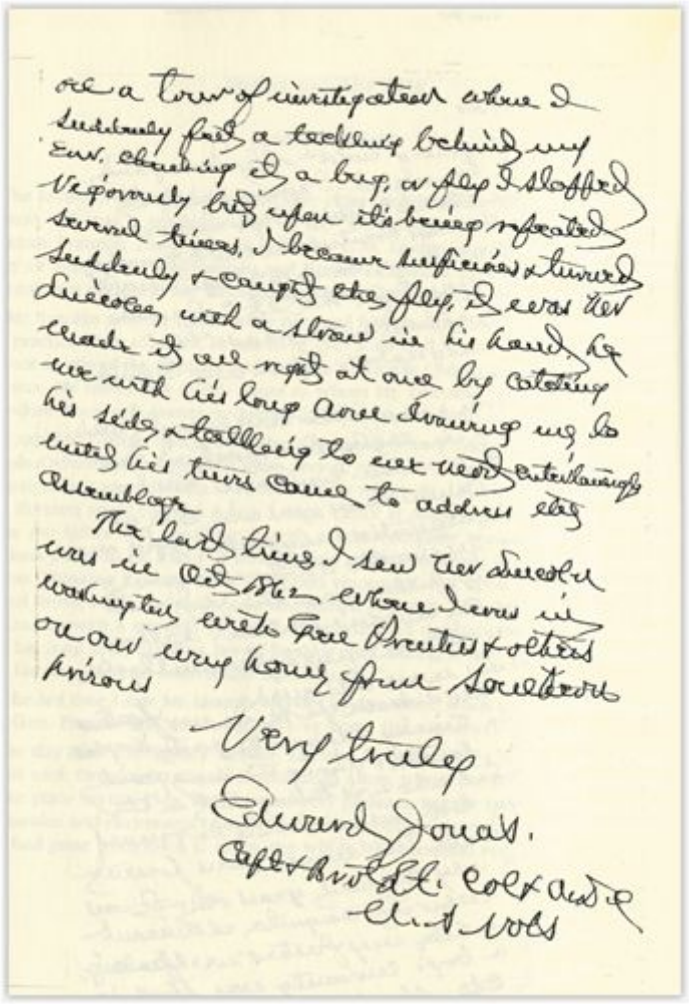
DELEGATES TO THE REPUBLICAN CONGRESSIONAL CONVENTION TO BE HELD AT AUGUSTA, WEDNESDAY, 25th.

A. Jonas, Henry Asbury, B. M. Prentiss, S. P. Delano, J. K. Van Doorn, A. Buddee, J. S. Loomis, J. Tilson, J. Rice, T. Crocker, E. A. Dudly, Capt. J. V. Hanks, Jas. M. Crawford, T. Kilam, J. Benton, Col. J. B. Chittenden, J. Byler, T. B. Warren, J. J. Kirkpatrick, A. M. Smith, G. P. Phinney, J. Pearce, G. W. Williams, A. H. Pettit, J. Q. Adams, S. S. Meacham and R. G. Kay.

THE *QUINCY DAILY WHIG,* AUGUST 24, 1858

"Augusta Ahoy!" The local Quincy newspaper announces Lincoln's upcoming visit to Augusta: "Huzza for Abe Lincoln!!!"

Courtesy of the Quincy Public Library



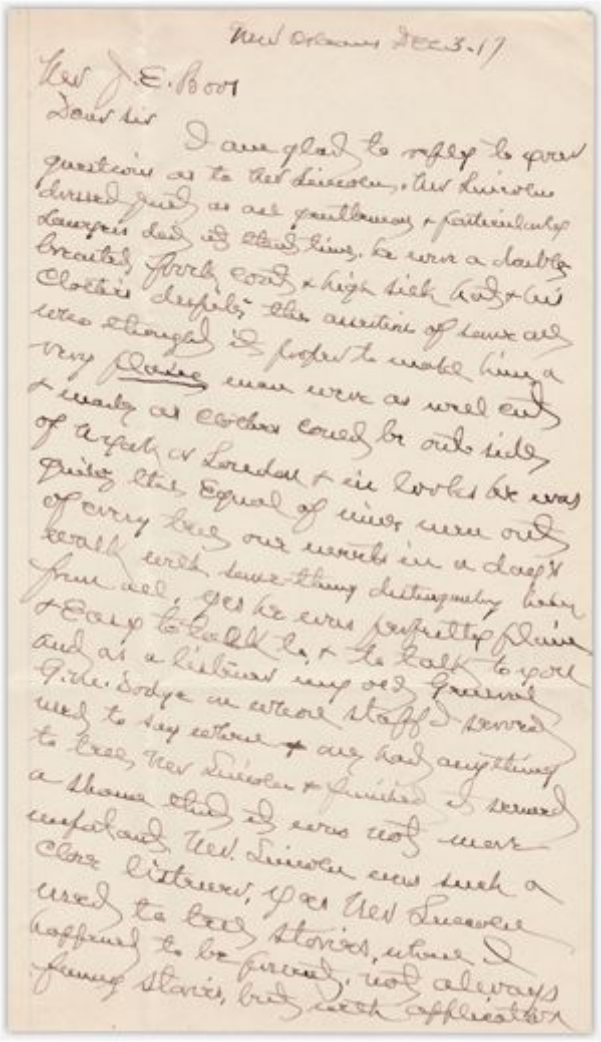
EDWARD JONAS, "I SUDDENLY FELT A TICKLING BEHIND MY EAR…"

As Lincoln and Abraham Jonas's son Edward sat listening to the elder Jonas speak at an Augusta political event in the week between the first and second debates, the younger Jonas was playfully teased, he later recalled, by Lincoln himself.

Collection of John E. Boos

By the time he uttered those words in Quincy, Lincoln may have sensed that he was fighting a losing battle. Douglas's campaign chest was far richer than his, and years of gerrymandered voting districts and malapportioned seats in Illinois gave the Democrats a clear electoral advantage; the rule of "one man one vote" was not yet in force. In addition, Lincoln proved too radical for some voters. They feared, despite his denials, that a vote for him was a vote for abolition. Perhaps in an effort to steel himself (even as he reassured others that "we shall carry the day") Lincoln told one of those who met with him at Quincy, the humorist David R. Locke, that he would win the popular vote "but that Douglas would, nevertheless, be elected to the Senate, owing to the skillful manner in which the State had been districted in his interest." That is precisely what

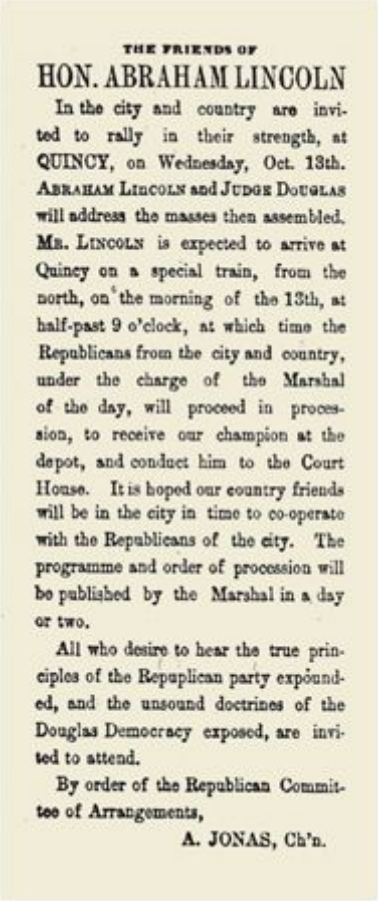
happened on Election Day. Lincoln won the popular vote but Douglas became senator. Yet even as he lost his Senate bid, Lincoln knew that he had advanced the cause of human equality, attracted nationwide attention to himself and his platform, and inflicted great political damage upon Douglas. “You can’t overturn a pyramid,” he reputedly observed, “but you can undermine it; that’s what I have been trying to do.”[68] In the aftermath, Henry Asbury wrote to thank Lincoln “for your noble canvass in behalf of Freedom.” Speaking, one suspects, for his law partner Abraham Jonas as well, he encouraged Lincoln not to “be persuaded by soreheads to abandon the positions you and we assumed in the late canvass until we have fought out the battle,” a hint that another, even more decisive electoral contest lay ahead. “I simply write to say,” Asbury concluded, “you have been and are right.” Lincoln sent him back a reassuring reply. “The fight must go on,” he agreed. “The cause of civil liberty must not be surrendered at the end of one, or even, one hundred defeats.”[69] He expressed similar sentiments to the chair of the Republican state central committee, his friend and de facto campaign manager, Norman B. Judd. “Let the past as nothing be,” he wrote him in the election’s aftermath. “For the future my view is that the fight must go on.” A day later, he consoled Judd with wisdom from the East, sometimes attributed to King Solomon and deeply important to his own psychological well-being. “And this too shall pass away,” he wrote, “Never fear.”[70]



EDWARD JONAS RECALLS HIS FATHER'S FRIEND

The youngest Jonas son, Edward, the only son of Abraham to fight for the Union, fondly recalls in 1917 how Lincoln dressed, talked, listened, and debated in Quincy, fifty-nine years before: "Yes he was perfectly plain & easy to talk to … Mr. Lincoln was such a close listener. Yes Mr. Lincoln used to tell stories, when I happened to be present…"
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Confessing to Judd that in the wake of his defeat he was "absolutely without money now for even household purposes," Lincoln took a long view of his situation—much as he would repeatedly do later, following defeats in the Civil War. Looking ahead, he even promised to contribute $250 toward discharging his party's debt from the election, but only after a real estate investment he had earlier made with Judd was settled.[71]



THE FRIENDS OF

HON. ABRAHAM LINCOLN

In the city and country are invited to rally in their strength, at QUINCY, on Wednesday, Oct. 13th. ABRAHAM LINCOLN and JUDGE DOUGLAS will address the masses then assembled. MR. LINCOLN is expected to arrive at Quincy on a special train, from the north, on the morning of the 13th, at half-past 9 o'clock, at which time the Republicans from the city and country, under the charge of the Marshal of the day, will proceed in procession, to receive our champion at the depot, and conduct him to the Court House. It is hoped our country friends will be in the city in time to co-operate with the Republicans of the city. The programme and order of procession will be published by the Marshal in a day or two.

All who desire to hear the true principles of the Repuplican party expounded, and the unsound doctrines of the Douglas Democracy exposed, are invited to attend.

By order of the Republican Committee of Arrangements,

A. JONAS, Ch'n.

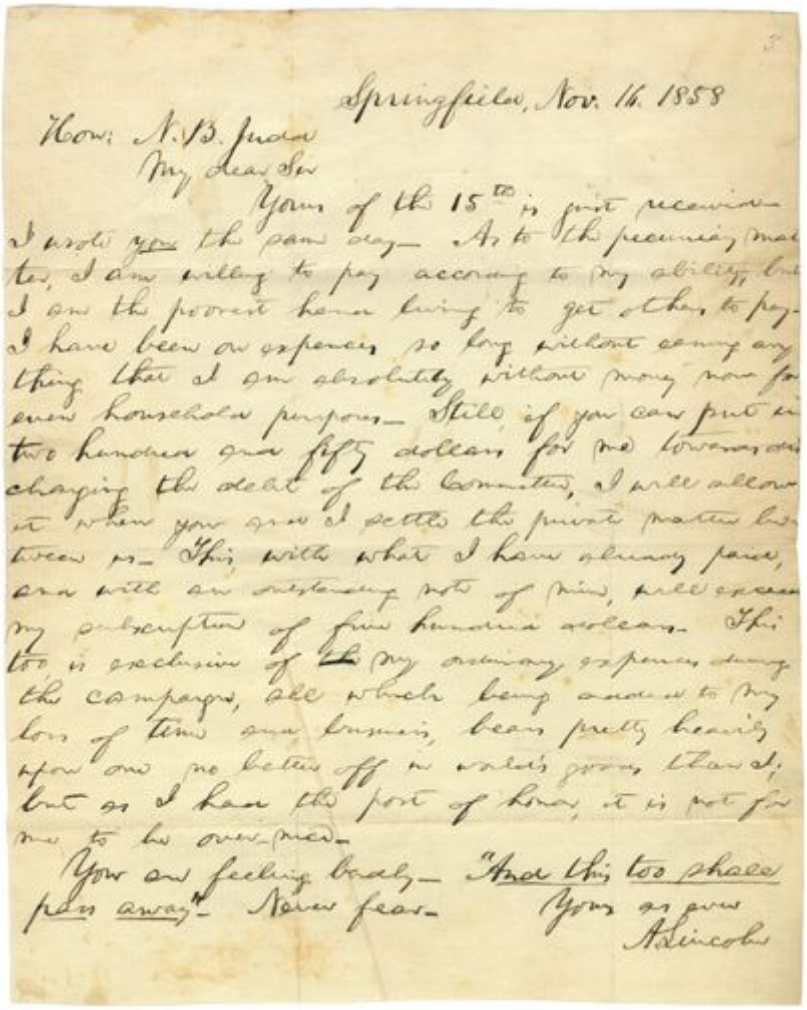
THE *QUINCY DAILY WHIG,* OCTOBER 7, 1858

Jonas, as the Republican chairman of the committee for the Lincoln-Douglas debate in Quincy, published this invitation in the local papers: "The Friends of Hon. Abraham Lincoln ... are invited to rally in their strength ... to hear the true principles of the Republican Party expounded, and the unsound doctrines of the Douglas Democracy exposed." Jonas not only signed the printed invitation but introduced Lincoln to the crowd.
Courtesy of the Quincy Public Library

"I write merely to let you know that I am neither dead nor dying," Lincoln wrote reassuringly to a friend on December 12, 1858. His defeat still stung and he experienced moments of dark depression, but in one interview, he compared himself to a boy who, having had his finger squeezed pretty badly, "felt too big to cry and too badly hurt to laugh." He understood, in short, that he had not been wounded nearly as seriously as first he thought. "We shall," he vowed, "beat them in the long run."[72]

The passage of time, the renewal of his law practice, and a rising stream of much-needed income all likely contributed to Lincoln's improved demeanor. He also discovered, perhaps to his surprise, that he had become something of a national celebrity. Some even discerned in him presidential timber.

"You are feeling badly—'And this too shall pass away'—Never fear."



Springfield, Nov. 16. 1858

Hon: N. B. Judd
My dear Sir

Yours of the 15th is just received. I wrote you the same day. As to the pecuniary matter, I am willing to pay according to my ability, but I am the poorest human being to get others to pay. I have been on expenses so long without earning anything that I am absolutely without money now for even household purposes. Still if you can put in two hundred and fifty dollars for me towards discharging the debt of the Committee, I will allow it when you and I settle the private matter between us. This, with what I have already paid, and will on satisfactory note of mine, will exhaust my subscription of five hundred dollars. This too is exclusive of my ordinary expenses during the campaign, all which being added to my loss of time and business, bear pretty heavily upon one no better off in worlds goods than I, but as I have the part of honor, it is not for me to be over-much.

Your are feeling badly— "And this too shall pass away"— Never fear.

Yours as ever
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO NORMAN B. JUDD, "NEVER FEAR," NOVEMBER 16, 1858

Following his defeat in the epic 1858 Senate contest, Lincoln writes to campaign manager Judd. "You are feeling badly—'And this too shall pass away'—Never fear." The phrase came from an Eastern folktale attributed to King Solomon. Judd's disappointment would indeed soon pass away: within six weeks Lincoln would be proposed as a possible presidential candidate in the 1860 election.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

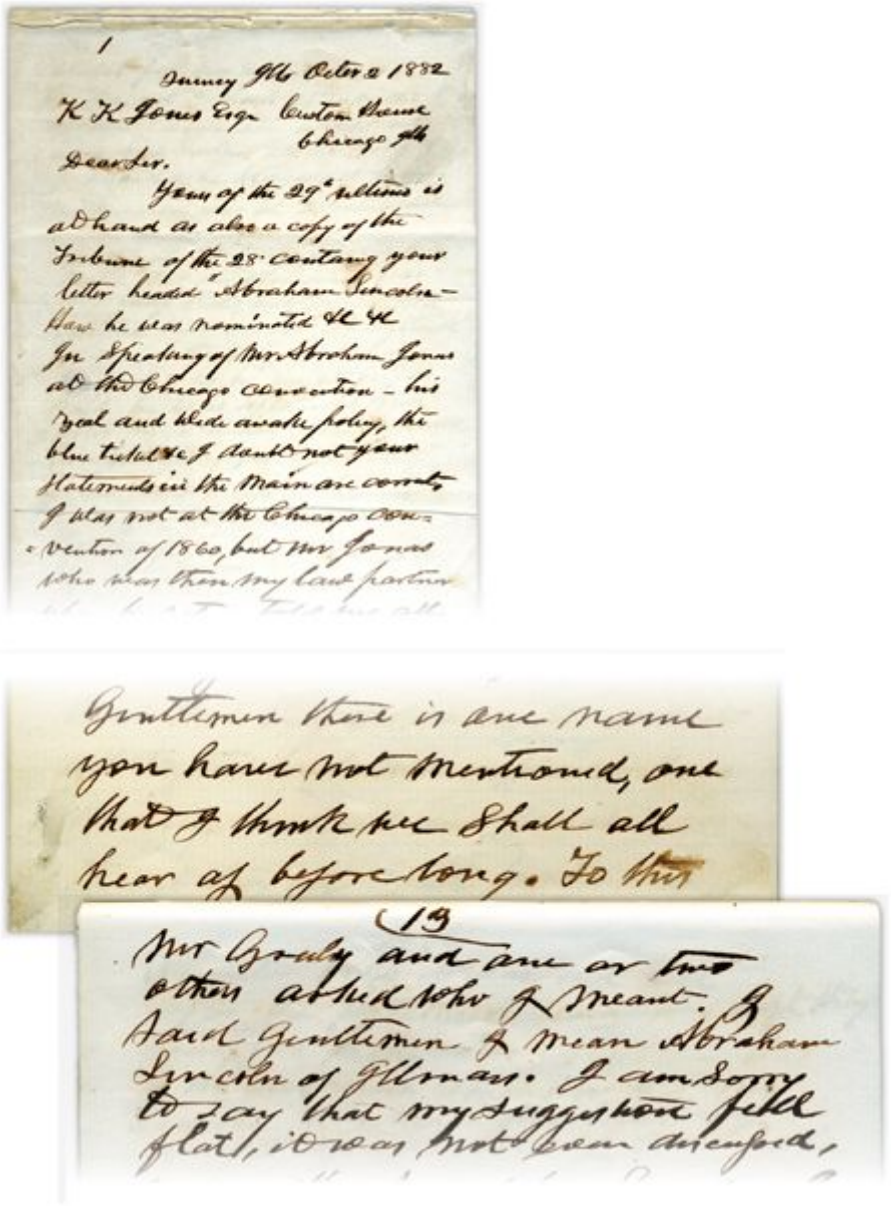
HORACE GREELEY

It was in Horace Greeley's presence in Jonas's law office that Lincoln's name first surfaced as a potential Republican presidential candidate for 1860.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Abraham Jonas, whose political instincts were widely admired, promoted Lincoln's candidacy for the nation's highest office. When Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune* and one of the most influential political figures in the country, showed up in Quincy on December 26, 1858, Jonas called together his Republican friends to meet with him in the law offices of Asbury and Jonas. The talk dealt with "political matters," and Jonas, as well as the others in the room, openly criticized Greeley for his "benevolent attitude" toward Douglas in the senatorial campaign. When the talk turned to the upcoming presidential contest, various names were bandied about including William Seward of New York, Edward Bates of Missouri, and the elderly Supreme Court justice John McClean, whose dissent in the Dred Scott case made him a Republican hero. "Gentlemen, there is one name you have not mentioned," Henry Asbury recalled interjecting when he wrote of the meeting years later. "I mean Abraham Lincoln." The suggestion initially fell flat, Asbury remembered, but then his Jewish partner, Abraham Jonas, reinforced it. "There may be more in Asbury's suggestion than any of us now think," Jonas declared, as if in echo of Lincoln's "And this too shall pass away. Never fear." Events would soon prove both men correct.[74]

"Gentlemen, there is one name you have not mentioned, one that I think we shall all hear of before long ... I said

Gentlemen I mean Abraham Lincoln of Illinois."



Gentlemen there is one name you have not mentioned, one that I think we shall all hear of before long. To this

13

Mr Greely and one or two others asked who I meant. I said Gentlemen I mean Abraham Lincoln of Illinois. I am sorry to say that my suggestion fell flat, it was not seen accepted,

HENRY ASBURY TO K.K. JONES, OCTOBER 2, 1882

A twenty-two-page letter in which Jonas's law partner Henry Asbury details Lincoln's rise to the presidency—and the key role played throughout by Jonas. Recounted here is the meeting with Horace Greeley—put together at the last minute "with the indomitable energy & readiness, characteristic of Jonas" at their law office—in which Lincoln's name was first proposed as a candidate for president. Also described, in detail, is how Jonas orchestrated Lincoln's surprising nomination at the 1860 Republican Convention.

Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, 1858

The self-proclaimed "homeliest man in the State of Illinois" is generally thought to have sat for this beardless portrait in 1858, in Peoria. A slight variant of this pose, taken at the same sitting, was used in the 1860 presidential campaign poster about which young Grace Bedell, whose father had brought home the poster, famously wrote to Lincoln with advice on how to obtain more votes: "if you will let your whiskers grow ... you would look a great deal better for your face is so thin ... then you would be President."

Shapell Manuscript Collection

CHAPTER THREE

ONE OF MY MOST VALUED FRIENDS

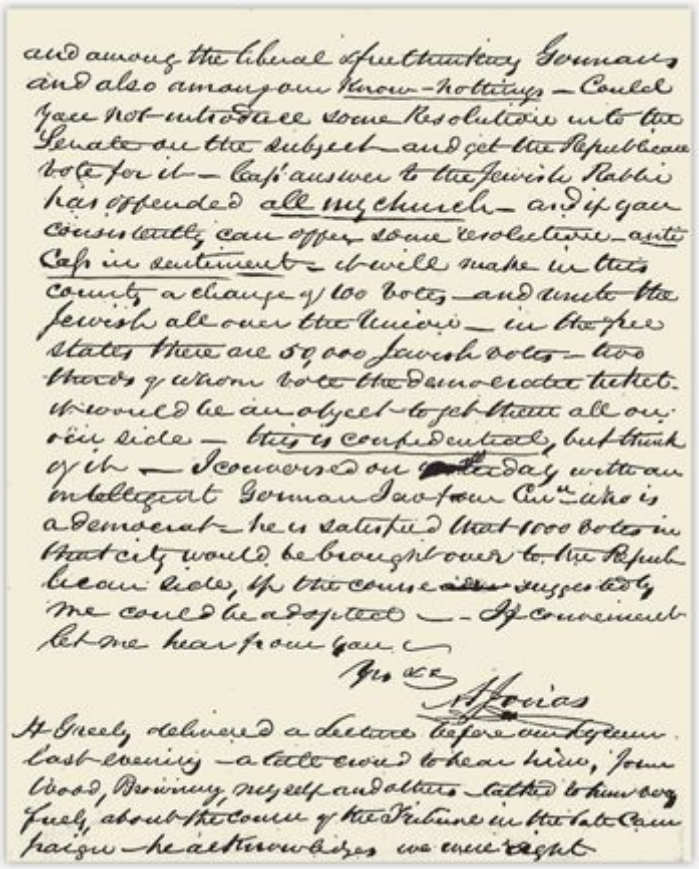
1858–1860

"We have no chance in the world for the Catholics," Abraham Jonas argued, as he laid out a strategy for winning new recruits into the Republican Party's ranks. Writing to Senator Lyman Trumbull on the same December day as he talked politics with Horace Greeley in Quincy, Jonas urged the party to focus on political outsiders. Specifically, he proposed an effort, "preparatory to the fight of 1860," to win over "the liberal and freethinking Germans," the anti-Catholic "Know-nothings," and most interesting of all, "the Israelites."[1]

The context for Jonas's plan was "the Jewish abduction case at Rome," known as the Mortara Affair. Six-year-old Edgardo Mortara had been secretly baptized as an infant by his nursemaid in Bologna and, as a consequence, was torn away from his parents' Jewish home in 1858 and handed over to the Church to be raised as a Catholic. The case provided grist for the anti-Catholic mill in America and attracted enormous public attention. Yet when American Jewish leaders sought help from Secretary of State Lewis Cass and President James Buchanan in freeing the youngster, they were rebuffed. The administration solemnly explained that the United States had "neither the right nor the duty … to express a moral censorship over the conduct of other independent governments." In reality, the concern was that foreign governments might link the Mortara Affair to American slavery, which similarly turned a blind eye to the forcible separation of (slave) children from their parents. Fearful of being criticized for America's own immoral behavior, its leaders resolved not to criticize others.[2]

This decision to take no action on Edgardo Mortara's behalf, according to Jonas, "offended all my church" and presented the Republicans with a golden opportunity. "Could you not," he asked Trumbull, "introduce some Resolution into the Senate on the subject and get the Republican vote for it?" A vigorous resolution that was "anti-Cass

in sentiment," he promised, would "make in this county [Adams County, Illinois] a change of 100 votes, and unite the Jewish [*sic*] all over the Union." Since he calculated that "in the free states there are 50,000 Jewish votes, two thirds of whom vote the democratic ticket," his goal, with the help of a Senate resolution, was to get those votes "all on our side" by Election Day.[3]



ABRAHAM JONAS STRATEGIZES WITH SENATOR LYMAN TRUMBULL, DECEMBER 26, 1858

The votes of 50,000 American Jews, Jonas contended, were up for grabs in 1860. The Buchanan administration, which had mishandled the outrageous Mortara Affair—in which a Jewish child was secretly baptized and then kidnapped and raised as a Catholic in Rome—had offended, Jonas declared, "all my church."

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

While Jonas was working behind the scenes to boost the Republican Party's ranks, Abraham Lincoln was busy with his law practice. His run for the Senate had, as he had earlier explained to Norman Judd, greatly reduced his income in 1858, and he was working hard to recoup. That meant fewer political engagements. "I regret the necessity of declining," he wrote in response to Judd's request to speak in Morris, Illinois. "This

year I must devote to my private business." In a more colorful letter, he apologetically informed a prominent Republican who sought his presence in Keokuk, Iowa, that "I shall go to the wall for bread and meat, if I neglect my business this year as well as last."[4]

Attending to business, however, did not preclude Lincoln from keeping abreast of politics. "When you can find leisure, write me your present impressions of Douglas's movements," he wrote Lyman Trumbull early in 1859.[5] A few months later, he warned Republicans in Chicago not to be taken in by Stephen A. Douglas's ideas: "Judge Douglas," he charged, "would lead us inevitably to the nationalization of slavery."[6] Promoting the Republican Party and opposing the spread of slavery were Lincoln's primary political goals at this time. In response to those who sought to promote him as a candidate in the 1860 election, he modestly replied, "I do not think myself fit for the Presidency."[7]

"We should look beyond our noses"

LINCOLN TO SHUYLER COLFAX, JULY 6, 1859

Lincoln's strategy in 1860 was to avoid regional issues, which were likely to distract and divide Republicans and ruin their chances for a victory—what he called "apples of discord"—and instead "look beyond our noses" by focusing on the great issue that united them, namely to prevent the spread and nationalization of slavery.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Evidence of nativism in the Republican ranks raised grave suspicions about the party, particularly among Germans and Jews, that threatened to upset Lincoln and Jonas's political calculations. Lincoln was particularly worried about "the movement against foreigners in Massachusetts," where, with Republican support, a popular initiative looked to impose upon foreigners a further two-year wait, following their naturalization, before they could vote or hold office. Lincoln urged Republicans to resist "the temptation in different localities to 'platform' for something which will be

popular just there, but which, nevertheless, will be a firebrand elsewhere."[8] Nativists, however, ignored him.

Once the Massachusetts initiative passed, German-American papers expressed outrage at the new law, particularly since no similar wait time was imposed upon ex-slaves or free blacks who moved to the state. Carl Schurz, a leader of the German-American community (and a friend of many Jews and later of Lincoln) who had battled for social rights in his home country before escaping to the United States, delivered a celebrated address at Faneuil Hall in Boston entitled "True Americanism," where he spoke out boldly in favor of "toleration" and "equality of rights" and against the state initiative.[9] Other leaders of the German immigrant community demanded that Republicans everywhere speak out in opposition to what Massachusetts had done. The German-American vote, they hinted, hung in the balance. In a letter to Theodore Canisius, editor of Springfield's German newspaper, the Illinois *Staats-Anzeiger,* Lincoln lost no time ("I have written this hastily") in complying. His statement aimed not only to distance himself from nativism but to stress the consistency of his thinking, and his desire to elevate people of all kinds, blacks and foreigners included:

> As I understand the Massachusetts provision, I am against its adoption in Illinois, or in any other place, where I have a right to oppose it. Understanding the spirit of our institutions to aim at the elevation of men, I am opposed to whatever tends to degrade them. I have some little notoriety for commiserating the oppressed condition of the negro; and I should be strangely inconsistent if I could favor any project for curtailing the existing rights of white men, even though born in different lands, and speaking different languages from myself.[10]

Lincoln's law partner, William H. Herndon, delivered a major address on this same subject, published in the *Daily State Journal* on May 17, 1859, which explicitly included Jews among those deserving of equality. In distancing the Republican Party from nativism, he set forth a capacious vision of "freedom and justice to all" that ran parallel to Lincoln's own and was, for its time, extraordinary:

> I know of no distinction among men, except those of the heart and head. I now repeat that, though I am native born, my country is the World, and my love for man is as broad as the race, and as deep as its humanity. As a matter of course I include native and foreign people, Protestant and Catholic, "Jew and Gentile." I go the full length of justice to all men—equality among all American citizens and freedom to the race of man.[11]

Two weeks later, on May 30, Lincoln, using his own funds, purchased a printing press and type for the German-language Illinois *Staats-Anzeiger,* with the proviso that it promote Republican Party policies. His goal was to win over German Americans and to ensure that German-speaking voters, Gentiles and Jews alike, would be welcomed into the Republican camp.[12]

Meanwhile, Stephen A. Douglas was stumping for the Democrats. In Ohio, where both the governor and the legislature were on the ballot in 1859, Lincoln agreed to counter Douglas's appeals to "popular sovereignty" by delivering five public speeches over two days in Columbus, Dayton, Hamilton, and Cincinnati. The last of these, at Fifth Street Market in Cincinnati on September 17, 1859, attracted a crowd of thousands; it was "one of the best-attended events in Lincoln's career before he became president."[13] Cincinnati was by far the largest Ohio city at that time, with a population of some 160,000. As many as 10,000 of those residents were Jews; no Jewish community west of the Alleghenies was larger.[14] How many of those Jews turned out to hear Lincoln is unknown, but a lithograph produced for the event's fiftieth anniversary preserves the name "Rosenbaum" on a store sign atop the building from whose portico he spoke.[15] Jews must have heard something about his speech for it was broadly covered in the press and, according to one historian, "was the most widely read speech of his pre-presidency."[16]

LINCOLN'S FRIEND—AND ADVOCATE FOR JEWS—CARL SCHURZ

CARL SCHURZ, like Lincoln, was intimately acquainted with Jews and had come to know and respect them. His appreciation for Jews began back with his father in Liblar, Germany, who had a close Jewish friend whom he revered as honest and wise. Schurz befriended Jews at the University of Bonn and in German revolutionary circles, where he achieved great renown. Later, in America, where he settled in 1852, one of his closest friends was the pioneering Jewish pediatrician Abraham Jacobi. Schurz's wife, Margarethe Meyer, likewise grew up among Jews, and in America was sometimes mistaken for one. During the Civil War, Schurz, a staunch Republican, served as a brigadier general. The 82nd Illinois Infantry Company C, a Jewish company, served under him, and he often boasted of its commander, Edward S. Salomon.

Schurz remained close to the Jewish community throughout his life and spoke out frequently against anti-Semitism. "Jews have done as much as any other class of citizens,—nay … the Jews have, in proportion to their numbers, done far more," he declared in a salute to Jews in 1888 upon the dedication of a Jewish charity home. "I repeat this with all the greater willingness, as I have recently had occasion to observe the motive springs, the character and the aims of the so-called 'Anti-semitic movement'—a movement whose dark spirit of fanaticism and persecution insults the humane enlightenment of the nineteenth century.…"

Carl Schurz
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

In his more than two-hour-long address, Lincoln sought to calm those who accused him of dividing the country. He made clear that the Republicans had no intention of interfering with slavery where it already existed, such as across the river in Kentucky, but only opposed slavery's extension into new territories. Countering Douglas's ahistorical view that the nation's founders had allowed each state's citizens to decide the issue of slavery on their own, Lincoln reminded Cincinnatians that the reason why they had no slaves, unlike their across-the-river neighbors in Kentucky, was because the Founders had made that decision for them. The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 explicitly banned slavery and involuntary servitude in the territories that became Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. Finally, Lincoln turned to the coming presidential election. Insisting that principles, not sectional issues, would determine who the Republican candidate was, he reassured his listeners that "there are plenty of men in the slave states that are altogether good enough … to be either President or Vice President." But he also warned against compromising principles or putting forth a man, like Douglas, who sought to be all things to all people. "He who is not for us is against us," he concluded, quoting the Gospels.[17] "He who gathereth not with us scattereth."

LINCOLN IN CINCINNATI

This lithograph commemorates the famous speech Lincoln gave there on September 17, 1859. "I think slavery is wrong, morally and politically," Lincoln declared. "I desire that it should be no further spread in these United States, and I should not object if it should gradually terminate in the whole Union."
Cincinnati Museum Center

"How would you feel if we nominated you for President?" a visitor asked Lincoln on the morning following his Cincinnati speech.[18] Lincoln's response to this enticing question is not known, but the widely publicized address catapulted Lincoln back into the presidential fray, positioning him in the ideological center of the Republican Party. Over the next seven months, he delivered thirty speeches in eight states and the Kansas Territory, greatly enhancing his national visibility and broadening his own familiarity with the country.[19] Consistent with the strategy that Jonas had laid out early in the campaign, Lincoln often met with "liberal and freethinking Germans" as well as "Israelites" on these trips; sometimes they were the same people.

So it was when Lincoln traveled to the Kansas Territory in December 1859. This was the farthest west that he ever traveled, and he did so at the invitation of some fifty-three Republican merchants, bankers, and businessmen, organized by Lincoln's friend and distant relative Mark W. Delahay. Their goal, with the coming presidential election in mind, was to win Kansas, "bleeding" from pitched battles between proslavery and antislavery activists, for the Republican Party. They assured Lincoln, who himself had plenty of experience in frontier communities, that they would try to make his "expenses light," his "visit agreeable," and his "welcome hearty."[20] Significantly, one of the

signatories on this invitation was a pioneering Leavenworth Jew named Jonas (James) Wollman (1824–1905). The famed Wollman Skating Rink in New York is named for the Wollmans, whose descendants included the two brothers who founded the tax preparation company H&R Block. Born in Kempen-in-Posen, Prussia, where at one time he planned to become a rabbi, Wollman had arrived in the United States in 1851 and moved to Leavenworth soon after his marriage to Betty Kohn of St. Louis, in 1855. There he took advantage of the opportunities created by the Kansas-Nebraska Act and opened up a clothing store to service the many newcomers flooding into the well-located city. He soon expanded into dry goods, jewelry, books, and rubber goods. He also played an active role in the development of Jewish institutions in the city, including its first synagogue and cemetery. Wollman courageously sided with the minority in Leavenworth, many of them German immigrants like himself, who staunchly opposed the spread of slavery into the state. For a time, his store even occupied the same building as Delahay's antislavery newspaper, the *Territorial Register*. When "border ruffians" supportive of slavery's spread destroyed that paper in 1855, Wollman was taken into protective custody. He and his family were threatened with harm repeatedly; for a time, the Wollmans were driven from the city by proslavery forces and on several occasions his wife and infant daughter were detained. All this goes far to explain why Lincoln, who so vigorously opposed the spread of slavery into Kansas, sat down to dinner with the Wollmans on his visit to Leavenworth. Some sources claim that he dined with them and another local Jewish merchant family, Simon and Amalia Abeles, at the Delahay home. Others insist that it was the Wollmans themselves who hosted the dinner for Lincoln. Family lore holds that Betty Wolman was deeply impressed with Lincoln and predicted, when he departed, that someday the "great man" would "be President of the United States." It likewise recalls that Lincoln cradled the Wollmans' sixteen-month-old son, Henry, in his arms. What seems indisputable is that such interactions as he had with the Wollmans helped to further acquaint Lincoln with Jews. He understood that "Israelites" like them could form part of a new Republican coalition.[21]

THE WOLLMAN SHOP

On his visit to Leavenworth in 1859, which included a dinner or two with the Jewish leader and scholar Jonas Wollman and his family, Lincoln was quoted in the New York Daily Tribune *as saying he regarded it as "one of the happiest events of his life."*
The Kansas State Historical Society

Lincoln similarly met with Jews when he visited New York. He had been invited to New York in October 1859 in the wake of his widely publicized success in the Midwest. "We want to hear a speech from him, such a one as he delivered in Cincinnati," a New York lecture promoter explained to William H. Bailhache, coeditor of the Illinois *State Journal*.[22] Easterners hardly knew Abraham Lincoln, and he was excited by the opportunity to introduce himself but felt that he needed time to prepare.[23] His address, delivered on February 27, 1860, in the Great Hall of Cooper Union in New York City, was one of the most important of his career up to that time, and has been described as "the speech that made Abraham Lincoln president."[24]

ABRAM J. DITTENHOEFER

When Jewish lawyer Dittenhoefer met Lincoln on the day of the Cooper Union Address, he was impressed, and when they met again at Lincoln's hotel the day after, he was congratulatory—although Lincoln himself felt unsure his speech had been a success. In the 1864 reelection campaign, Dittenhoefer would become a Republican elector for Lincoln.
Museum of the City of New York

New York City was home to the largest Jewish community in the United States in 1860. Some twenty-seven synagogues and over forty-four Jewish charitable and educational societies served the city's 40,000 Jews. One out of every twenty New Yorkers was Jewish, the bulk of them recent immigrants from central Europe. Many of New York's Jews worked in the clothing trade. They depended for their livelihood upon Southern cotton and produced clothes destined for Southern markets. Many of them also had friends and relatives in the South. Unsurprisingly, therefore, they tended to sympathize with the South. Even if they expressed no personal support for slavery, preservation of the Union was still their paramount concern. As a result, the majority of Jews sided with the Democrats. A significant minority, however, especially Jewish liberals, freethinkers, and young people, vigorously disagreed. Horrified by the specter of slavery's spread, they gravitated toward the Republican Party. They were particularly interested in what a man like Abraham Lincoln had to say.[25]

How many Jews sat among the audience of over 900 that listened to Lincoln's address at Cooper Union is impossible to know.[26] But at least one, a young attorney named Abram J. Dittenhoefer (1836–1919), was actually sitting on the platform that night. Years later, he recounted what he had seen:

> Mr. Lincoln never ranted, but gave emphatic emphasis to what he wished especially to "put across" by a slowness and marked clearness of enunciation. His voice was unpleasant, almost rasping and shrill at first. Perhaps that was due to the fact that he found it necessary to force it. A little later, he seemed to control his voice better, and his earnestness invited and easily held the attention of his auditors.[27]

Dittenhoefer was only twenty-three when he witnessed the Cooper Union Address, but he had already made a name for himself in Republican circles. Born in the South, he had converted to antislavery in college, stumped for Frémont four years earlier, and then converted his father, a merchant, to the Republican cause. Explicit Jewish considerations, he confessed, prompted his conversion. Having read how Senator Benjamin Wade characterized Judah Benjamin, the proslavery Jewish senator from Louisiana, as "an Israelite with Egyptian principles," it struck Dittenhoefer "with great force that the Israelite … whose ancestors were enslaved in Egypt, ought not to uphold slavery in free America, and could not do so without bringing disgrace upon himself."[28]

LINCOLN AT COOPER UNION

On the night of February 27, 1860, at least 900 people heard Lincoln give one of the most famous speeches of his life. "No man ever before made such an impression," Horace Greeley proclaimed, "on his first appeal to a New York audience." The speech, punctuated by lyrical phrases, including "right makes might," made Lincoln, overnight, a national candidate.
Cooper Union

Dittenhoefer warmed toward Lincoln after hearing him at Cooper Union, especially when he forthrightly declared slavery wrong and opposed its spread yet promised, in moderate tones, "to let it alone where it is, because that much is due to the necessity

arising from its actual presence in the nation." As for Lincoln's famous closing line, which reversed the standard aphorism and declared, "Let us have faith that right makes might and in that faith, let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it," Dittenhoefer recalled that he and those around him responded less than enthusiastically. Many, he concluded, "left the auditorium that night, as I did, in a seriously thoughtful mood." The next morning, according to Dittenhoefer, Lincoln himself questioned his performance—indeed, he was a harsh critic of his own speeches, even his greatest ones. "I am not sure," Dittenhoefer quoted him as saying, "that I made a success."[29]

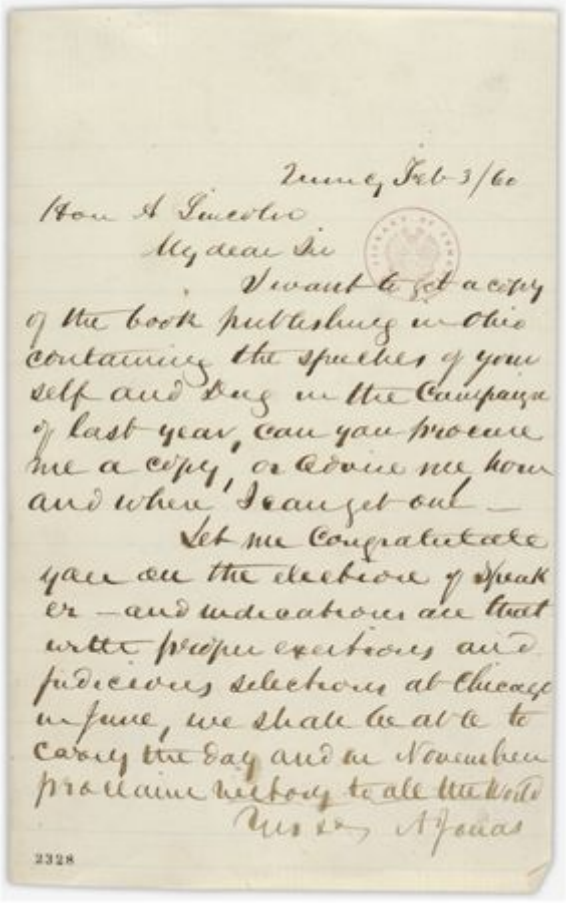
Subsequently, after the speech had been widely reprinted and discussed, Dittenhoefer knew better; he described the Cooper Union address as "epoch-making." Most scholars agree. According to historian Harold Holzer, for example, "Abraham Lincoln did triumph in New York. He delivered a learned, witty, and exquisitely reasoned address that electrified his elite audience and, more important, reverberated in newspapers and pamphlets alike until it reached tens of thousands of Republican voters across the North. He … departed politically reborn."[30]

As Lincoln's bid for the Republican nomination gathered steam in 1860, requests poured in for copies of his major speeches, particularly his 1858 debates with Stephen A. Douglas. Voters who had not heard Lincoln with their own ears wanted to have the opportunity to read what he said, and Lincoln's supporters wanted to be able to quote him verbatim in speeches they made on his behalf. Lincoln had received requests for transcripts of his debates with Douglas at least as early as January 1859, but at that time he expressed no interest in their publication beyond the press. By late March, he was enthusiastic about publishing the debates ("I would really be pleased with a publication substantially as you propose"). He insisted, consistent with his character, that the publication be "mutual, and fair," reproducing transcripts from each side "as reported by his own friends."

Lincoln himself worked hard on the volume, which, like many a book, took longer than expected to appear. By February 1860, Abraham Jonas was impatient to obtain a copy and wrote directly to Lincoln: "I want to get a copy of the book publishing in Ohio containing the speeches of your self and Douglas in the Campaign of last year, can you procure me a copy, or advise me, how and where I can get one—"? Lincoln responded at once, reporting that the books "would not be out before March." In fact, they did not appear until April, just a month prior to the Republican Convention. In a particularly

warm and impressive letter to a member of the Jewish community, Lincoln then proceeded, revealingly, to express his friendship for Jonas in singularly intimate terms ("you are one of my most valued friends") and to promise him one of the hundred gratis copies that had been allocated to him by the publisher. He kept his word. The copy he personally inscribed to Jonas of *Political Debates Between Hon. Abraham Lincoln and Hon. Stephen A. Douglas, In the Celebrated Campaign of 1858 in Illinois* survives to this day. The debates themselves went through eight editions, with some 50,000 copies distributed prior to the election, and became a campaign bestseller.[31]

As one of Lincoln's most valued friends, Jonas was determined to see Lincoln nominated by the Republican Party for the presidency. Senator William H. Seward of New York, however, was the front-running candidate for that position. A staunch opponent of slavery, Seward in 1858 had incautiously warned of a coming "irrepressible conflict" between the North and the South. "The United States," he declared, "must and will, sooner or later, become either entirely a slaveholding nation, or entirely a free-labor nation." Fearing that such militant talk could doom his electoral chances, his advisors dispatched him on an eight-month tour of Europe and the Middle East, including, in September 1859, Jerusalem.[32] During that voluntary exile, Lincoln delivered his well-publicized speech in Cincinnati, which led to the success at Cooper Union and greatly improved his own chances for nomination.



Quincy Feb 3/60

Hon A Lincoln

My dear Sir

I want to get a copy of the book publishing in Ohio containing the speeches of yourself and Doug in the Campaign of last year, can you procure me a copy, or advise me how and when I can get one —

Let me Congratulate you on the decision of Speaker — and indications are that with proper exertions and judicious selections at Chicago in June, we shall be able to carry the day and in November proclaim victory to all the World

Yours truly A Jonas

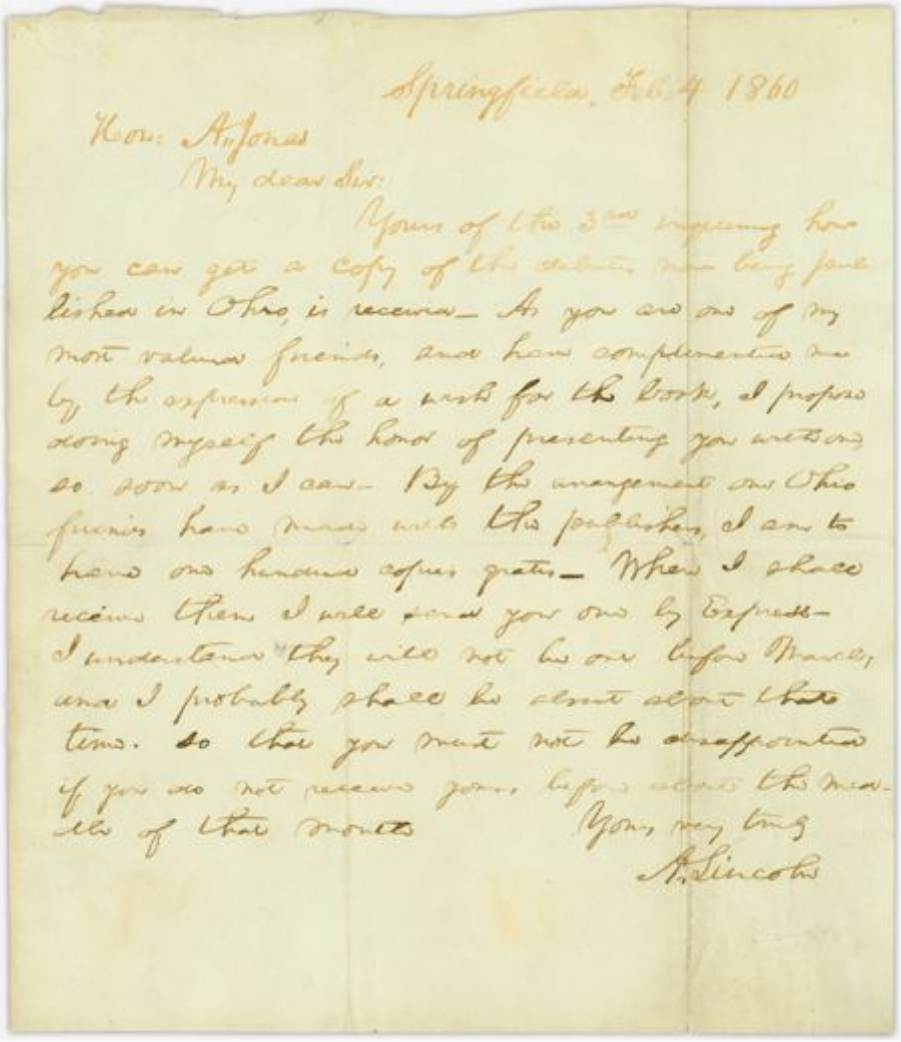
2328

ABRAHAM JONAS TO LINCOLN, FEBRUARY 3, 1860

Eager to obtain a copy of the Lincoln-Douglas debates book, Jonas predicts his friend's ascension to the presidency: "... at Chicago in June, we shall be able to carry the day and in November proclaim victory to all the World."

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

"As you are one of my most valued friends..."



Springfield, Feb. 4 1860

Hon: A. Jonas

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 3rd inquiring how you can get a copy of the debate now being published in Ohio, is received. As you are one of my most valued friends, and have complimented me by the expression of a wish for the book, I propose doing myself the honor of presenting you with one, as soon as I can. By the arrangement our Ohio friends have made with the publisher, I am to have one hundred copies gratis. When I shall receive them I will send you one by express. I understand they will not be out before March, and I probably shall be absent about that time. So that you must not be disappointed if you do not receive yours before about the middle of that month.

Your very truly

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO ABRAHAM JONAS: "… ONE OF MY MOST VALUED FRIENDS," FEBRUARY 4, 1860

Replying to Jonas's request from the previous day for a copy of the Lincoln-Douglas debates, Lincoln writes, for the only known time in his life, a phrase directly acknowledging what Jonas's friendship meant to him: "As you are one of my most valued friends, and have complimented me by the expression of a wish for the book, I propose doing myself the honor of presenting you with one, as soon as I can."
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

The other major Republican candidates for the presidency were Edward Bates of Missouri, Simon Cameron of Pennsylvania, and Salmon P. Chase of Ohio. With long careers in politics behind them, all of these men had significant enemies, personal and political. Lincoln, with much less national experience, aimed to be everybody's second choice. His plan was "to give no offence to others—leave them in a mood to come to us, if they shall be compelled to give up their first love."[33]

As Republicans gathered on May 16 for their convention in Chicago's cavernous 18,000-square-foot Wigwam—so-called because it was built to resemble an Indian

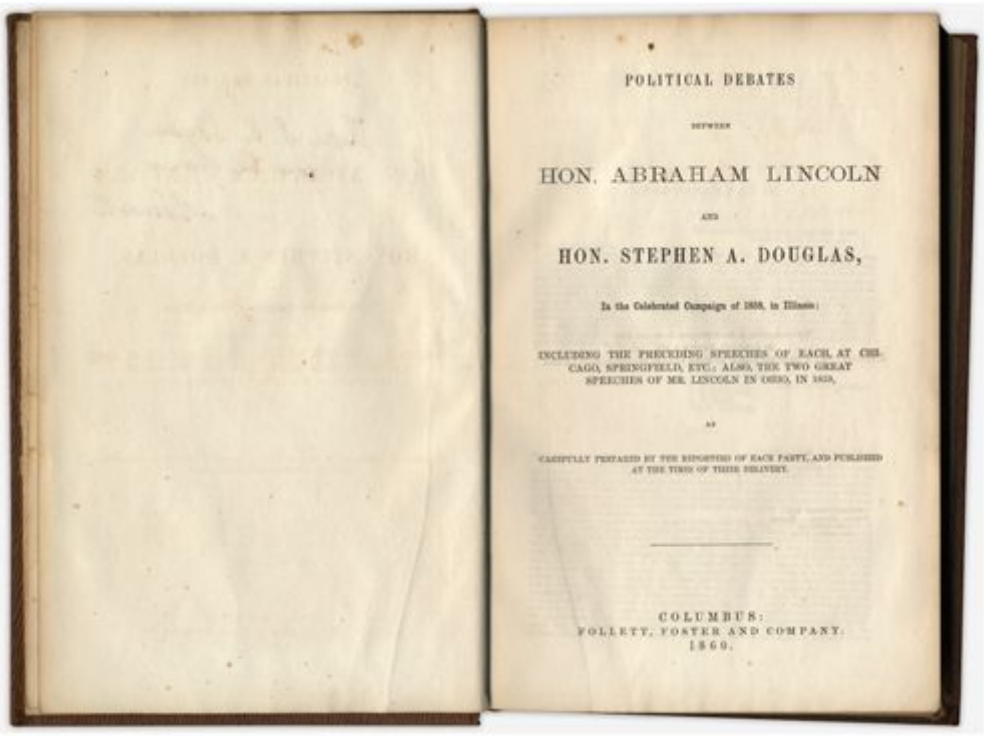
loghouse—the goal of Jonas and other Lincoln supporters was precisely to encourage delegates "to give up their first love" and shift to favorite son Lincoln as an electable second choice. To do that, they had to prevent Seward from carrying the convention on the first ballot. Seward's supporters felt supremely confident. They enjoyed superior manpower, ample funding, and long political experience. But they underestimated the opposition, including Abraham Jonas. Though not himself a delegate, Jonas was present in Chicago and actively promoted Lincoln's cause among Midwest delegations. Jonas's law partner Henry Asbury's retrospective account, published by an Illinois party operative named K. K. Jones, reveals that beyond that first auspicious meeting with Horace Greeley, Jonas continued to play an important backstage role in the maneuverings that led to Lincoln's nomination.

"The evening before and the day of the nomination," Jones recalled, "it had become apparent that the Seward forces, abetted by the then Chairman of the National Committee [Edwin D. Morgan of New York], had manipulated the 'blue tickets' so that it was feared there would be a large majority of Seward men in the Wigwam when the nominating speeches were made. They were prepared for a grand display of enthusiasm when William H. Seward should be named, and intended thus to 'boom things.'" A huge pro-Seward demonstration, his supporters believed, would persuade wavering delegates to vote for Seward on the first ballot so as to align themselves with a winner. Abraham Jonas, according to Jones, got wind of the plan and "took it upon himself to counteract this nicely laid scheme." Some 10,000 people from Central Illinois and Indiana were rounded up to stage an even bigger convention demonstration when Lincoln's name was placed in nomination. To ensure that these outsiders could gain admission to the Wigwam, Lincoln's supporters did just what Seward's had done: they "manipulated" the blue admission tickets, printing extras which they distributed to their friends in order to pack the hall. "I have got the thing all fixed," Jones quoted Jonas as telling him. "Our friends are stationed in every part of this Wigwam, and when 'Old Abe' is put in nomination we will show our Eastern brethren what Western vim, Western endurance and Western enthusiasm can do." That, in fact, is what happened.

The nomination of Seward touched off, as expected, a "grand demonstration"—what the convention minutes describe as "prolonged applause and cheers." To the surprise of everyone, however, the nomination of favorite son Abraham Lincoln resulted in another grand "outburst of enthusiasm," described in the convention minutes as "immense

applause and cheers." This was taken as a signal of the convention's fervor for Lincoln, especially since demonstrations on behalf of Bates, Chase, Cameron, and other candidates proved far more muted. Seward, as a result, failed to win the nomination on the first ballot. As Lincoln's supporters had hoped, numerous delegates then abandoned their "first love" and embraced Lincoln. He won the nomination on the third ballot.[34]

In addition to Jonas and Dittenhoefer, who attended the Republican convention in nonvoting capacities, at least one Jewish delegate actively participated and voted in the convention: Lewis Naphtali Dembitz (1833–1907) of Louisville, Kentucky. An Orthodox Jew, attorney, and polymath (he read twelve languages), Dembitz immigrated to the United States, along with relatives named Brandeis and Wehle, in response to the failed 1848 liberal revolutions in central Europe. He fervently opposed slavery and, like Lincoln and Jonas, revered Henry Clay; he even named one of his sons after him (another would later be named after Abraham Lincoln). At twenty-seven, he was already a significant Republican political leader in Kentucky and one of the city's leading lawyers. Consequently, he was appointed to the select committee that prepared the order of business for the convention. Tradition holds that he delivered a nominating address for Lincoln at the convention, but if so that was not recorded in the official proceedings. Dembitz did vote for Lincoln at the convention but never had the opportunity to meet him. Later, in addition to authoring many distinguished publications, he greatly influenced his talented nephew, the future Supreme Court justice Louis D. Brandeis, who changed his middle name to Dembitz in his uncle's honor.[35]

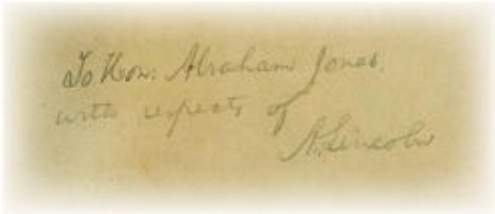


POLITICAL DEBATES

HON. ABRAHAM LINCOLN

HON. STEPHEN A. DOUGLAS,

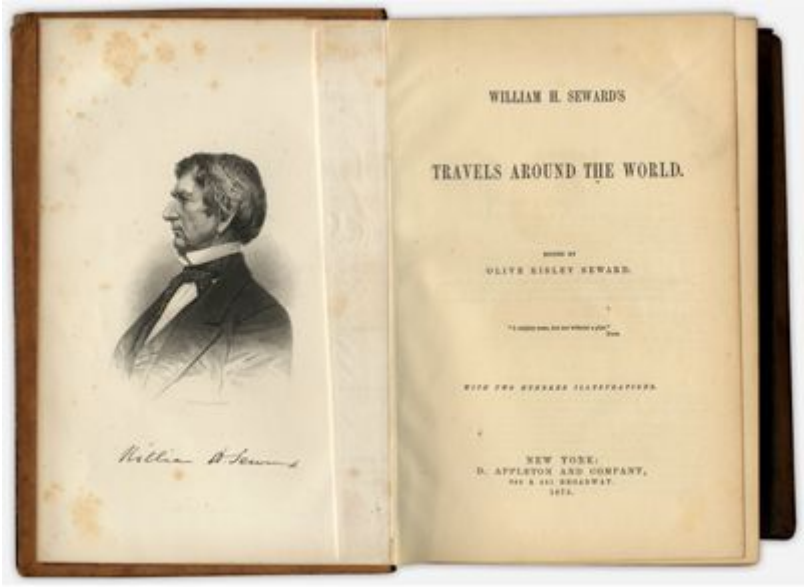
COLUMBUS:
FOLLETT, FOSTER AND COMPANY.
1860.



INSCRIBED LINCOLN TO ABRAHAM JONAS DEBATE BOOK, 1860

Of the hundred copies of the debates given to Lincoln by the publisher to distribute to friends, forty-two presentation copies are now known to exist, most of which are inscribed in pencil. Four copies, however, are in ink. Apparently, Lincoln noticed that the paper tended to absorb the ink, creating a spread-out, "feathery" pattern, and he therefore switched from pen to pencil.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum



WILLIAM H. SEWARD'S

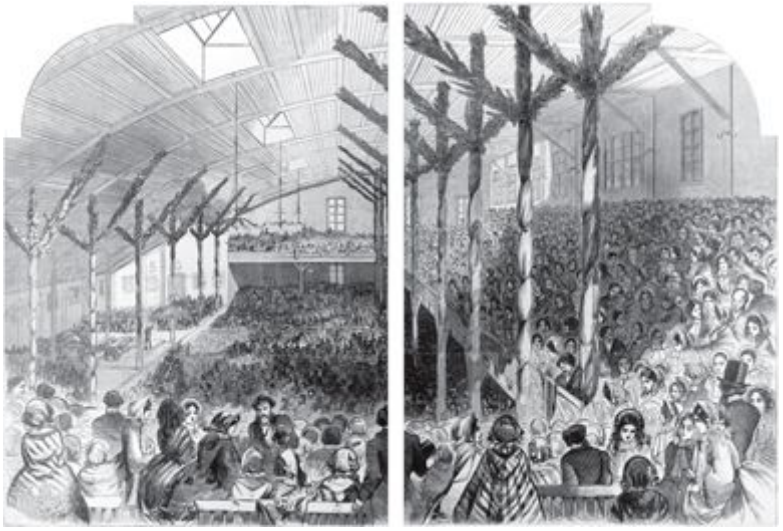
TRAVELS AROUND THE WORLD.

OLIVE RISLEY SEWARD.

NEW YORK:
D. APPLETON AND COMPANY,
1873.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD GOES TO JERUSALEM

In late 1859, as the front-runner for the Republican nomination, Senator Seward of New York traveled abroad, which included a trip to Jerusalem. The trip coincided with Lincoln's rise to prominence, and his transformative Cooper Union address. Seward visited the Holy Land a second time, in 1871.
William H. Seward's Travels Around the World, 1873



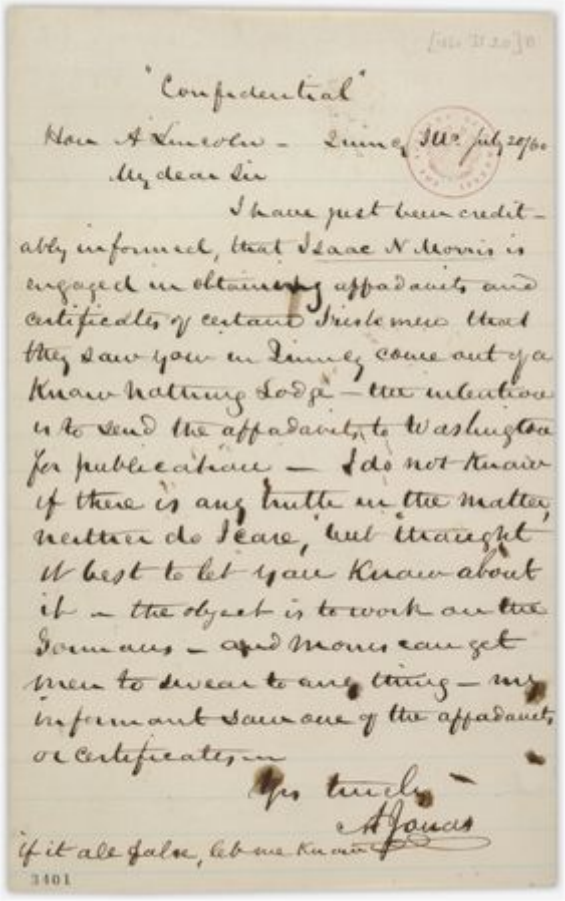
THE "WIGWAM" CONVENTION HALL, CHICAGO, MAY 18, 1860

In the Wigwam, on Lincoln's home turf of Illinois, Abraham Jonas and Henry Asbury played an important backstage role in the orchestrations that led Lincoln to maneuver the nomination away from Seward.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The other Jewish delegate[36] at the convention was Moritz Pinner (1828–1911). Born in the Prussian province of Posen (today Poznan, Poland) and the son of a rabbi, Pinner immigrated to America in 1851 and soon became involved in abolitionism. He was one of those quintessential "liberal and freethinking Germans" and "Israelites" whom Jonas sought for the Republican coalition. In strife-torn Kansas, Pinner edited the uncompromisingly antislavery *Kansas Post* (which, when published in Kansas City, Missouri, was known as the *Missouri Post.*) At the state Republican convention in Missouri, reputedly attended by only 134 people, he played an active role, speaking out on behalf of his fellow Germans and opposing efforts to compel Republican delegates to cast their vote for the state's favorite son, Edward Bates. Though acquainted both with Bates and with Lincoln, Pinner favored William Seward. He resigned from Missouri's delegation when denied the right to vote his conscience and subsequently worked to undermine Bates at the Chicago national convention, greatly to Lincoln's advantage. As a result, he was not officially listed as a conference delegate from Missouri and did not cast any ballots.[37]

Pinner, like many of the other Jews committed to the Republican Party, spent the months following the Republican national convention campaigning for Abraham Lincoln. “I am satisfied with Mr. Lincoln,” he wrote to abolitionist Wendell Phillips. “I hold that out of Republ[ican] ranks no better man could have been selected. He is opposed to slavery in the abstract, is free in the expression of his sentiments on all subjects, is honest and therefore reliable.”[38] Abram Dittenhoefer recalled that he himself threw all his energy into the campaign, “and though young … was frequently making several speeches during a day and evening.” Days before the election, at Cooper Union, he claimed to have sung out “We are coming, Father Abraham, five hundred thousand strong,” as if in anticipation of James Sloan Gibbons’s famous 1862 Civil War poem of an almost identical name, set to music by Luther Orlando Emerson.[39] Abraham Jonas likewise addressed a series of meetings and rallies in Illinois, including ones in Quincy and Marceline. At a rally in Stones Prairie in Adams County, he spoke “eloquently” for an hour on “the principles of the Republican Party and in refutation of the false and slanderous assertations of the Douglasites,” reputedly before 10,000 people—some of whom, later in the day, staged an ugly riot.[40]

Jonas’s devotion to Lincoln and the Republican cause at that time was further evidenced in his confidential letter to Lincoln dated July 20, 1860, informing him that Illinois’ Democratic congressman, Isaac Newton Morris, was “engaged in obtaining aff[i]davits and certificates of certain Irish men that they saw you in Quincy come out of a Know-Nothing Lodge.” Central European immigrants opposed to slavery, like Moritz Pinner, Abram Dittenhoefer, and Lewis Dembitz, were a key component of Lincoln’s coalition, and they despised the anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant Know-Nothings. Tying Lincoln to an appearance in a Know-Nothing Lodge in 1854, Jonas knew, was a Democratic ploy to “work on the Germans.” However much Jonas was prepared to welcome Know-Nothings into the Republican coalition, he worried that tying Lincoln directly to the Know-Nothing cause might cost his close friend many votes.[41]



'Confidential'

Hon A Lincoln - Quincy Ill. July 20/60

My dear Sir

I have just been credibly informed, that Isaac N Morris is engaged in obtaining affadavits and certificates of certain Irishmen that they saw you in Quincy come out of a Know Nothing Lodge - the intention is to send the affadavits to Washington for publication - I do not know if there is any truth in the matter, neither do I care, but thought it best to let you know about it - the object is to work on the Germans - and Morris can get men to swear to anything - my informant saw one of the affadavit, or Certificates -

Yours truly

A Jonas

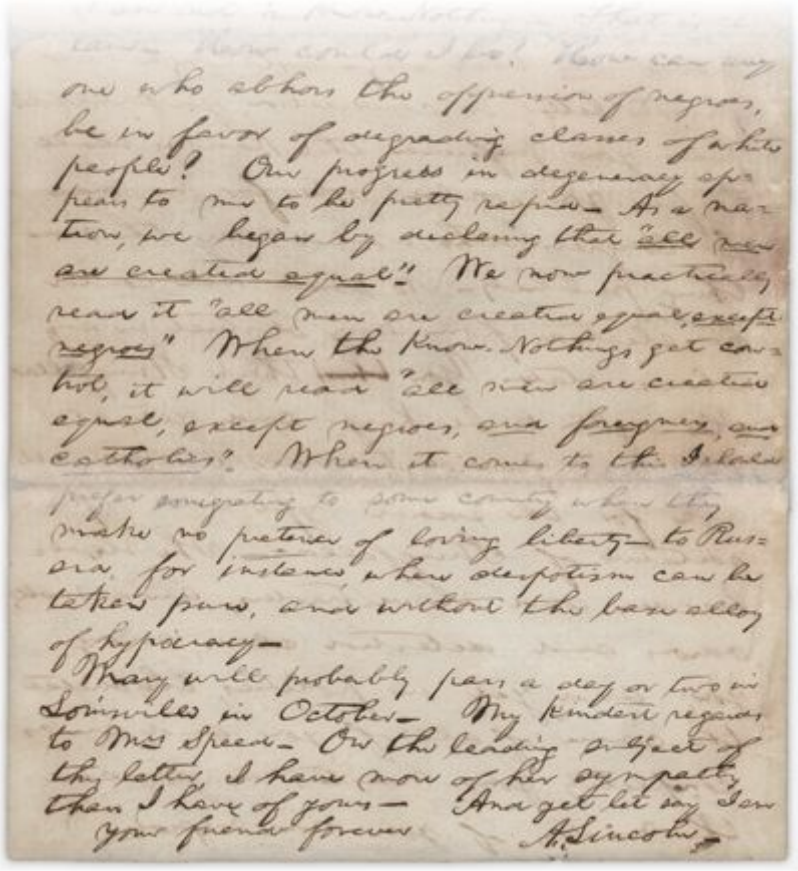
If it ale false, let me know

3401

ABRAHAM JONAS TO LINCOLN, JULY 20, 1860

Jonas writes to Lincoln to warn him that the Democrats are trying to paint him as anti-immigrant by gathering "aff[i]-davits" of Irishmen who claim they saw him coming out of a Know-Nothing Lodge in Quincy.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



one who abhors the oppression of negroes, be in favor of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid— As a nation, we began by declaring that "all men are created equal"! We now practically read it "all men are created equal, except negroes" When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read "all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and catholics" When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty— to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocracy—

Mary will probably pass a day or two in Louisville in October— My kindest regards to Mrs Speed— Of the leading subject of thy letter, I have more of her sympathy than I have of yours— And yet let me say I am

Your friend forever

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO JOSHUA SPEED: NOT A "KNOW-NOTHING," AUGUST 24, 1855

Nearly five years before his presidential campaign, Lincoln writes to his close friend Joshua Speed of his intense dismay for the "despotism" of the Know-Nothings, who, if in control, would maintain "all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and catholics"—the "foreigners," a term common at the time that included Jews.

Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society

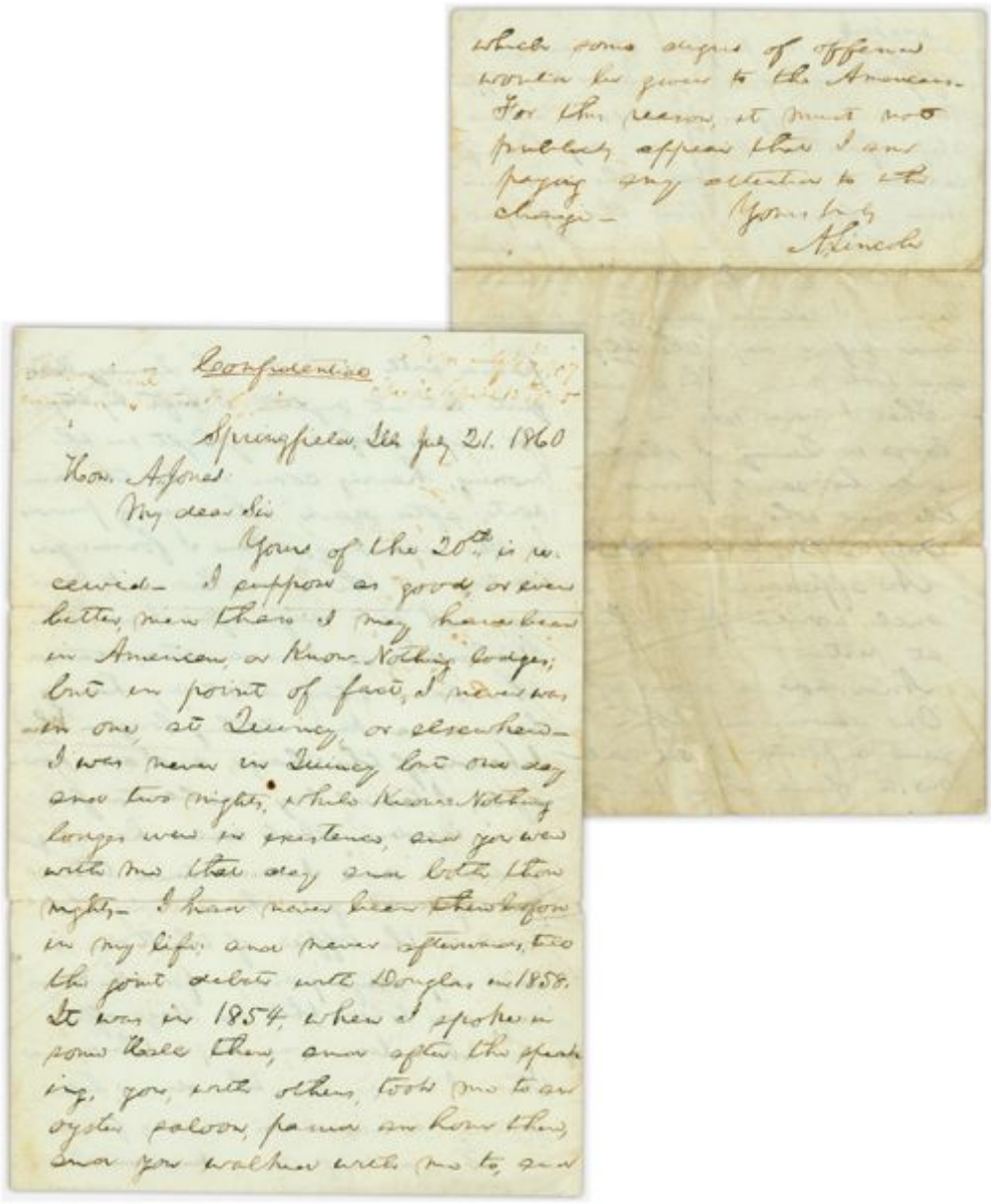
Lincoln must likewise have been worried, for he replied within twenty-four hours with a confidential letter of his own. "I suppose as good, or even better men than I may have been in American or Know-Nothing lodges," he observed, thereby distancing himself from the kind of guilt-by-association politics that Congressman Morris and so many others engaged in. "But in point of fact, I never was in one, at Quincy or elsewhere." Reminding Jonas that he "was never in Quincy but one day and two nights while Know-Nothing lodges were in existence, and you were with me that day and both those nights," Lincoln traced with astonishing precision his movements during that 1854 visit. He felt sure that affidavits from "respectable men … would put the matter at rest."[42]

Lincoln did not mention to Jonas that in a remarkable private letter to his friend Joshua F. Speed, back in 1855, he had unequivocally distanced himself from Know-Nothingism:

> I am not a Know-Nothing. That is certain. How could I be? How can any one who abhors the oppression of negroes, be in favor of degrading classes of white people? Our progress in degeneracy appears to me to be pretty rapid. As a nation, we began by declaring that "all men are created equal." We now practically read it "all men are created equal, except negroes." When the "Know-Nothings" get control, it will read "all men are created equal, except negroes, and foreigners, and catholics." When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretence of loving liberty—to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy.[43]

Yet, Lincoln cautioned Jonas to be discreet. "Our adversaries think they can gain a point if they could force me to openly deny the charge, by which some degree of offence would be given to the Americans," Lincoln wrote, referring to members of the nativist American Party, many of whose members (some of them also Know-Nothings) supported him. "For this reason it must not publicly appear that I am paying any attention to the charge." Jonas, himself a consummate politician, understood. Lincoln sought to personally disassociate himself from the taint of prejudice but could not afford, as a candidate, to lose the votes of those less enlightened than he was.[44]

"It was in 1854, when I spoke in some Hall there, and after the speaking, you, with others, took me to an oyster saloon, passed an hour there ... and you walked with me..."



which some degree of offence would be given to the Americans. For this reason, it must not publicly appear that I am paying any attention to the charge.

Yours truly
A. Lincoln

Confidential

Springfield, Ills. July 21. 1860

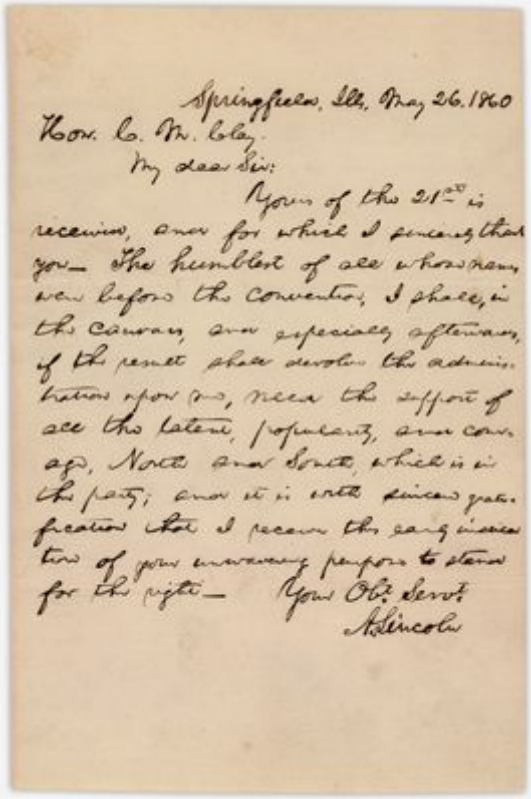
Hon. A. Jonas
My dear Sir

Your of the 20th is received. I suppose as good, or even better, men than I may have been in American, or Know-Nothing lodges; but in point of fact, I never was in one, at Quincy, or elsewhere. I was never in Quincy but one day and two nights, while Know-Nothing lodges were in existence, and you were with me that day and both those nights. I had never been there before in my life; and never afterwards, till the joint debate with Douglas in 1858. It was in 1854, when I spoke in some Hall there, and after the speaking, you, with others, took me to an oyster saloon, passed an hour there, and you walked with me to, and

LINCOLN TO ABRAHAM JONAS, JULY 21, 1860

Replying confidentially to Jonas's letter of the previous day, Lincoln rebuts the charge that he was ever in a Know-Nothing Lodge. Lincoln recalls that Jonas was in fact the witness for his alibi: while indeed in Quincy at the time in question, he was with Jonas in an oyster saloon.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum



Springfield, Ills. May 26. 1860

Hon. C. M. Clay.

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 21st is received, and for which I sincerely thank you— The humblest of all whose names were before the convention, I shall, in the canvass, and especially afterwards, if the result shall devolve the administration upon me, need the support of all the talent, popularity, and courage, North and South, which is in the party; and it is with sincere gratification that I receive this early indication of your unwavering purpose to stand for the right— Your Obt. Servt.

A. Lincoln

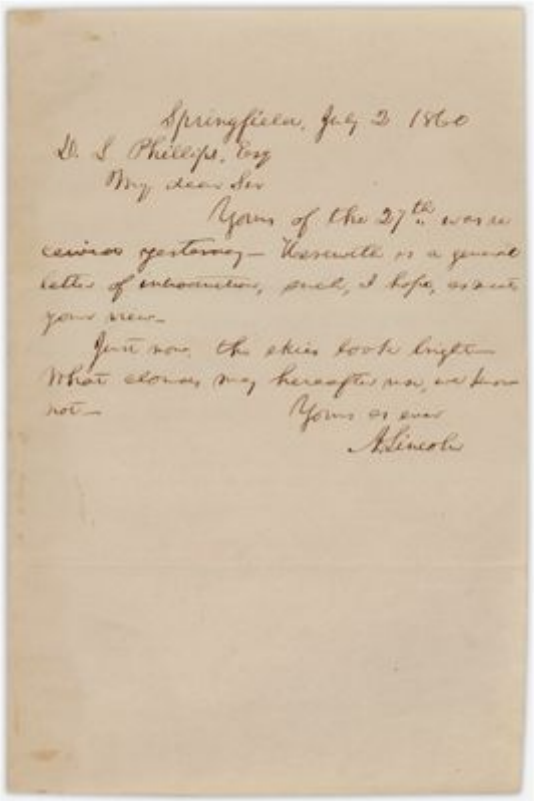
LINCOLN TO CASSIUS M. CLAY: "THE HUMBLEST OF ALL," MAY 26, 1860

A week after receiving the nomination, Lincoln, here referring to himself as the "humblest of all whose names were before the convention," appeals to Cassius Marcellus Clay, a former rival for the nomination, in order to enlist his support in the upcoming campaign, and salutes his "unwavering purpose to stand for the right."
Shapell Legacy Partnership

Having been nominated as his party's candidate, Lincoln, consistent with the custom of his times, did not personally leave home to campaign. Within four days of his nomination he understood that "it will scarcely be prudent for me to leave home much, if any" until after the election.[45] Instead, as his correspondence with Jonas about the Know-Nothings indicates, he managed his campaign from Springfield. Thousands of supporters, including Moritz Pinner, came to visit him there.[46] He also received stacks of mail and telegrams from around the country and posed agreeably for photographs and portraits.

"Lincoln bears his honors meekly," Orville Hickman Browning, who was friendly with both Lincoln and Jonas, reported in his diary after meeting with the nominee.[47] This was a characteristic trait of Lincoln's and was especially evident during the almost six months between his nomination and election that Lincoln spent in Springfield. Perhaps, at age fifty-one, this humility sprang from his painful early life, lack of formal education, absence of wealth, and want of influential friends. Perhaps, he still saw

himself as something of an outsider, like the Germans and Jews whom he befriended. Whatever the case, he described himself in a letter to the somewhat vainglorious antislavery reformer Cassius Marcellus Clay, cousin of Henry Clay, as "the humblest of all whose names were before the convention."[48]



Springfield, July 2 1860

D. L. Phillips, Esq

My dear Sir

Yours of the 27th. was received yesterday— Herewith is a general letter of introduction, and, I hope, suits your views—

Just now, the skies look bright— What clouds may hereafter rise, we know not—

Yours as ever

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO DAVID L. PHILLIPS: "JUST NOW, THE SKIES LOOK BRIGHT," JULY 2, 1860

"Just now, the skies look bright. What clouds may hereafter rise, we know not," Lincoln writes to political operative David L. Phillips. While the sentiment would prove prophetic of the coming storm of war, he also reflects on his improving chances for victory in November.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

Having lived his entire life, prior to his whirlwind elevation to national notice, as an ordinary person, Lincoln saw himself as unexceptional. He had been a day laborer, a small shopkeeper, a lawyer—and, politically, for most of his life, a failure. Now he was poised to claim the highest office in the land—and still he did not think himself, as he put it back in 1859, "fit for the presidency."[49] So, when the learned Pennsylvania judge William D. Kelley, an acquaintance and leading Republican, sought permission to inscribe a new legal work to him, Lincoln gratefully accepted the proffered honor,

"begging only that the inscription may be in modest terms, not representing me as a man of great learning, or a very extraordinary one in any respect."[50]

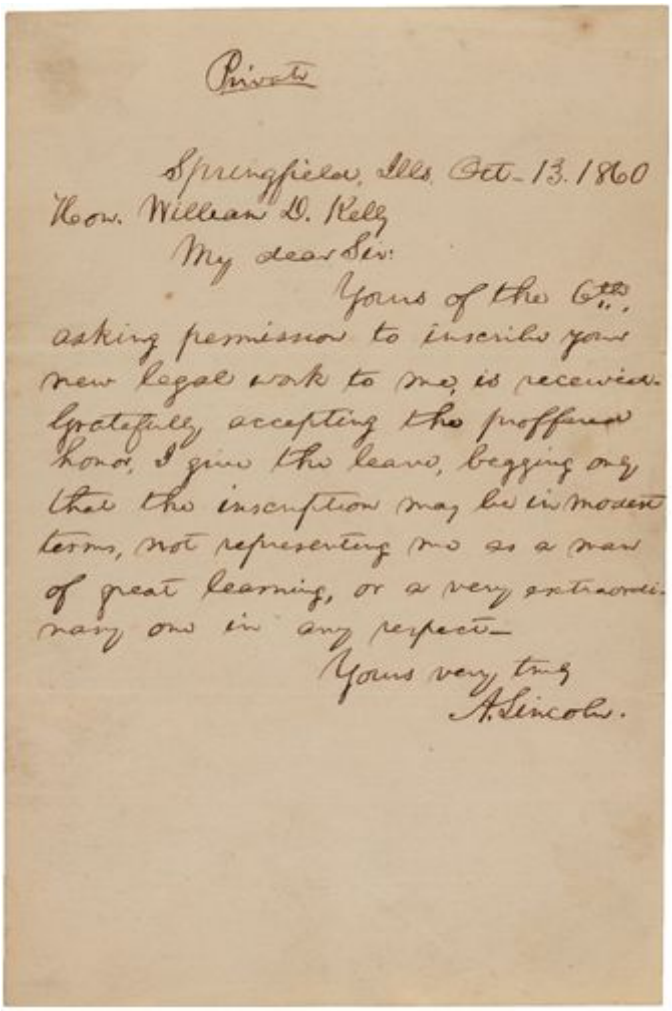
During this time, as the Democratic Party split along sectional lines and contentiousness spread through its ranks, Lincoln grew increasingly hopeful concerning his election chances. The Democrats, unable to unite, held two conventions in Baltimore: Northern Democrats, after a clamorous debate, nominated Stephen A. Douglas on the fifty-seventh ballot, on June 18, while Southern Democrats nominated John C. Breckinridge on June 23. Against this background, on July 2, Lincoln wrote to David L. Phillips, a distant relative of abolitionist Wendell Phillips and, according to one scholar, "the leading Republican of Southern Illinois," that "just now, the skies look bright. What clouds may hereafter rise, we know not."[51] The poetic turn of phrase reflected long years of accumulated experience. Lincoln knew that bright political skies could darken at any time, and he may even have had a premonition of coming sectional strife. Still, he sensed, as he wrote later that same month to his vice presidential running mate, Hannibal Hamlin, that "the prospect of Republican success now appears very flattering."[52] By October, the die seemed cast. As congressional elections on October 9 swept the Republicans to victory in key Northern states, Lincoln wrote exultantly to William H. Seward three days later that "it now really looks as if the Government is about to fall into our hands. Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana have surpassed all expectation, even the most extravagant."[53]

The prediction, based on a careful analysis of voting trends, proved accurate. On November 6, 1860, Election Day, Lincoln won the four-way presidential contest with slightly less than 40 percent of the popular vote, capturing 180 out of 303 electoral votes. The Northern free states from Maine to Minnesota, plus California and Oregon, formed the core of his majority. This basically vindicated the electoral strategy that Jonas had crafted in his letter to Senator Trumbull back in December 1858. Lincoln, according to one analysis, "did especially well among younger voters, newly eligible voters, former nonvoters, rural residents, skilled laborers, members of the middle class, German Protestants, evangelical Protestants, native-born Americans, and most especially former Know-Nothings and Whig Americans."[54] How many Jews voted for him is hard to determine. He lost New York City, the largest Jewish community in the United States, and some estimates claim that German immigrants there, as well as Jews, voted against him by a two-to-one margin.[55] He also had trouble in other large Northern

urban areas: only four of the North's eleven most populous cities (where Jews tended to live) gave him a majority. Unsurprisingly, he received very few votes—Jewish or non-Jewish—in the South. On the other hand, a study of the Chicago Jewish community (probably less than a thousand voters) determined that "the majority of the Chicago Jewish community … supported Lincoln over Douglas."[56] On balance, even if more Jews voted Democratic than Republican in 1860, the 50,000 or so Jewish voters made no difference whatsoever in the election results. Jews like Jonas and Dittenhoefer, however, did make a difference in helping to shape the six-year-old Republican Party's first national victory.

One of the 180 electors whose votes in the Electoral College made Lincoln's election to the presidency official was known to be Jewish. His name was Sigismund Kaufmann of New York (1826–1889). A prominent German-American who left Germany in the wake of the failed liberal revolutions of 1848, Kaufmann was active in the turnvereins, the German-American gymnastic societies founded by German liberals to promote sound bodies and sound minds. The socialistic Turnerbund that he established and headed in New York was not only dedicated to physical activity, but also "strongly encourage[d] true freedom, prosperity and education for all classes."[57] Kaufmann belonged to a synagogue and was involved in Jewish charitable activities but devoted most of his efforts to furthering the interests of the German immigrant community. As a political radical and staunch opponent of slavery, he strongly advocated the importance of German Americans voting for the Republican Party. This probably explains why he was rewarded with the opportunity to serve as a presidential elector. Lincoln and Kaufmann met, likely for the first time, at a reception for members of the Electoral College on February 19, 1861 in New York, and the president-elect "pleasantly remarked that he knew enough of German to know that the name [Kaufmann] meant merchant."[58] Subsequently, Kaufmann obtained Lincoln's autograph for a friend and advocated for German Americans in government and in the military. Tradition holds that President Lincoln offered him the post of minister to Italy but that he declined "on the ground that he could be more useful to his party at home."[59]

"… not representing me as a man of great learning, or as a very extraordinary one in any respect."


Private

Springfield, Ills. Oct. 13. 1860

Hon. William D. Kelly

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 6th., asking permission to inscribe your new legal work to me, is received. Gratefully accepting the proffered honor, I give the leave, begging only that the inscription may be in modest terms, not representing me as a man of great learning, or a very extraordinary one in any respect—

Yours very truly

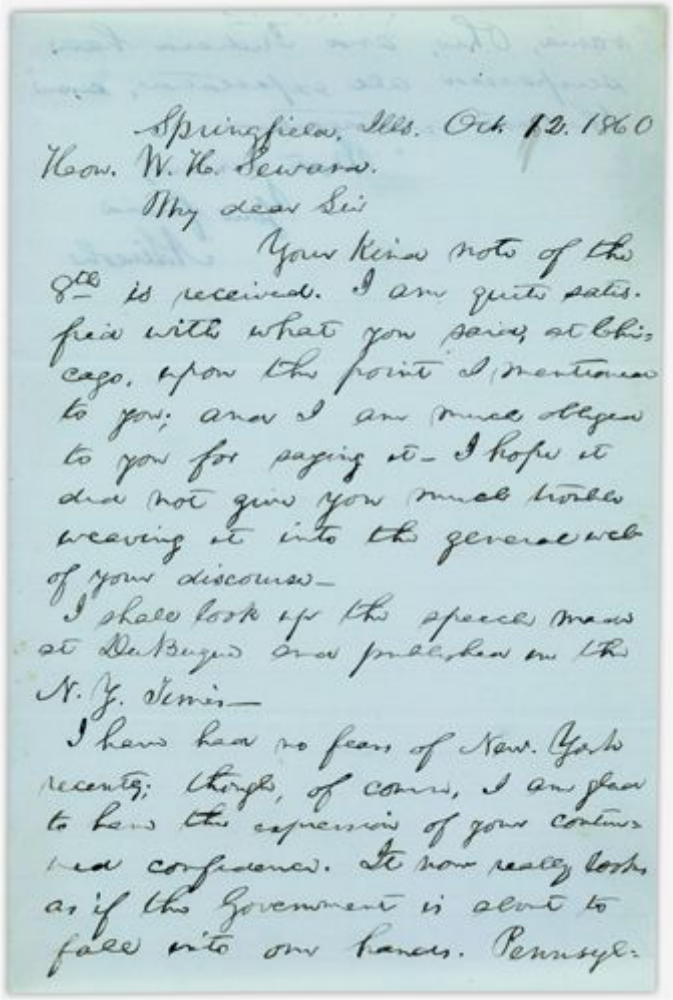
A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN TO WILLIAM D. KELL[E]Y: ON THE VERGE OF VICTORY, A TIMELESS LESSON, OCTOBER 13, 1860

Lincoln agrees to having a forthcoming legal book dedicated to him, though he tempers the honor by referencing his humble origins and lack of formal education: "... that the inscription may be in modest terms, not representing me as a man of great learning, or as a very extraordinary one in any respect." Though Lincoln was unschooled, he was not uneducated, having taught himself law, surveying, and military strategy.

Shapell Legacy Partnership

"... the government is about to fall into our hands"

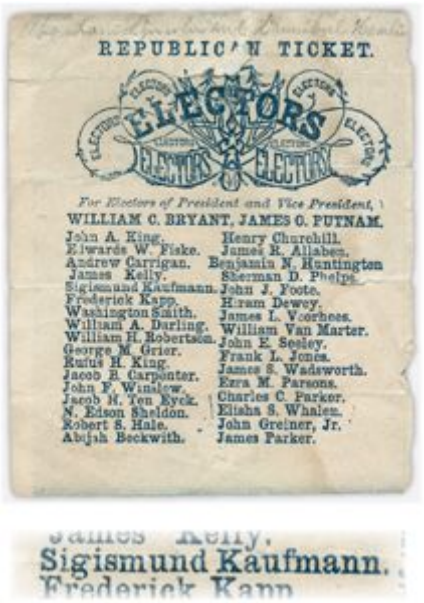


Springfield, Ills. Oct 12. 1860
Hon. W. H. Seward.
My dear Sir
Your kind note of the 8th is received. I am quite satisfied with what you say at Chicago, upon the point I mentioned to you; and I am much obliged to you for saying so. I hope it did not give you much trouble weaving it into the general web of your discourse.
I shall look up the speech made at Dunleith and published in the N. Y. Times.
I have had no fears of New York recently; though, of course, I am glad to have the expression of your confidence. It now really looks as if the Government is about to fall into our hands. Pennsyl-

LINCOLN TO WILLIAM H. SEWARD, OCTOBER 12, 1860

As congressional elections sweep the Republicans to victory in key Northern states, Lincoln writes to Seward that "the government is about to fall into our hands"—a phrase that suggests a sureness, a literal grasp, that he would use again at another heightened, hard-won, and long-sought moment: writing at the end of the Civil War, he says, "It is certain now that Richmond is in our hands."
Shapell Legacy Partnership

Before the electoral votes of Kaufmann and his fellow presidential electors were formally counted at a joint session of Congress on February 13, 1861, the results of the November election had unleashed a frenzy of political activity across the South. Fearing that Lincoln's ascension portended slave revolts and a perilous threat to the whole Southern way of life and the slave system that made it possible, the cry went out for secession. Declining to write for publication, so as not to exacerbate the seething tension, Lincoln stuck to his guns on secession, choosing to make his views known only through confidential letters. "My opinion is that no state can, in any way lawfully, get out of the Union, without the consent of the others."[60]



REPUBLICAN TICKET.

ELECTORS

For Electors of President and Vice President,
WILLIAM C. BRYANT, JAMES C. PUTNAM.

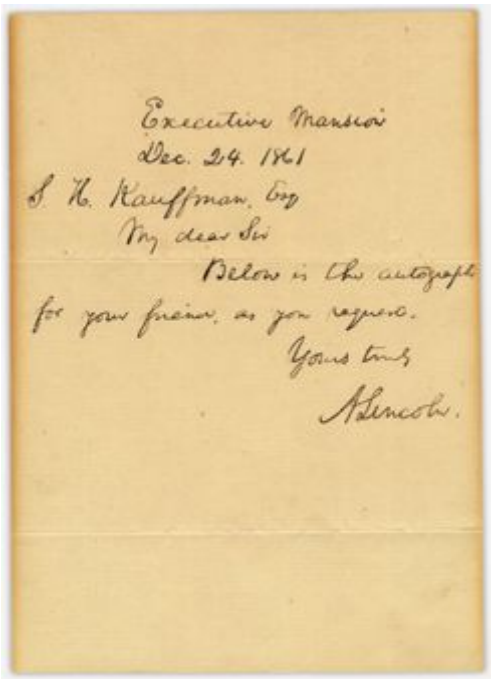
John A. King.	Henry Churchill.
Edwards W. Fiske.	James R. Allaben.
Andrew Carrigan.	Benjamin N. Huntington
James Kelly.	Sherman D. Phelps.
Sigismund Kaufmann.	John J. Foote.
Frederick Kapp.	Hiram Dewey.
Washington Smith.	James L. Voorhees.
William A. Darling.	William Van Marter.
William H. Robertson.	John E. Seeley.
George M. Grier.	Frank L. Jones.
Rufus H. King.	James S. Wadsworth.
Jacob B. Carpenter.	Ezra M. Parsons.
John F. Winslow.	Charles C. Parker.
Jacob H. Ten Eyck.	Elisha S. Whalen.
N. Edson Sheldon.	John Greiner, Jr.
Robert S. Hale.	James Parker.
Abijah Beckwith.	

James Kelly.
Sigismund Kaufmann.
Frederick Kapp

SIGISMUND KAUFMANN, NEW YORK REPUBLICAN ELECTORAL BALLOT, 1860

When Lincoln first met the fiery Jewish refugee from the German Revolution of 1848, he knew enough German (or, some say, Yiddish) to say that he understood that "kaufmann" meant "merchant"—and "schneider" meant "tailor." Sigismund Kaufmann, however, was neither: instead, as a lawyer, he led New York's German Jews in supporting Lincoln and cast an electoral vote for him in 1861.

Rail Splitter Archives, New York City



Executive Mansion
Dec. 24. 1861

S. N. Kauffman, Esq
My dear Sir

Below is the autograph for your friend, as you request.

Yours truly
A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN TO SIGISMUND KAUFMANN, ESQ, THE COMMONALITY OF TWO LAWYERS, DECEMBER 24, 1861

On Christmas Eve, 1861, Lincoln does a favor for the influential representative of the German-Jewish Republican element, Sigismund Kaufmann. "Below is the autograph for your friend," Lincoln writes, "as you

request."
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Just three days later, however, on December 20, 1860, South Carolina, the state with proportionally the largest black population in the country (57 percent), repudiated Lincoln's view. It became the first of seven states in the Deep South to secede from the Union prior to his inauguration. "South Carolina has resumed her entire sovereign powers, and, unshackled, has become one of the nations of the earth," the *Charleston Mercury* reported.[61] Eleven days afterward, Judah P. Benjamin, the senator from Louisiana whom Abram Dittenhoefer had heard called "an Israelite with Egyptian principles," delivered a spellbinding farewell to his Senate colleagues, expounding upon what he termed "The Right of Secession." "What may be the fate of this horrible contest, no man can tell, none pretend to foresee," he emotionally concluded, "but this much I will say: the fortunes of war may be adverse to our arms; you may carry desolation into our peaceful land, and with torch and fire you may set our cities in flames … but you never can subjugate us; you never can convert the free sons of the soil into vassals paying tribute to your power; and you never, never can degrade them to the level of an inferior and servile race. Never! Never!"[62]

As the nation teetered toward civil war, rumors of plots against the president and vice president-elect circulated. One of them reached Abraham Jonas in Quincy, and on December 30, 1860, he hastened to inform Lincoln. Expressing "great anxiety in regard to your personal safety and the preservation of our national integrity," Jonas reminded the president-elect that he had a "very large family connection in the south," including six children and other "near relatives" in New Orleans. Divided as those relatives were politically, they still maintained close familial ties. Jonas reported in confidence that he had learned from one of those relatives—he did not say which one, but it is tempting to think that it was his son, Benjamin, who had earlier worked with Lincoln to free John Shelby—"that there is a perfect organization, fearful in numbers and controuled [*sic*] by men of character and influence, whose object is to prevent the inauguration of Lincoln … if by no other means, by using violence on the person of Lincoln—men engaged in this measure are known to be of the most violent character, capable of doing any act necessary to carry out their vile measures." Alarmed, Jonas urged "precautionary measures," adding the salutation "with great devotion."[63] A day earlier, Sen. William H. Seward, soon to become Lincoln's secretary of state, passed along

similar intelligence concerning a plot to seize the capital on or before the inauguration on March 4 ("you must not imagine that I am giving you suspicions and rumors—Believe that I know what I write.")[64] So it was that in a December 31 letter to Ohio governor Salmon P. Chase, soon to be nominated secretary of the Treasury, that Lincoln, as if summing up the last two weeks of 1860 and anticipating the even worse year to come, evoked the apocalyptic language of the Book of Daniel (9:25): "these troub'lous times."[65] On that last day of 1860, the image he saw reflected in the lion's den may well have been his own.

President James Buchanan, chastened by the election and aware that he had but a few months left in office, was by no means blind to these same "troub'lous times." In a message to the American people, he designated Friday, January 4, 1861, as a day to be "set apart for Humiliation, Fasting and Prayer throughout the Union."[66] In response, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise of Cincinnati, who considered the results of the 1860 election "one of the greatest blunders a nation can commit," was openly scornful. "Pray, Sir? No, it is too late. Either the Republican party must go overboard or the Union be dissolved."[67] For the most part, though, synagogues were "exceedingly well attended" on the fast day, with Jews reputedly just as focused on "the importance of the Union and the duty of its preservation" as their non-Jewish neighbors.[68]

Rabbi Morris Raphall (1798–1868) of New York's B'nai Jeshurun Congregation delivered the most memorable sermon of the fast day—so memorable that he was invited to repeat it eleven days later before the New-York Historical Society. An ordained Orthodox rabbi with impressive university credentials, Raphall possessed dazzling oratorical skills, and was once described as the first celebrity rabbi in American Jewish history. He had supported Douglas against Lincoln, opposed abolitionism, and distrusted those who justified antislavery on the basis of the Bible. "How dare you, in the face of the sanction and protection afforded to slave property in the Ten Commandments—how dare you denounce slaveholding as a sin?" he challenged the abolitionist preacher Henry Ward Beecher in his sermon. His own analysis of the Bible led him to believe that (1) slavery had existed since antiquity; (2) that it was "no sin," as slave property was expressly placed under the protection of the Ten Commandments; and (3) that the slave should be considered a person with rights "not conflicting with the lawful exercise of the rights of his owner." This, he believed offered a sound basis for sectional reconciliation: "If our Northern fellow-citizens,

content with following the word of God, would not insist on being 'righteous overmuch,' or denouncing 'sin' which the Bible knows not, but which is plainly taught by the precepts of men—they would entertain more equity and less ill feeling towards their Southern brethren," he thundered. "And if our Southern fellow-citizens would adopt the Bible view of slavery, and discard the heathen slave code, which permits a few bad men to indulge in an abuse of power that throws a stigma and disgrace on the whole body of slaveholders—if both North and South would do what is right, then God … would mercifully avert the impending evil, for with Him alone is the power to do so."[69]

"No state can, in any way lawfully, get out of the Union, without the consent of the others."

Private & confidential

Springfield, Ills. Dec. 17. 1860

Hon. Thurlow Weed

My dear Sir

Yours of the 11th. was received two days ago. Should the convocation of Governors, of which you speak, seem desirous to know my views on the present aspect of things, tell them

you judge from my sp[...]
will be inflexible o[...]
question; that I pro[...]
either the Misso[...]
or Douglas and Eli T[...]
would lose us every th[...]
by the election; that[...]
for all South of us,[...]
slave states of it, wo[...]
spite of us, under eith[...]
Also, that I proba[...]
opposition, real and a[...]
fugitive slave of th[...]
ought to be withdra[...]

I believe you can pretend to find but little, if any thing, in my speeches, about secession; but my opinion is that no state can, in any way lawfully, get out of the Union, without the consent of the others; and that it is the duty of the President, and other government functionaries to run the machine as it is—

Yours very truly
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO THURLOW WEED, DECEMBER 17, 1860

Just three days ahead of South Carolina's secession on December 20, Lincoln maintains his consistent posture: "No state can, in any way lawfully, get out of the Union, without the consent of the others," he declares. Lincoln also refers to Douglas's dreaded favorite slogan: Popular Sovereignty.
Shapell Legacy Partnership

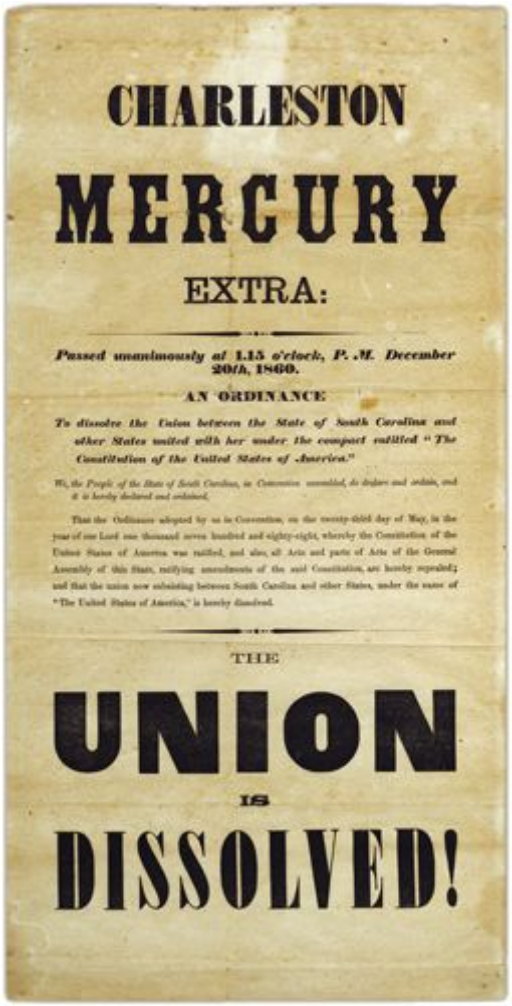
THE UNION IS DISSOLVED

IN 1860, THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT in democracy was less than ninety years old: no other government in the world was headed by an elected figure. Lincoln, profoundly conscious of his roles as both leader of the states and the preserver of their unity, insisted in December 1860 that no state could lawfully leave the Union without the consent of the others and had stressed in his Cooper Union address that this was indeed the intent of the

Founders. To Lincoln, that the Union might be dissolved from within was no less than anathema. This is, perhaps, why the headline in the *Charleston Mercury,* "Union Is Dissolved," had not so much to do with slavery, which he so abhorred, but with democracy, which he so loved. Secession, to Lincoln, was an attack on the foundations of self-governance; and, looming ominously, raised the possibility of a catastrophic defeat for the cause of human liberty. "My paramount object in this struggle is to save the Union," he made clear to Horace Greeley in his famous August 22, 1862, letter, "and is not either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing any slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it."

Lincoln, however, had other things to consider—pragmatic ones. His view of his official duty as president contrasted, he made clear, with his personal position on slavery. "I intend no modification of my oft-expressed personal wish that all men every where could be free," he told Greeley. Yet he clarified, in an April 4, 1864, letter to a Kentucky newspaper editor, that "if slavery is not wrong, nothing is wrong. I cannot remember when I did not so think and feel." But his lifelong goal of abolishing slavery would have to wait, for had he made the war only about slavery and not about secession, he would have lost the slaveholding border states, still in the Union, to the Confederacy—and perhaps the war itself. "I hope to have God on my side," Lincoln is reported to have said, "but I must have Kentucky."

Lincoln walked, then, a fine line indeed, for even if the war was fought over states' rights and secession, those rights included owning slaves and allowing the expansion of slavery into the western territories. Without slavery, there would have been no war between North and South. And what congressional legislation could not fix in the 1850s on the slavery question, war—and Lincoln's pen—ultimately would.



CHARLESTON

MERCURY

EXTRA:

Passed unanimously at 1.15 o'clock, P. M. December 20th, 1860.

AN ORDINANCE

To dissolve the Union between the State of South Carolina and other States united with her under the compact entitled "The Constitution of the United States of America."

We, the People of the State of South Carolina, in Convention assembled, do declare and ordain, and it is hereby declared and ordained,

That the Ordinance adopted by us in Convention, on the twenty-third day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight, whereby the Constitution of the United States of America was ratified, and also, all Acts and parts of Acts of the General Assembly of this State, ratifying amendments of the said Constitution, are hereby repealed; and that the union now subsisting between South Carolina and other States, under the name of "The United States of America," is hereby dissolved.

THE

UNION

IS

DISSOLVED!

DECEMBER 20, 1860

Some seven weeks after Lincoln's election, South Carolina became the first Southern state to secede from the United States. This broadside, published by the Charleston Mercury, *announces the unanimous adoption by South Carolina of an ordinance of secession, at 1:15 P.M., December 20, 1860.*

Shapell Manuscript Collection

"Private"

Quincy, Dec 30/60

Hon A Lincoln

My dear Sir

The purport of this communication, must be my apology for troubling you—and my great anxiety in regard to your personal safety and the preservation of our National integrity, will I think justify me on this occasion, when you have so much to think of and so many things to perplex you—

You perhaps are aware, that I have a very large family connection in the South, and that in New Orleans I have six children and a host of other near relatives—I receive many letters from them, their language has to be very guarded, as fears are entertained that the sanctity of the mails, is not much regarded—on yesterday I received a letter from N. O. from one who is prudent, sound and careful of what he writes and among other things, he says "things are daily becoming worse here, God help us, what will be the result, it is dreadful to imagine—One thing I am satisfied of, that there is a perfect organization, fearful in numbers

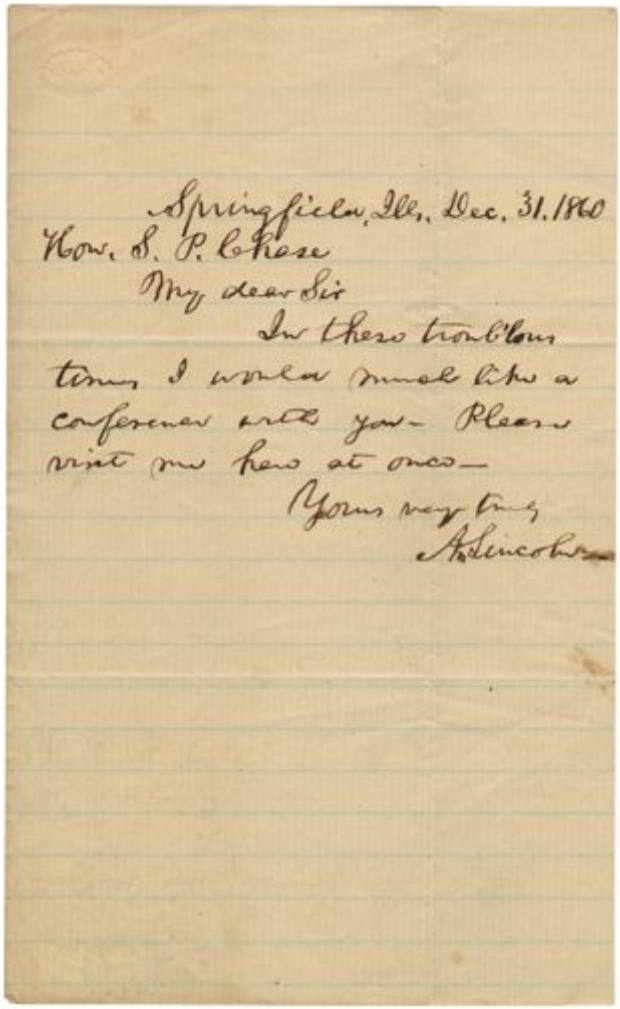
or his subordinates—something should be

ABRAHAM JONAS TO LINCOLN, DECEMBER 30, 1860

Jonas warns Lincoln of a plot to assassinate him before Inauguration Day. His warnings did not go unheeded: Lincoln was smuggled into Washington, arriving in the dead of night ten days before the Inauguration.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

"In these troub'lous times"


Springfield, Ill., Dec. 31. 1860
Hon. S. P. Chase
My dear Sir
In these troublous
times I would much like a
conference with you- Please
visit me here at once—
Yours very truly
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN IN THE LION'S DEN, DECEMBER 31, 1860

Secession, assassination, and war: as the country tore itself apart, Lincoln, in Springfield, strove to put together his cabinet. Now immersed "in these troub'lous times," Lincoln, echoing the biblical Daniel, acknowledges in a letter to Salmon P. Chase, the impending danger from all sides.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

THE ANTI-SEMITIC ABOLITIONISTS

BY DEFINITION, *abolitionism* was understood to mean, in its simplest form, the movement to achieve immediate and total abolition of slavery, and to many it also carried with it connotations of altruism, liberal-mindedness, tolerance, and respect for blacks. But there was another side—a darker side—to abolitionism, and that was the abolitionists themselves. Yes, blacks could be free, but they should be free blacks somewhere else. Colonization of blacks in foreign lands, outside the borders of the U.S., formed a big part of their beliefs. And for good measure, they were, to varying degrees, also anti-Semitic, especially the most famous of them, William Lloyd Garrison, who once called his opponent Mordecai Noah "a lineal descendant of the monsters who nailed Jesus to the cross…" Well-known clergyman Theodore Parker also often had vicious words for the Jews: their "intellect was sadly pinched in those narrow foreheads," he wrote—and, another time, said of Jews that "they did sometimes kill a Christian baby at the Passover or the anniversary of Haman's famous day."

Raphall's address echoed familiar Protestant arguments and was properly described as "very forcible if not novel."[70] Yet coming as it did from a learned rabbi, it received wide circulation, sparking fierce debate in both Jewish and non-Jewish circles. "Child of a thrice delivered race," one Christian poet scolded, "hast thou/no tears for those who still in bondage bow?"[71] The key debate concerned how the Bible should be interpreted and read. Within the Jewish community, supporters of Lincoln who opposed slavery condemned Raphall's literal reading of the biblical text and insisted on a more contextualized reading or one that focused on the spirit rather than on the letter of divine law. The radical reform rabbi David Einhorn, for example, who fiercely opposed slavery, argued vehemently that "the spirit of the law of God" enshrined in the creation story, where "God created man in his image" [Gen. 1:27], "can never approve of slavery."[72] The lay Jewish biblical scholar Michael Heilprin, whose brother was Lincoln's optician in 1864, mischievously wondered whether Raphall would support polygamy and concubinage, since both were also accepted by the Bible and practiced by the patriarchs.[73] On the other hand, one enthusiastic Protestant minister was so persuaded by Raphall's close textual reading, based on the Hebrew original, that he declared the rabbi's lecture to be "as true almost as the word of God itself."[74]

Raphall was far from being the only Jewish apologist for slavery. Rabbi Bernard Illowy in Baltimore used his Fast Day sermon to attack Lincoln and the Republicans. "Who can blame our brethren of the South," he declared, "for seceding from a society whose government can not, or will not, protect the property rights and privileges of a great portion of the Union against the encroachments of a majority misguided by some influential, ambitious aspirants and selfish politicians who, under the color of religion and the disguise of philanthropy, have thrown the country into a general state of confusion?" He, like Raphall, defended slavery on the basis of the Bible.[75]

Even Abraham Jonas's older brother, Joseph Jonas, in an address before the Ohio House of Representatives, defended slavery. He argued, likewise from the Bible, that the Negro slave descended from the serpent in the Garden of Eden and was cast into "slavery, without the power of rising in the scale of nations." Abolitionists, he charged, were sinfully "flying in the face of Providence, who has, for some grand purpose … condemned this race to slavery."[76]

The controversy over Morris Raphall's sermon brought unprecedented publicity to the supposed "Jewish view" on the slavery issue but only underscored, in the end, the

complexity of the issue and the many different ways that biblical texts could be parsed. On the issue of slavery, the question of how properly to understand the Bible, and most other controversial issues through the Civil War years, the Jewish community did not speak, as Abraham Jonas had hoped they would, with a single voice. Instead, some Jews supported Lincoln and opposed slavery; some supported the Union and sought to compromise on slavery; and some justified slavery and hated Lincoln with a passion.

Chicago Jewish leader Abraham Kohn (1819–71) became one of those who supported Lincoln. Born and educated in Bavaria, Kohn immigrated to the United States in 1842. For a time, he peddled in New England, but in 1843 or 1844 he moved to Chicago and became the proprietor of a clothing store. On the Day of Atonement in 1845, Kohn participated in the first known Jewish religious service held in Chicago and subsequently helped to found its first synagogue, of which he was later president. In 1860, he also became the city's first Jewish clerk. By then, he had become active in politics as a staunch Republican, dubbed by his enemies "one of the blackest Republicans and Abolitionists."

Abraham Lincoln was introduced to Kohn as a Jewish leader by his friend, newly elected congressman Isaac N. Arnold, probably on his trip to Chicago following the election (November 21–25, 1860), and the two men spoke of their common devotion to the Bible.[77] Ten weeks later, when Kohn wrote Lincoln to recommend the appointment of a local attorney, Republican leader John W. Waughop, a Methodist, as resident minister to the Hague, he reminded Lincoln of his Jewish connections. "Being well acquainted with the Hebrew population of the City of Chicago," he assured the president-elect, "I know that the appointment of Mr. Waughop to that position would give entire satisfaction, indeed they would rejoice in it." "Mr. Waughop," he explained, "has taken great pains to encourage the Hebrews in the support of the Republican cause." While there is no evidence that Lincoln acted on the recommendation, one of his aides docketed the letter as coming "from a leading Jew" and appended a revealing note to the bottom of the letter, further evidence of the special interest Lincoln took in Jews: "I regard Mr. Kohn," it read, "as the best authority for his countrymen in Chicago."[78]

Later that same month, Kohn (described by one newspaper as "a Hebrew of the Hebrews") sent Lincoln a present, one of many he received as he prepared to leave his home in Springfield to take up residence in the White House. It was, according to one reporter, "an exquisitely executed picture of the American flag, with a Hebrew

inscription filling the entire extent of the white stripes." The reporter described the gift as "gracefully designed, delicately executed, felicitously presented, and gratefully accepted." The Hebrew inscription, according to multiple contemporary sources, consisted of "the passage in the first chapter of Joshua; the 4th to the 9th verses inclusive." Lincoln and Kohn, who knew their Bible so well, understood how apt that passage was for a new leader about to cross the country to take up his duties in Washington under the threat of a looming war. Even reporters found the inscription "to be very appropriate." One supplied readers with an English translation from the King James Bible. "Be strong and of a good courage," the text concluded. "Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."[79]

ABRAHAM KOHN, CIRCA 1865

A German-born Chicago clothier and city official, Kohn met Lincoln during the presidential campaign of 1860—and, as both an ardent Republican and devout Jew, saw in him, his daughter recalled, a leader like Moses, destined to free the slaves and save his nation.
KAM Isaiah Israel Congregation, Chicago, Illinois

KOHN FLAG

To his new friend Lincoln, departing to Washington as president-elect, Kohn sent this painted flag. In the white bars of the flag Kohn inscribed, in Hebrew, verses 4 through 9 of Joshua I, including: "Be strong and of a good courage ... Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."

Courtesy of the Chicago History Museum

CAPTURING LINCOLN

Lincoln understood the political importance of his image. He sat for his photo some fifty times, including for the Jewish photographer Samuel G. Alschuler, with whom he met on at least two occasions. The images here reflect not only how Lincoln looked but how, approaching the presidency, that look changed: in 1860, he grew a beard.

Why Lincoln grew a beard is anyone's guess, but he himself gave the nod to an eleven-year-old girl named Grace Bedell. She wrote him that his face was too thin and that he would look better if he let his whiskers grow. Women like beards, Grace reasoned, so they would tease their husbands to vote for him. She promised, meanwhile, to try and get her older brothers to vote for him as well. Charmed by her letter, Lincoln, with his characteristic love of children, replied to "My dear Little Miss." "As to the whiskers," he wrote, "having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affection [*sic*] if I were to begin it now?" Though Lincoln was concerned about vanity and affectation, he nevertheless took her advice, though he had already realized a week earlier, that with "the government about to fall into our hands," he did not grow his beard to gain votes. He did, however, change the fashion of the times: for the next fifty years, all elected U.S. presidents, save for William McKinley, would have facial hair.

While famous for its connection to Lincoln's beard, Lincoln's letter to little Grace also shows Lincoln in a moment of quiet personal reflection: in response to her question about children, as the father of four sons he replies, "I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughters."

Private

Springfield, Ills. Oct 19. 1860

Miss. Grace Bedell

My dear little Miss.

Your very agreeable letter of the 15th. is received—

I regret the necessity of saying I have no daughters— I have three sons— one seventeen, one nine, and one seven, years of age— They, with their mother, constitute my whole family—

As to the whiskers, having never worn any, do you not think people would call it a piece of silly affection if I were to begin it now?

Your very sincere well-wisher

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN'S FAMOUS LETTER TO GRACE BEDELL, OCTOBER 19, 1860

Shapell Legacy Partnership

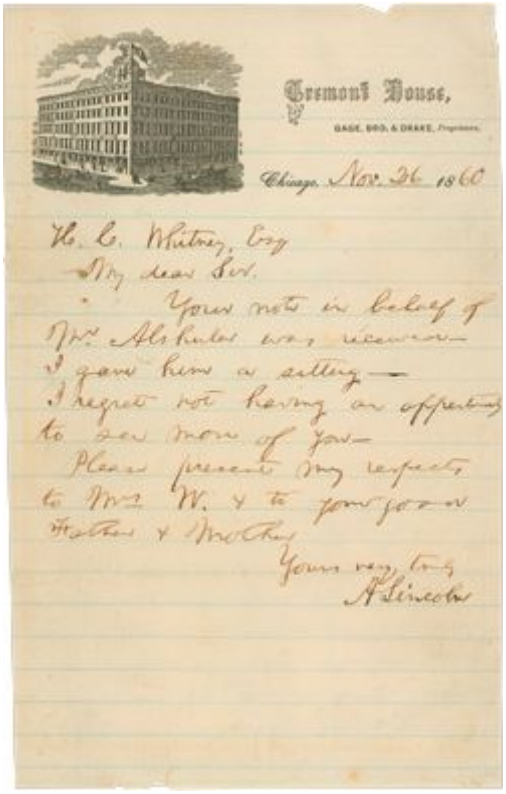
1858

Samuel Alschuler lent Lincoln his own velvet-trimmed coat for this photo taken by Alschuler in Urbana, Illinois, on April 25, 1858.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

"in behalf of Mr. Alschuler ... I gave him a sitting."

1860

Lincoln, now president-elect and with an early beard, again sits for Alschuler, in Chicago, on November 25, 1860.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress



President-elect Lincoln recalls sitting for Alschuler on the previous day; written on Fremont House Chicago stationery, November 26, 1860.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

1861

Lincoln, in a signed photograph taken by Christopher German in Springfield, Ilinois, dated January 26, 1861, now with a full beard.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

INAUGURATION DAY, MARCH 4, 1861

Amid unprecedented military security and accompanied by President James Buchanan, Lincoln spoke movingly of peace and reconciliation with the rebellious South. "We are not enemies, but friends," he pleaded in his inauguration speech. Nonetheless, six weeks later, the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter, and the war began.
The Granger Collection

CHAPTER FOUR

WE HAVE NOT YET APPOINTED A HEBREW

1861–1862

Needing every ounce of the strength and the courage that Abraham Kohn, invoking the biblical Joshua, had wished upon him, Abraham Lincoln set forth on February 11, 1861, the eve of his fifty-second birthday, for Washington, D.C. Some one thousand people gathered early in the morning at Springfield's Great Western Railroad depot to see him off. Henry Greenebaum, the Jewish Democrat whom Lincoln had earlier wooed in Chicago, happened to be in Springfield for a legislative hearing that day and joined them. "I now leave," he heard Lincoln say, "not knowing when, or whether ever, I may return." In what Greenebaum recalled as "a very solemn and impressive speech," the president-elect described the task awaiting him as even "greater than that which rested upon Washington." South Carolina, Mississippi, Florida, Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Texas had all by then seceded from the United States, and, on February 8, the Confederate States of America, "invoking the favor of Almighty God," had formed a provisional constitution. Lincoln, affirming his own trust in God, "who can go with me, and remain with you and be every where for good," confidently hoped "that all will yet be well." He bid "an affectionate farewell" to everyone, and, according to Greenebaum, "moved us to tears."[1]

Lincoln's train stopped repeatedly along the route, a conscious effort to promote calm and acquaint Americans with their new president—"that I may see you," he said, "and that you may see me." Everywhere he was greeted by large crowds. In Cincinnati, where he left his train for the night, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise watched the eager throngs and was appalled. "The Philistines from all corners of the land congregate around their Dagon and worship him…," he complained, employing a biblical metaphor that, ironically, Lincoln himself might well have appreciated. "We can not tell why these extraordinary demonstrations, processions, banquets, &c., should be made." To Wise,

an immigrant and a Democrat, the president-elect appeared inadequate; he described him, evoking a central European metaphor, as looking like "Der Landjunker das erste Mal in der Stadt, which [means], in good English, 'like a country squire for the first time in the city.'" "We have no doubt he is an honest man and, as much as we can learn, also quite an intelligent man," he concluded, "but he will look queer in the white house, with his primitive manner."[2]

HENRY GREENEBAUM

The German-born Greenebaum was an intimate friend of Stephen A. Douglas in Illinois, but he knew and liked Lincoln, becoming a Republican with the advent of the Civil War. Lincoln, he recalled, had "very broad views, had no prejudices whatever against any nationalities or classes and many of the most prominent Jews of Illinois supported him for the Presidency."
Chicago History Museum

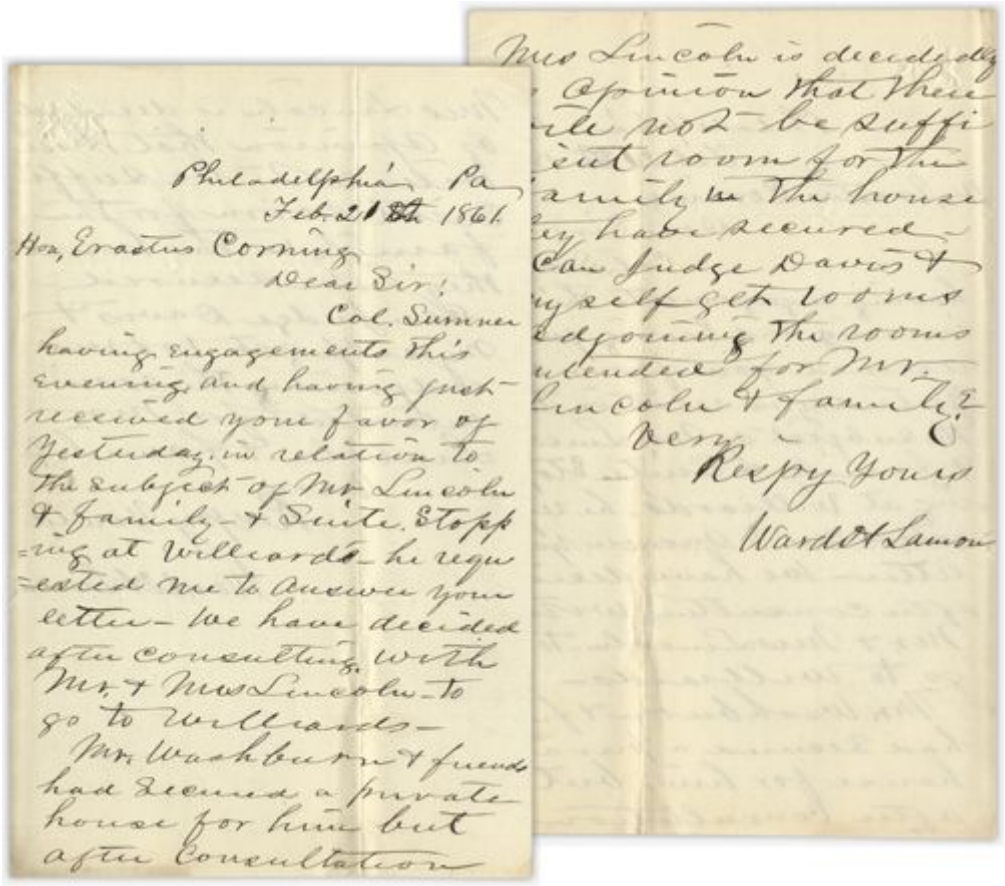
ISAAC MAYER WISE

Though not denying Lincoln's honesty and intelligence, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, a leading figure in the American Jewish community, was repulsed by Lincoln's primitive manner. A Northern Democrat, Wise was

fearful of radicalism on both sides; and while not antislavery, his primary aim was to hold the Union together.
Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio

Abram Dittenhoefer, the Jewish lawyer who had worked so hard to elect Lincoln, naturally disagreed. He was present on February 20 when the Democratic mayor of New York, Fernando Wood, hosted Lincoln, and described the president-elect as "more grave and serious" than before, an indication either of "fatigue or anxiety regarding the future." Lincoln, he sensed, was "a man carrying a burden that grew heavier day by day," understandably so in the wake of Jefferson Davis's inauguration two days earlier as provisional president of the Confederate States. Lincoln's remarks in response to Wood, in which he analogized the Union to a ship with passengers and cargo, and hinted that in order to save the ship it might be necessary to throw "cargo overboard," suggested to Dittenhoefer that the president-elect "had become bolder in the expression of his feeling against the continuance of slavery in the South." Looking back, he described what Lincoln said that day as an anticipation of the future, "the first gleam of emancipation."[3]

Many other Jews also gazed upon Abraham Lincoln as trains carried him across the country, a journey that covered 1,904 miles and the tracks of eighteen different railroad lines. In Philadelphia, in sight of the hall where the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution were originally framed, Lincoln repeated an ancient Jewish oath, inspired by Psalm 137. "May my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth," he declared, thinking of what the Founders had created, "if ever I prove false to those teachings." Implicitly, he here linked the most sacred documents of the United States to the sacred city of Jerusalem; Lincoln was very likely aware of how the portion of Psalm 137 continues: "If I do not remember you, if I do not consider Jerusalem, my highest joy."[4]



Philadelphia Pa
Feb. 21st 1861

Hon. Erastus Corning

Dear Sir!

Col. Sumner having engagements this evening, and having just received your favor of Yesterday, in relation to the subject of Mr Lincoln & family - & Suite. Stopping at Willards - he requested me to answer your letter - We have decided after consulting with Mr. & Mrs Lincoln - to go to Willards -

Mr. Washburn & friends had secured a private house for him but after consultation

Mrs Lincoln is decidedly
opinion that there
will not be sufficient room for the
family in the house
they have secured -
Can Judge Davis &
myself get rooms
adjoining the rooms
intended for Mr.
Lincoln & family &
very
Respy Yours
Ward H Lamon

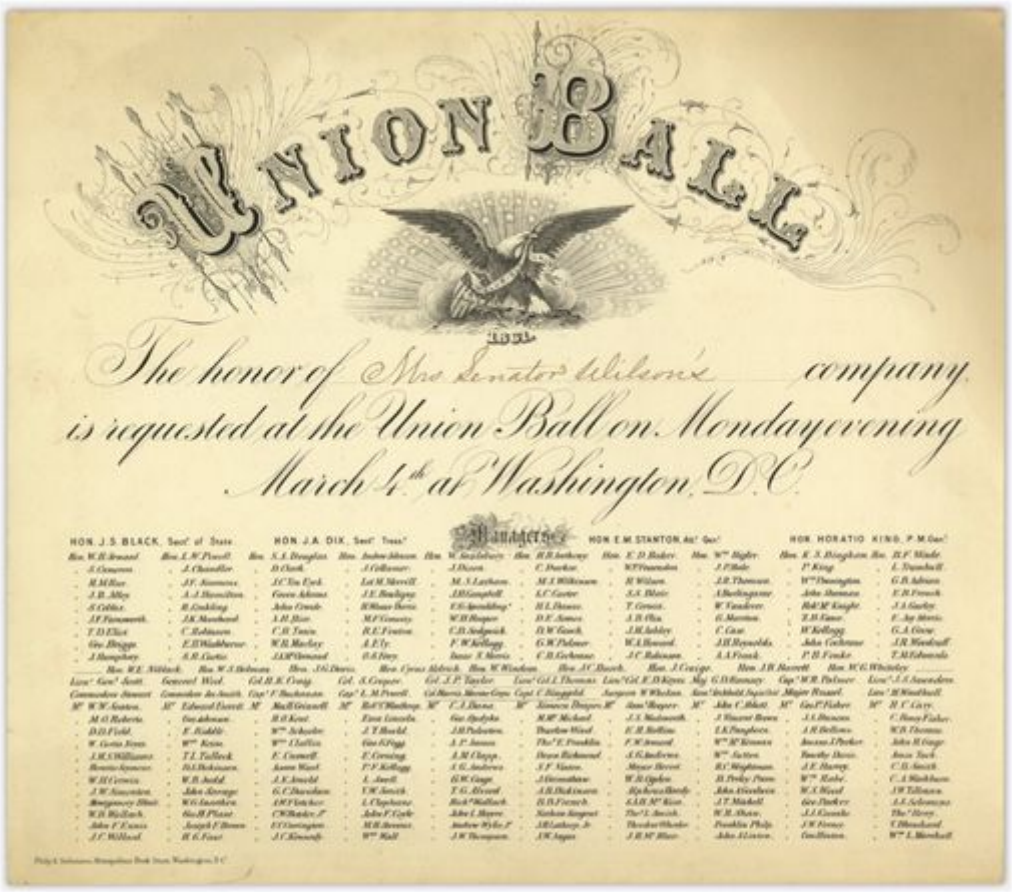
LINCOLN IS SAFELY DELIVERED TO WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY 21, 1861

Eight weeks after Abraham Jonas expressed concern over Lincoln's safety prior to the inauguration, Lincoln's friend and bodyguard Ward Lamon confirms that the president-elect will stay at a public hotel, Willard's, in Washington, for the ten days prior to his move into the Executive Mansion. Sadly, Lamon would be out of town four years later when the inadequately protected Lincoln was shot at Ford's Theatre.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

FIRST WASHINGTON SITTING, FEBRUARY 24, 1861

One day after sneaking into Washington from Baltimore under cover of darkness, Lincoln, exhausted and pensive, sits as president-elect for this photo—his first taken in Washington—by Alexander Gardner at Mathew Brady's studio.
Shapell Manuscript Collection


UNION BALL

1861

The honor of Mrs Senator Wilson's company
is requested at the Union Ball on Monday evening
March 4th at Washington D.C.

Managers

HON. J. S. BLACK, Secr. of State — HON. J. A. DIX, Secr. Treas. — HON. E. M. STANTON, Att. Gen. — HON. HORATIO KING, P. M. Gen.

Hon. W. H. Seward — Hon. J. W. Powell — Hon. S. A. Douglas — Hon. Andrew Johnson — Hon. W. Bigler — Hon. H. B. Anthony — Hon. E. D. Baker — Hon. W. Sprague — Hon. R. S. Bingham — Hon. B. F. Wade

S. Cameron — A. Chandler — D. Clark — J. Gilmore — J. Dixon — C. Durkee — W. P. Fessenden — J. Pitcher — P. King — E. Dyer Ashwell
M. M. Rice — J. F. Simmons — J. C. Du Cark — Lot M. Morrill — M. S. Latham — M. S. Wilkinson — H. Wilson — J. R. Thompson — W. Thompson — G. B. Adams
J. B. Alley — A. J. Hamilton — Green Adams — J. F. Bradley — J. D. Campbell — J. C. Carter — S. S. Blair — A. Shellingame — John Thomas — T. B. French
S. Colfax — R. Conkling — John Crisfield — Wm Kline Davis — V. Spaulding — H. L. Dawes — T. Gross — W. Vandever — Hd M. Knight — J. A. Gurley
J. F. Farnsworth — J. K. Moorhead — A. H. Rice — M. F. Conway — W. H. Hooper — D. F. Somes — A. B. Olin — G. Morton — T. B. Cane — F. Jay Morris
T. D. Eliot — C. Robinson — C. H. Train — R. E. Fenton — C. D. Sedgwick — D. W. Gooch — J. M. Ashley — C. Case — W. Kellogg — G. A. Grow
Geo. Briggs — E. D. Washburne — W. H. Hurley — A. E. Ely — F. W. Kellogg — G. W. Palmer — W. A. Howard — J. H. Reynolds — John Coltrane — J. R. Woodwell
J. Humphrey — A. R. Curtis — J. M. Edmond — D. A. Finny — Isaac N. Morris — C. B. Cochrane — J. C. Robinson — A. A. Frank — P. B. Fouke — T. M. Edwards

Hon. W. E. Niblack — Hon. W. A. Richardson — Hon. J. C. Davis — Hon. Cyrus Aldrich — Hon. W. Windom — Hon. J. C. Davis — Hon. J. Craig — Hon. A. B. Burritt — Hon. W. G. Whiteley

Lieut. Gen. Scott — Genl. Wool — Gd. B. R. Craig — Col. A. Cooper — Col. J. P. Taylor — Lieut Col. L. Thomas — Lieut Col. E. D. Keyes — Maj. G. D. Ramsay — Capt W. H. Palmer — Lieut. J. J. Saunders
Commodore Stewart — Commodore Jno Smith — Capt I. P. Buchanan — Capt S. M. Powell — Col Thos. Morris Cripps — Capt C. Sinnyfield — Surgeon W. Wharton — Asst Archibald Ingersol — Major Russell — Lieut. H. Wadsworth

Mr W. W. Seaton — Mr Edward Everett — Mr Mad'l Grinnell — Mr Rob't Winthrop — Mr C. J. Ihone — Mr Simeon Draper — Mr Asst Rogers — Mr John C. Hunt — Mr Geo P. Fisher — Mr H. C. Gray
M. O. Roberts — Geo Ashman — R. B. Kent — Elon Lincoln — Geo Opdyke — M. P. Michael — J. S. Wadsworth — J. Vincent Brown — J. S. Duncan — C. Henry Fisher
D. D. Field — F. Riddle — Wm Schaefer — J. T. Hoeld — J. B. Palmeter — Thurlow Weed — E. B. Bellow — J. K. Pangborn — A. H. Bellows — W. B. Thomas
W. Gates Jones — Wm Klein — Wm Chellis — Geo Grigg — A. P. Jones — Tho's E. Franklin — P. W. Arnaud — Wm M. Kinnan — Amasa J. Parker — John H. Gray
J. M. S. Williams — T. L. Tulluck — E. Cromwell — E. Corning — A. M. Clapp — Dean Richmond — A. G. Andrews — Wm Sutton — Timothy Davis — Amos Tuck
Horatio Seymour — D. S. Dickinson — Aaron Ward — P. P. Kellogg — S. L. Andrews — S. F. Vinton — Meyer Hecht — R. C. Wrightman — A. E. Burnig — C. G. Smith
W. H. Corwin — W. B. Astoff — A. K. Arnold — L. Jewell — G. W. Gage — A. Hemenhaus — W. B. Ogden — B. Perley Poore — W. W. Kohl — C. A. Washburn
A. W. Ainsworth — John Jessup — G. C. Thorndon — V. W. Smith — T. G. Alvord — A. B. Dickinson — Ryckman Bleeck — John Hendricks — W. S. Wood — J. W. Tillman
Montgomery Blair — Wm Hamilton — J. M. Fletcher — I. Clephane — Rich'd Wallach — D. D. French — S. S. M. Kee — A. T. Mudell — Geo Parker — A. S. Solomons
W. D. Wallach — Geo H. Plant — C. W. Butler, Jr — John F. Coyle — John C. Myers — Nathan Sargent — The's L. Smith — W. H. Shaw — J. J. Cassin — Tho's Berry
John F. Cuss — Joseph F. Brown — J. J. Cassin — M. B. Brown — Andrew Wylie Jr — J. M. Lathrop Jr — Theodore Wheler — Franklin Philp — J. W. Fenay — V. Blanchard
J. C. Willard — H. G. Foot — J. C. Kennedy — Wm Hall — J. W. Thompson — J. W. Jones — J. H. M. Blair — John A. Lowe — Cas Benton — Wm L. Marshall

C. B. Smith.
C. A. Washburn.
J. W. Tillman.
A. S. Solomons.
Tho's Berry.
V. Blanchard.
Wm L. Marshall.

INAUGURAL BALL INVITATION, MARCH 4, 1861

Listed as a "Manager" of Lincoln's celebratory Union Ball, to be held the night of the swearing-in, is Jewish activist, philanthropist, and businessman Adolphus Simeon (A. S.) Solomons.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Inspired as some were by Lincoln's biblically inflected rhetoric, Jews remained divided in their views concerning the incoming president. As such, they were a microcosm of the nation as a whole. This was particularly evident in Baltimore, where, in order to avoid a suspected assassination plot, Lincoln arrived under cover of darkness at about 3:30 A.M. on Saturday morning, February 23, and made himself inconspicuous as he switched trains for the last leg of his journey to Washington. Baltimore at that time was home to as many as 7,000 Jews, and they spanned the spectrum. Some of the city's oldest and most Orthodox Jews, like the majority of the Cohen and Friedenwald families and Rabbi Bernard Illowy, loathed the Republican Party and openly sympathized with the slaveholding South. Radical Jews like Rabbi David Einhorn and his followers, many of whom had supported the failed 1848 revolutions in Europe, detested slavery and cheered on its Republican opponents (as a result, Einhorn would be forced to flee the city in April). The majority of Jews, in the middle, having voted for the Democrats, promoted peace and reconciliation. They sought at all costs to stem the secessionist tide that Lincoln's nomination had precipitated.[5]

PHILP & SOLOMONS STATIONERY EMBOSSMENT

Imprint from the firm of Philp & Solomons, founded by Jewish printer Adolphus S. Solomons. Official Executive Mansion stationery had never before been employed in the White House, and Lincoln wrote many of his first personal and official letters as president on plain Philp & Solomons imprinted stationery. A year after taking office, Lincoln received the first printing of official Executive Mansion-embossed stationery. Lincoln continued to use Philp & Solomon's stationery—including for one of five handwritten copies of the Gettysburg Address.

Ten days following his arrival in Washington, Abraham Lincoln was inaugurated as the sixteenth president of the United States. His celebrated inaugural address likewise sought to stem the secessionist tide. He promised his "dissatisfied fellow countrymen"

that he would uphold the laws, and reiterated his promise not "to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists." His remarkable peroration, a literary masterpiece, pleaded for national reconciliation:

> We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stre[t]ching from every battle-field, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.[6]

Unremarked, except by Jews, was Lincoln's specific reference to Christianity as a basis for resolving the sectional crisis. "Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him, who has never yet forsaken this favored land," he declared, "are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulty."[7] A dozen letters poured into the office of the *Israelite* protesting the president's remarks. "Why not take the advice of the writings and doings of Thomas Jefferson," one of them asked. It called upon Lincoln to speak out "in the name of humanity and not Christianity." Giving voice to perennial Jewish fears concerning the use of state power to advance the Christian faith to the disadvantage of others, the letter writer worried that Lincoln, in the future, might prove sympathetic to nationwide efforts to strengthen Christian Sunday closing ("blue") laws, as well as to the campaign to have "Christ be acknowledged by the Constitution."[8]

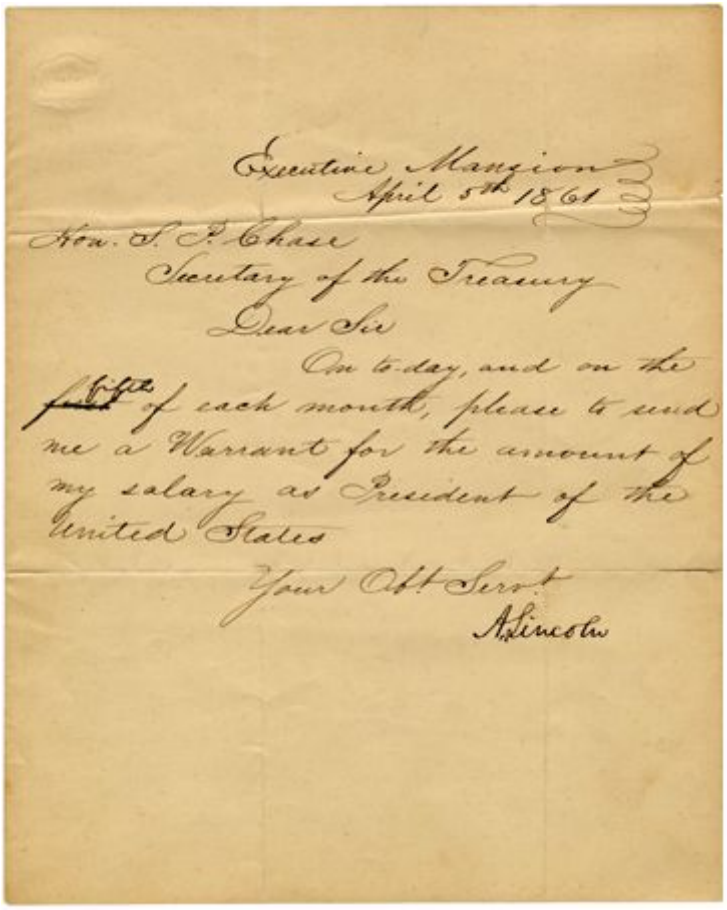
HONEST ABE

"MR. LINCOLN," HIS WIFE WROTE, "is almost a monomaniac on the subject of honesty." "On no terms would either male or female receive his signature to enable them to profit by our Government." In fact, even before he became president, tales concerning his integrity and magnanimity circulated, whether as a shopkeeper in New Salem or as a hardworking lawyer in Springfield collecting judgments for his clients. As president, he demanded the same standards of honesty from others whom he appointed to government office.

On April 5, 1861, he sent a memo that illustrates those exacting standards. "On to-day," he wrote, "and on the first fifth of each month, please to send me a Warrant for the amount of my salary as President of the United States." He had been inaugurated on March 4, and lest he be paid for four days (March 1–4) when he had not yet assumed office, he corrected the memo in his own hand and stipulated that his salary should thereafter be paid on the fifth of every month.

Two weeks later, on April 19, he displayed his standards of probity once again. "I am annoyed to know that my Bill at your house has not yet been paid," he wrote to the proprietor of Willard's Hotel, where he had stayed prior to his inauguration. "Receipt it & hand it to Mr. Nicolay & he will give a check for the amount." By the nineteenth, a week after hostilities began, Fort Sumter had fallen, and Lincoln, on that very day, was

proclaiming a blockade of the South. Nevertheless, he took time out from his busy schedule to make certain that an overdue bill was paid.



Executive Mansion
April 5th 1861

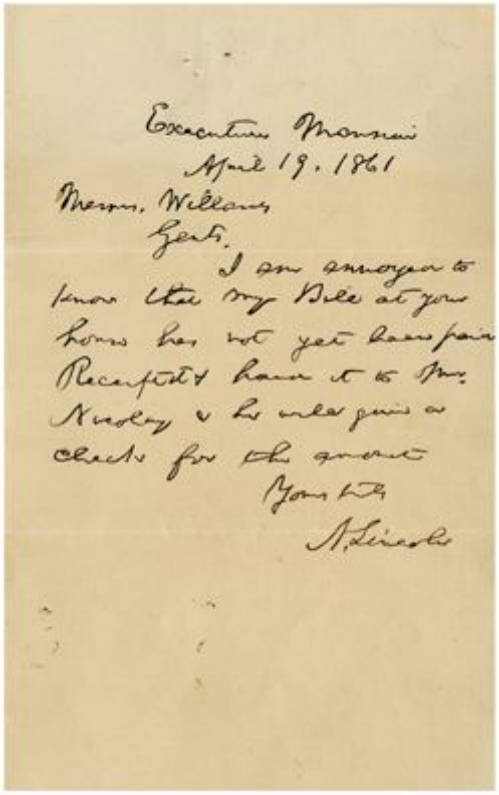
Hon. S. P. Chase
Secretary of the Treasury
Dear Sir
On to-day, and on the ~~first~~ fifth of each month, please to send me a Warrant for the amount of my salary as President of the United States
Your Obt Servt
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN'S TELLING ONE-WORD REVISION OF HIS SALARY VOUCHER

Shapell Legacy Partnership

THE CHECK, SHOWING THE CORRECT DATE—APRIL 5, 1861, WITH LINCOLN'S ENDORSEMENT

U.S. National Archives & Records Administration



Executive Mansion
April 19. 1861
Messrs. Willard
Gents.
I am annoyed to know that my Bill at your house has not yet been paid. Receipted & hand it to Mr. Nicolay & he will give a check for the amount
Yours truly
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN PAYS HIS BILL TO WILLARD'S HOTEL

Shapell Manuscript Collection

Though no partisan of the president, Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, the editor of the *Israelite,* urged calm. "In Springfield religion is called Christianity," he wrote reassuringly, "because people there do not think of any other form of worship, hence Mr. Lincoln uses the same word to express the same sentiment." Observing that Lincoln's supporters at the polls included many infidels and atheists, he suggested that his "words must not be criticized too closely." "By and by," he patronizingly predicted, "he will learn the precise use and import of terms."[9]

The precise meaning of "Christianity" at that time was actually somewhat complex. Some in Lincoln's day used the word narrowly as a synonym for Protestantism, others as a synecdoche for religion as a whole. The status of religious outsiders, such as Catholics, Jews, Mormons, and Native Americans, lay much in dispute.[10] Moreover, for all of his appeal to Christianity, Lincoln may not even have considered himself a Christian. He grew up, we have seen, among Calvinist Baptists who believed in predestination. True Christians, according to them, had been selected as such when the world came into being. "I am not a Christian—God knows I would be one," he

allegedly told Illinois' state superintendent of public instruction, Newton Bateman, in 1860.[11]

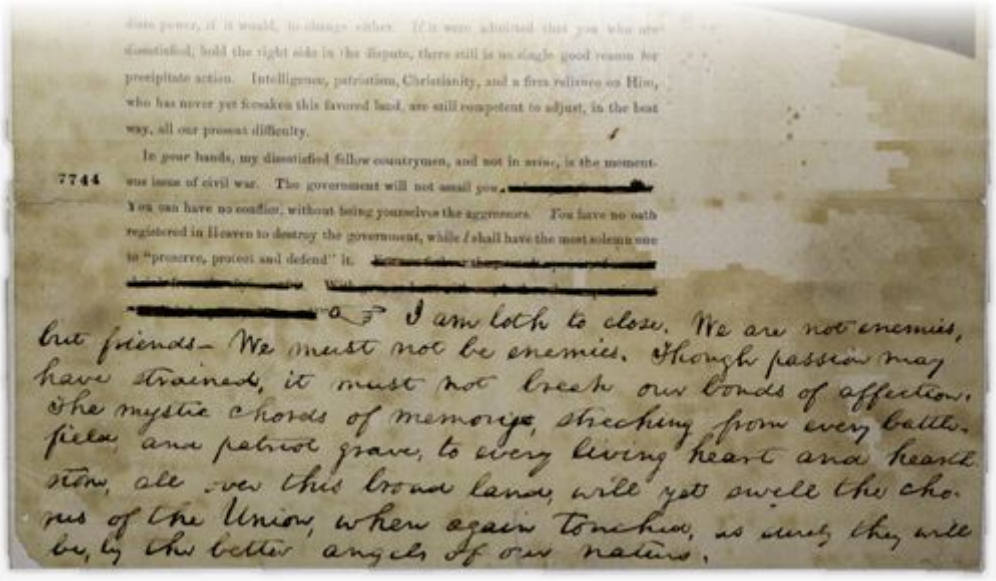
As for Jews, while they were known to be a distinctive "class" of Americans, much like Germans and Catholics, the fact that they were not Christian became an issue only when Jews felt excluded.[12] Otherwise, they mostly played down their religious differences and sought to fit in. Many of them, indeed, were better known as Germans than as Jews. Lincoln, from his previous interactions with Jews, had no reason to know that his reference to "Christianity" would offend them. Over time, as we shall see, he learned better.

Meanwhile, a call had gone out in the *Jewish Messenger* for "our people" to be "well represented" at the grand Union Ball held on inauguration night. However much Jews viewed themselves as a people apart ("our people"), they looked to participate as equals in public events of this sort. Over eighty Jewish families reputedly lived in Washington at that time. The noted Washington printer and bookstore owner Adolphus S. Solomons, who was Sabbath-observing and Orthodox, was even listed as a "manager" on the ball's official invitation. "The tickets are to be $10 each," the *Messenger* drolly reported, "admitting a gentleman and as many ladies as he may have the moral courage to bring with him."[13]

Some of those who paid to dance at the inaugural ball were office seekers. Prior to the 1883 Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act, patronage dominated most levels of government in the United States, on the theory that "to the victor belongs the spoils." Presidents rewarded their acquaintances and supporters with government jobs to cement their hold on power and promote party loyalty. As a result, within days of the inauguration, thousands of job seekers, of every faith and no faith, thronged the White House. Abraham Lincoln spent long hours seeking to identify whom he could depend upon to work hard and resist corruption.[14]

Ethnic and religious group leaders naturally paid close attention to presidential appointments, hoping that members of their own flock received their due. Jews were no exception. "The present government … has not given one single office to an Israelite," Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise complained four weeks after Lincoln took office.[15] By then, Lincoln was actually preparing to make his first official appointment of a Jew to public office. On May 24, Wise himself happily announced the news: "Abraham Jonas has received the appointment of Post Master of Quincy by the direct nomination of President

Lincoln."[16] Jonas, we have seen, had served in that position before, under Presidents Taylor and Fillmore. Having worked so hard to elect Lincoln, he sought the remunerative position once again. Soon after the November election, the *Quincy Daily Herald* reported that a petition was circulating in the community, "asking Abe Lincoln to appoint Abe Jonas postmaster." Democrats signed the petition as well. Orville Hickman Browning, in a letter to Lincoln in December, added his weight to the effort: "I would be glad to have our mutual friend Abram Jonas remembered in connection with the Post office at Quincy. He wishes the place, and, I think, ought to have it." Lincoln, preoccupied by the fall of Fort Sumter and the outbreak of war, seems to have delayed the appointment. Once he acted favorably, though, Jonas lost no time in extending patronage to friends of his own: "The new Post Master, Mr. Jonas has made the following appointments," the *Quincy Whig Republican* reported on May 25. "Edward Jonas, Principal Assistant; Simon P. Cohen, Book-Keeper; John Kinkle, Clerk." Two of those three early appointments went to Jews, one of whom was Jonas's own son.[17]


dissatisfied, hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him, who has never yet forsaken this favored land, are still competent to adjust, in the best way, all our present difficulty.

In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you. You can have no conflict, without being yourselves the aggressors. You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to "preserve, protect and defend" it.

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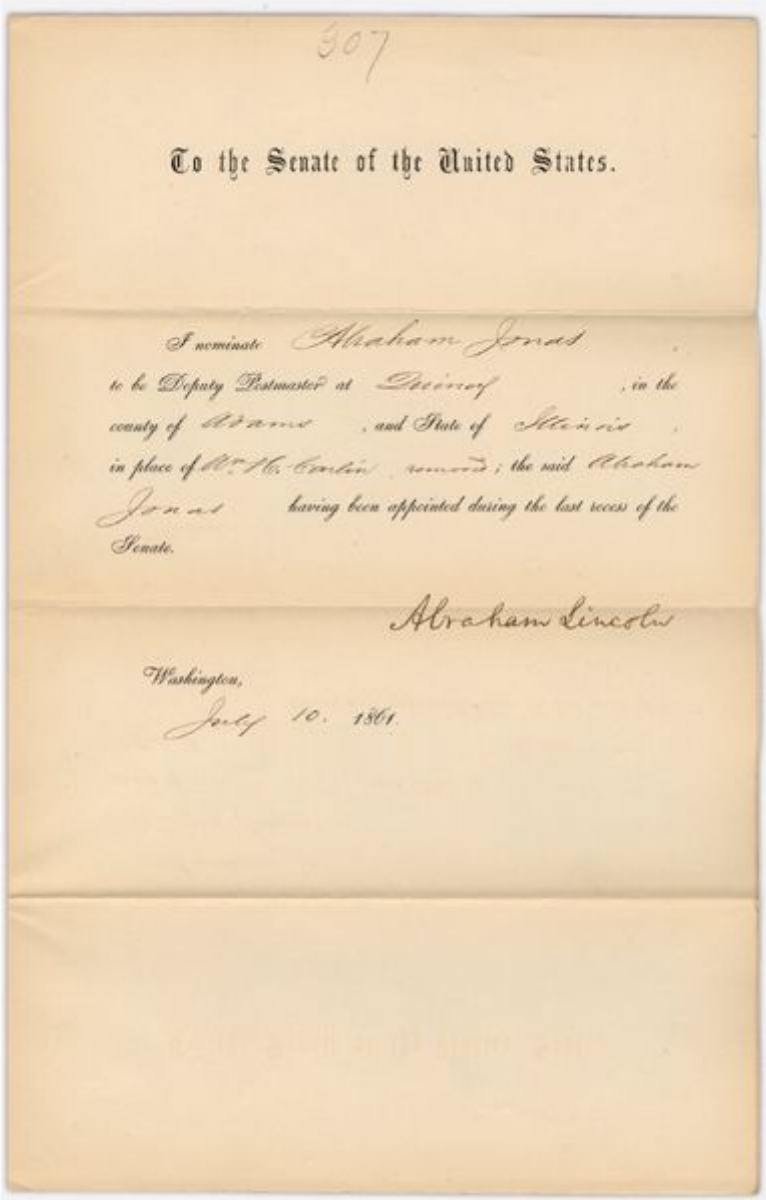
I am loth to close. We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearth-stone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature.

"BETTER ANGELS OF OUR NATURE," LINCOLN'S FIRST INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1861

A working draft of Lincoln's literary masterpiece, pleading for national reconciliation. Four years later, in his second inaugural address, Lincoln again concluded with words that indelibly marked American memory.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Abraham Lincoln found himself engaged with matters concerning Jews thrice more around the time that Jonas became Quincy's postmaster, a sign of the growing numbers and significance of Jews in the United States, of Lincoln's own predilections, and of the

president's changing priorities and responsibilities with the onset of the Civil War. On May 26, he dashed off a note to Secretary of War Simon Cameron concerning a Jew named Max Einstein. "I am very much inclined to accept Col. Einsteins Regiment," he wrote "and wish you would have it mustered into service as soon as possible."[18]



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To the Senate of the United States.

I nominate Abraham Jonas to be Deputy Postmaster at Quincy, in the county of Adams, and State of Illinois, in place of Wm H. Condit removed; the said Abraham Jonas having been appointed during the last recess of the Senate.

Abraham Lincoln

Washington, July 10. 1861.

LINCOLN NOMINATES ABRAHAM JONAS, JULY 10, 1861

At the recommendation of Orville Hickman Browning, Lincoln nominates his long-time friend and political supporter, Abraham Jonas, to the position of Deputy Postmaster of Quincy, Illinois.
U.S. National Archives & Records Administration

Einstein (1822–1906), who immigrated to America from Württemberg in 1844, owned a successful ribbon and silk store in Philadelphia, but his passion was the military. During the 1850s, he served in various Pennsylvania militias and helped to

found and lead the Philadelphia Flying Artillery Company, a unit that specialized in fighting on horseback, using recently introduced lightweight artillery. He also developed extensive political connections. As war loomed, in 1861, Einstein helped to organize the 27th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment: at least half of its volunteers were German immigrants, and about 10 percent Jews. Embarrassed when rioters attacked the unprepared volunteers in Baltimore as they sought to make their way to Washington, the regiment was reorganized as a light artillery company, with Einstein, who was experienced in that area, serving as colonel. He personally traveled to Washington amid the patriotic fervor that swept the North following the fall of Fort Sumter, so as to offer his troops to Secretary of War Cameron, whom he had previously known as Pennsylvania's senator.

Although it was officially up to "state authorities" to supply militiamen in response to the call for 75,000 volunteers to suppress the Confederacy, Lincoln encouraged Cameron to accept the regiment anyway. At the first battle of Bull Run (Manassas), which the Union lost, the 27th Regiment covered the military's retreat, and according to some reports at the time, "Colonel Einstein's Regiment behaved gallantly." But Major General George B. McClellan, with whom Einstein had apparently clashed, wanted the regiment placed under new leadership. When, allegedly without authorization, Einstein traveled to Philadelphia to procure clothing and shoes for his troops, McClellan had him arrested. Subsequently, McClellan told Cameron that "the interests of the service demand Colonel Einstein's dismissal" since he was "in no respects fit to be a colonel." Accordingly, Einstein was honorably discharged on October 2, 1861. Yet Lincoln was apparently far from convinced of his unfitness, for less than twelve weeks later he nominated him to be U.S. consul to Germany at Nuremberg. The existing consul, Philip Geisse, whom Einstein was slated to replace, was appalled. Among other things, he complained that Einstein's "being an Israelite is much to his prejudice here." Ultimately, the Senate rejected Einstein's nomination.[19]

Anti-Semitism likewise bedeviled another one of Lincoln's consular appointees from that time, Charles L. Bernays. Editor of an antislavery German newspaper in Missouri, Bernays had been a delegate to the 1860 Republican convention and was one of several sympathetic editors whom Lincoln rewarded with consulships. In early June, Lincoln appointed him consul to Zurich, and the recess appointment subsequently sailed through Congress. Jews of the day seem not to have paid much attention to the

appointment. Bernays, scion of a distinguished Jewish family, was nominally a Lutheran, baptized and confirmed as a child in Germany prior to his immigration, and was known in Missouri as a freethinker. According to Isaac Mayer Wise, "nobody" would consider him an "Israelite." Nevertheless, several Swiss citizens protested Bernays's nomination, both because they considered him a Jew and because he had criticized Switzerland for discriminating against Jews. Within six months, Lincoln prudently shifted him to Helsingør (Elsinore), Denmark, where his Jewish parentage seems not to have been an issue.[20]

The third matter concerning Jews that engaged Abraham Lincoln around the time that Abraham Jonas took office involved a European Jewish banking family, the Rothschilds. On May 28, Lincoln received a letter from the prominent New York attorney and former Democratic congressman Francis Brockholst Cutting, advising him "that impressions beneficial to our country will be produced by continuing to communicate with Europe, thro' the medium of the Messrs Rothschild."[21] One of Lincoln's greatest fears at that time was that Great Britain, which was dependent upon Southern cotton, angered by America's recently raised protectionist tariff (the Morrill tariff), and happy to see the United States weakened, might grant official recognition to the Confederacy in a bid to weaken America still more. Salomon James de Rothschild, the somewhat irresponsible twenty-six-year-old son of Baron James Mayer de Rothschild of France, who was on a prolonged visit to America, advocated precisely that policy in a letter home: "The sooner the great European powers recognize the Confederacy…," he wrote, "the sooner they will have fulfilled a mission of peace and humanity. Even more, it is in their own interest to do so, for the independence of the South will bring about free trade and will create an immense outlet for all our products and for those of England.… I am therefore begging you to use all your influence to have the Confederacy recognized as quickly as possible."[22]

What Cutting had discovered and revealed to Lincoln, however, was that the elder Rothschild's own Jewish agent in the United States, August (Aaron) Belmont (1813–1890), strongly disagreed with Salomon. The German-born Belmont, who mixed in high society, and was married (in a church) to the daughter of Commodore Matthew Perry, was a leading figure in the Democratic Party.[23] Opposed to Lincoln's election, he was nevertheless outraged by the attack on Fort Sumter and strongly advocated for the Union. "Your Statesmen & your press have at all times taken the most violent &

uncompromising stand against Slavery," he reminded Baron Lionel de Rothschild, England's first Jewish member of Parliament, "and it is more than strange to see the British Government now give its moral countenance to a power, which … is based upon Slavery as its principal fundamental strength." Rebutting arguments by Lord John Russell and others that favored British recognition of the Confederacy, Belmont insisted that the South had rebelled from "a fear that their peculiar institution of slavery may hereafter be interfered with by the party which put Mr Lincoln into power." He warned that British interference would "only prolong the fratricidal war and entail ruin not only upon both sections of our country but upon the material interests & commerce of the world." Never a shrinking violet, he made sure that his letter would be read both by the British prime minister, Lord Palmerston, and by Salomon's father, Baron de Rothschild of Paris.[24]

Belmont visited Washington in June, offering advice on how to fund the war (he thought it would require "from 50 to 60 millions of dollars"—Belmont was off in his estimate by a factor of one hundred).[25] He also met privately with Abraham Lincoln. He even seems to have undertaken a secret mission into Confederate territory, though details of his trip remain shrouded in mystery. Later, from Paris, he conveyed to Lincoln confidential "impressions & convictions of highplaced & wellfavored parties" in England and France concerning foreign intervention, and offered suggestions on how to export enough cotton across the Atlantic to prevent the Europeans from entering the conflict.[26] Belmont's call for "an earnest effort towards reconciliation and peace," as if the Southern states have not seceded at all, later distanced him from Lincoln: "Broken eggs," Lincoln replied, employing a metaphor that he memorably used following the Emancipation Proclamation, to underscore that there could be no return to the earlier status quo, "can not be mended." As head of the Democratic Party, in 1864, Belmont actively opposed Lincoln's reelection.[27] Even when they clashed, however, Lincoln—unlike so many others of his time—never disparaged Belmont as a Jew. By contrast, former president James Buchanan (whom Belmont had helped to elect back in 1856) once privately described him as a "speculating German Jew." The *New York Times* portrayed him as "the agent of foreign Jew bankers." A colonel named Max Langenschwarz dismissed him as "Jew-President Belmont."[28] Lincoln sometimes respected Belmont and sometimes not, but never commented on his ancestry or religion.

Washington D.C. May 26th
1861.

Hon. Simon Cameron
Sec. of War.

Dear Sir,

I am very much inclined to accept Col. Einstein's Regiment and wish you would have it mustered into service as soon as possible if in any way consistent with our arrangements.

Yours Truly
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO SIMON CAMERON, APPROVING THE MUSTERING OF MAX EINSTEIN'S REGIMENT, MAY 26, 1861

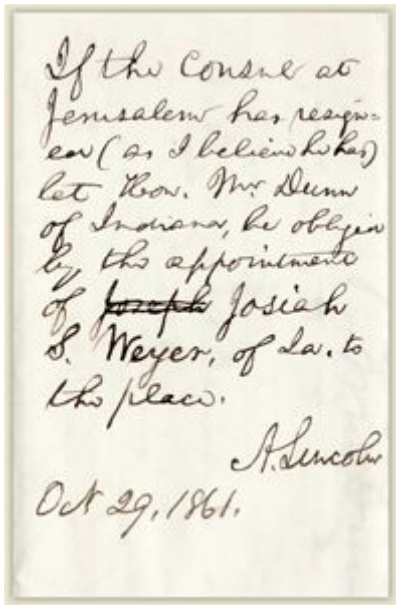
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Colonel Max Einstein
Collection of Robert Marcus

Gift of a revolver to Colonel Max Einstein, presented "by his friends."
Courtesy of Shalom Lamm

LINCOLN'S APPOINTMENTS TO JERUSALEM

LINCOLN, WHO, according to his wife, Mary, told her on April 14, 1865, that he wanted to see Jerusalem before he died, shared a similar fate with his October 1861 choice for consul at Jerusalem: neither one of them ever got there. "If the Consul at Jerusalem has resigned, (as I believe he has)," Lincoln wrote, then he obliges the appointment of Josiah S. Weyer. But Weyer, of Iowa, had been trumped months earlier by a more politically viable candidate, Franklin Olcott of New York. Lincoln had simply forgotten that Olcott had been chosen. Albert Rhodes, who was appointed on February 23, 1864, was the last of four different consuls who served under Lincoln in the Holy Land.

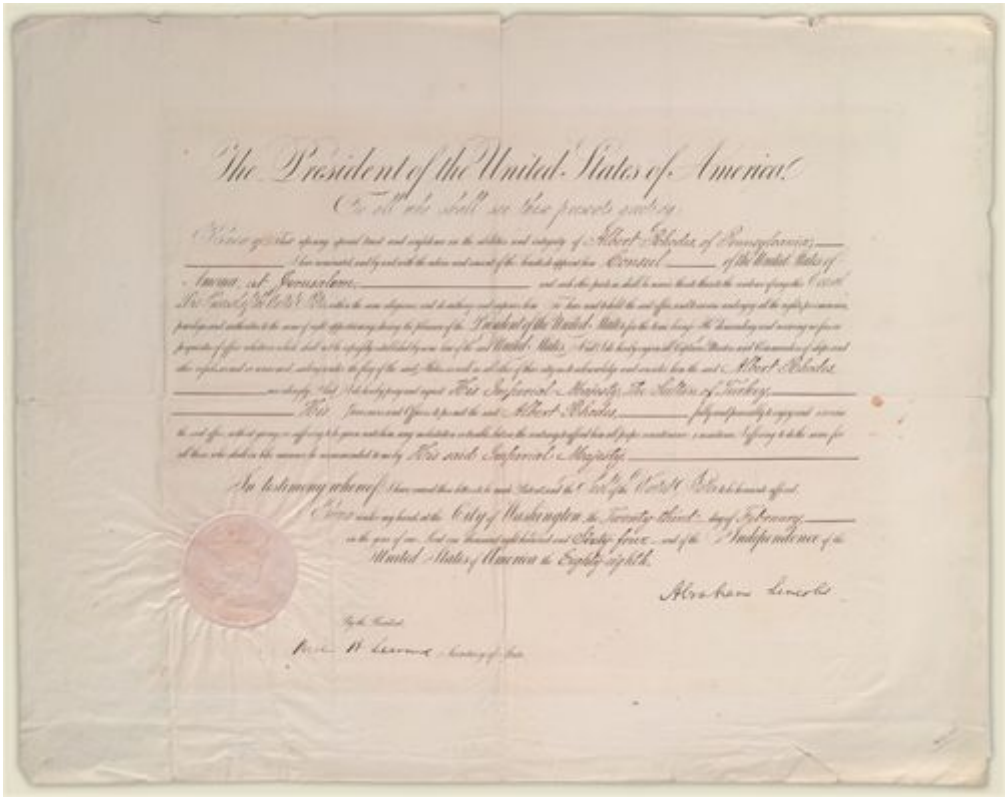

If the Consul at Jerusalem has resigned (as I believe he has) let Hon. Mr. Dunn of Indiana, be obliged by the appointment of ~~Joseph~~ Josiah S. Weyer, of Ia. to the place.

A. Lincoln

Oct 29, 1861.

LINCOLN'S ENDORSEMENT OF JOSIAH S. WEYER ON A LETTER FROM WILLIAM MCKEE DUNN, OCTOBER 29, 1861

Shapell Manuscript Collection



APPOINTMENT OF ALBERT RHODES AS CONSUL AT JERUSALEM, FEBRUARY 23, 1864

Brown University Library

Nor did ancestry and religion initially play much role in Lincoln's military appointments, which became increasingly numerous and significant in the months following the fall of Fort Sumter. As we previously noted, he appointed people, as far as possible, on the basis of merit. Such was certainly the case with regard to Alfred Mordecai, Jr., whom Lincoln, on August 10, 1861, appointed a second lieutenant.[29] Mordecai, twenty-one, was the scion of a distinguished and close-knit American Jewish family that dated back from before the American Revolution; he had relatives in both the North and the South. His father, Alfred Mordecai, Sr., received a classical and Jewish education, graduated first in his class at West Point in 1823, was a leader in the field of weapons and ammunitions development, and was probably the highest-ranking Jew of his day in the army. Varina Davis, the wife of Jefferson Davis, met him in the 1850s when her husband was U.S. secretary of war and was so impressed by the "Hebrew" that she felt she could understand, after seeing him, "how that race had furnished the highest type of mankind." In her memoirs, she went on to describe Mordecai's "habits of thought," "moral nature," and "private life" as being most admirable and

praiseworthy; he was, she gushed, echoing the New Testament (John 1:47), "an Israelite without guile."[30]

Heavily recruited by the Confederacy once the Civil War began, even as he was overseeing the manufacture of cannon carriages meant to pound the Confederacy into submission, the elder Mordecai resolved his painful sectional dilemma by resigning from the military and sitting out the war in Philadelphia, forgoing honor and a comfortable salary. In so doing, he sought to "spare the feelings" of his wife and children, who favored the North; forbear taking up arms against his mother, siblings, and extended family, who all lived in and sided with the South; and preserve his ties to the army and the Union to which he had sworn loyalty.[31] None applauded his decision. Mordecai's son and namesake, whom Lincoln appointed, faced no similar dilemma. Likewise a West Point graduate ("near the top of his class"), and a lifelong Northerner, he identified with his Jewishness far less than his father (after the war, he was married, in a church, to a Christian).[32] His skills commended him to Lincoln.

AUGUST BELMONT

The wealthy German-born August Belmont was a New York Democrat who, as an international banker, was primarily concerned with preserving a peaceful economy. After Fort Sumter, however, he supported the Union cause and helped raise and equip the first German-American regiment.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

The same was true of the Jewish quartermasters whom Lincoln appointed. Quartermasters during the Civil War were responsible for the housing ("quarters"), transportation, clothing, and supplies of the troops. Their labors were described as

"incessant." "The success of all military operations," one Civil War era study concluded, depended "in a great measure" upon the "promptness and efficiency" of the quartermaster.[33] Since a successful quartermaster required business and management skills in abundance, it comes as no surprise that a disproportionate number of Jews, many of whom had mercantile backgrounds, were called upon to fill these positions. One of the first whom Lincoln is known to have appointed was Moritz Pinner, the Jewish delegate from Missouri who had been present at the Republican national convention that nominated Lincoln for president in 1860. Pinner possessed both military and business experience, and General Philip Kearny of the First New Jersey Brigade asked that he be "appointed Quarter Master of his staff." In reply, Lincoln scrawled on the back of the letter, "Let Gen. Kearney be obliged, if it can be done consistently," and forwarded it on to Simon Cameron. Pinner received his commission a week later.[34]

HEBREW, ISRAELITE, JEW

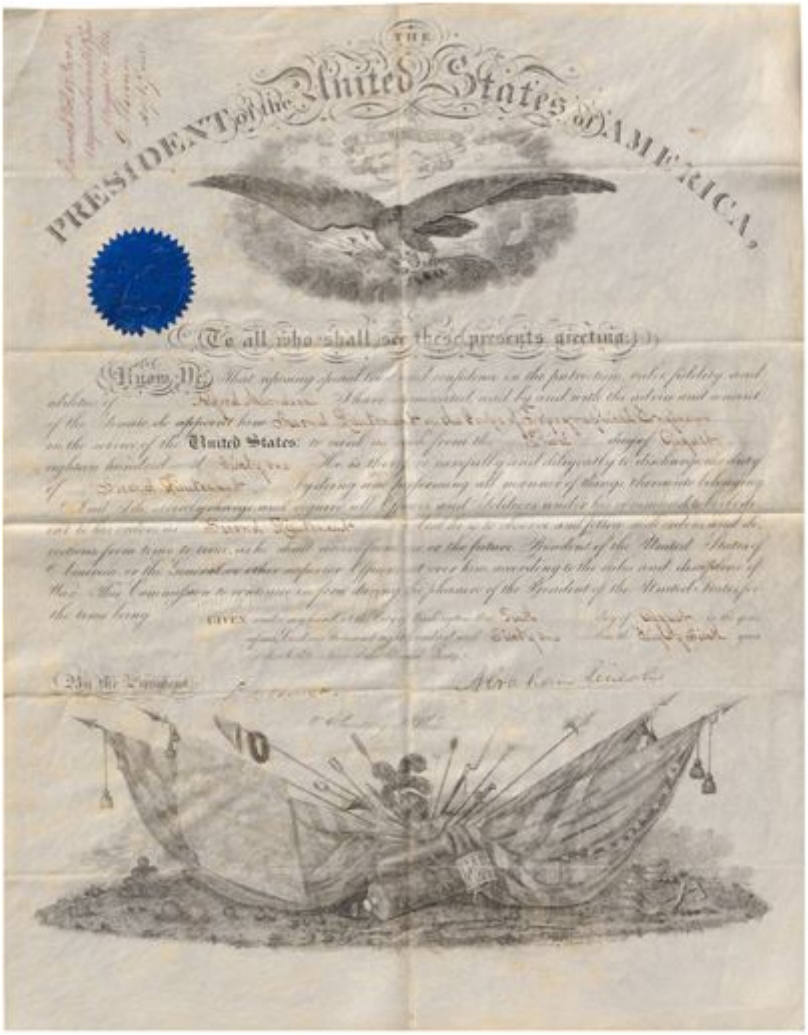
AT DIFFERENT TIMES in his correspondence, Abraham Lincoln spoke of "Jews," of "Hebrews," and of "Israelites." All three terms were commonplace in his day, and they frequently were used interchangeably. Given the negative associations many Christians had with the word *Jew,* some considered *Hebrew* and *Israelite* more respectful terms. A name change, they thought, would improve Jews' overall status. Others, however, remained loyal to the word *Jew,* which had deep historical resonance. Revealingly, nineteenth-century American Jewish newspapers carried names like the *Jewish Messenger,* as well as the *Hebrew Leader* and the *American Israelite.*

The word *Jew,* in the end, did not disappear from the American lexicon. Instead, context generally determined whether it was being used respectfully, descriptively, or disparagingly. In Lincoln's case, whether he wrote about Jews, Hebrews, or Israelites, he never did so, as far as is known, in a disrespectful way.

Some fifty other Jews served as quartermasters for the Union during the Civil War, but with a single exception no mention of their being Jewish accompanied their appointment; they were appointed on the basis of their merit or connections.[35] In the Confederacy, there were also many Jewish quartermasters, including the quartermaster general of the entire army (derided by his enemies as "Jew Quarter-Master General"), Col. Abraham Charles Myers, for whom Fort Myers, Florida, is named.[36]

On one remarkable occasion—the "single exception" noted above—Lincoln appointed an assistant quartermaster precisely because he was a Jew. The individual involved, Cheme (Cherie) Moise Levy, was the son-in-law of Rabbi Morris J. Raphall of New York's Congregation B'nai Jeshurun. Before the war, as we have seen, Raphall

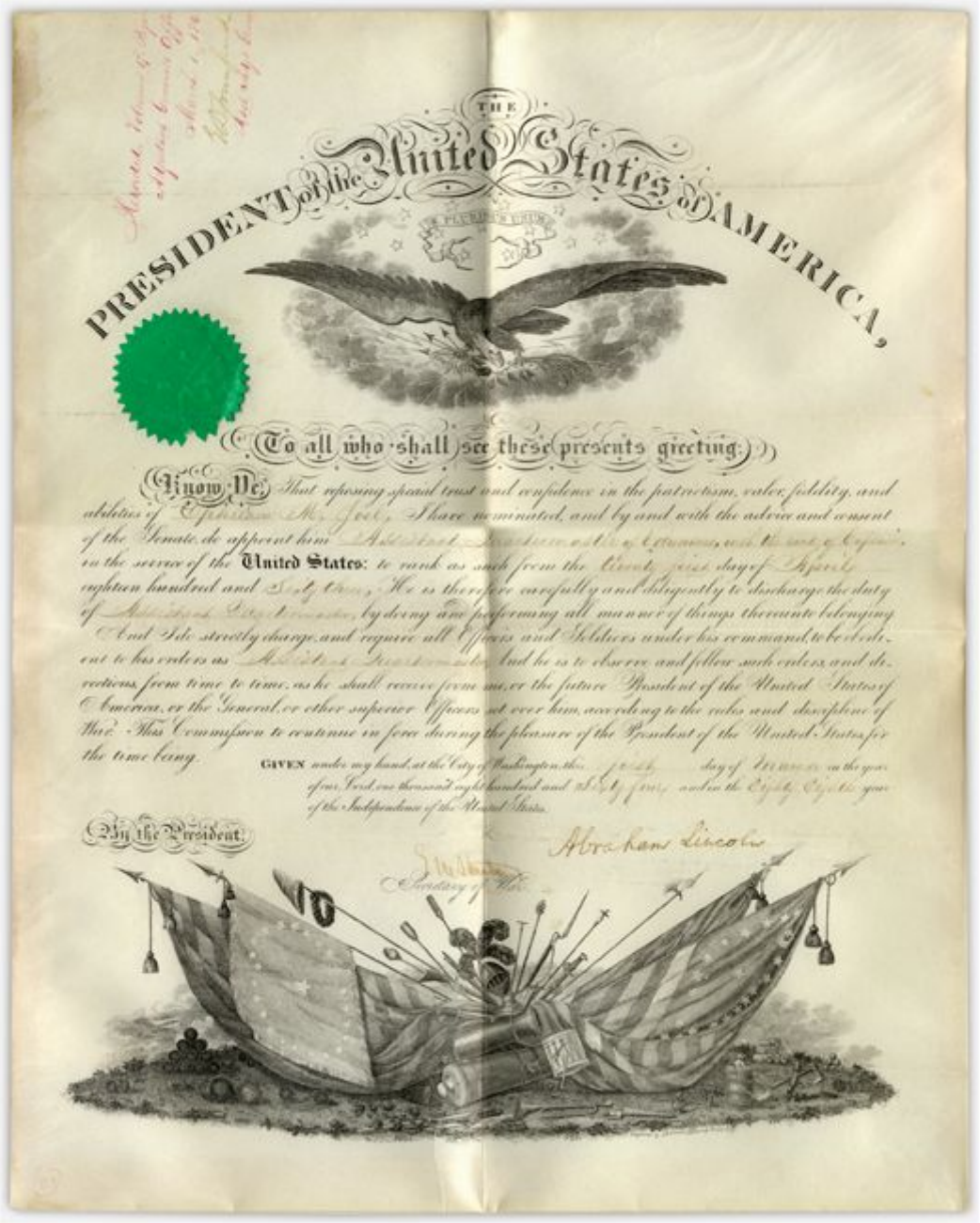
defended slavery as biblically sanctioned, but once the war began he evinced ardent patriotism. His son, Alfred, was commissioned an officer and served with distinction in the Union army, later losing an arm in the fighting near Devil's Den at the Battle of Gettysburg.[37] The elder Raphall's son-in-law, probably with his father-in-law's backing, applied to be a quartermaster. "I believe we have not yet appointed a Hebrew," Lincoln responded in a note to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton on November 4, 1862. In fact, he was quite wrong in that belief, for, as we have seen, he had already appointed numbers of Jews, including quartermasters. Levy, however, was different: being Orthodox and well respected in New York, he was a public and visible Jew. That, indeed, is why Lincoln appointed him, because he was a "Hebrew" and because he was "well vouched as a capable and faithful man" (the word *faithful,* with typical Lincoln wordplay, carried a double meaning.) "Let him be appointed an Assistant Quarter-Master, with the rank of Captain," Lincoln ordered.[38]



LINCOLN APPOINTS ALFRED MORDECAI, JR. A SECOND LIEUTENANT, AUGUST 10, 1861

Mordecai, a Jewish West Pointer, would go on to become one of the best-known ordnance officers in the United States Army; he retired as a general.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

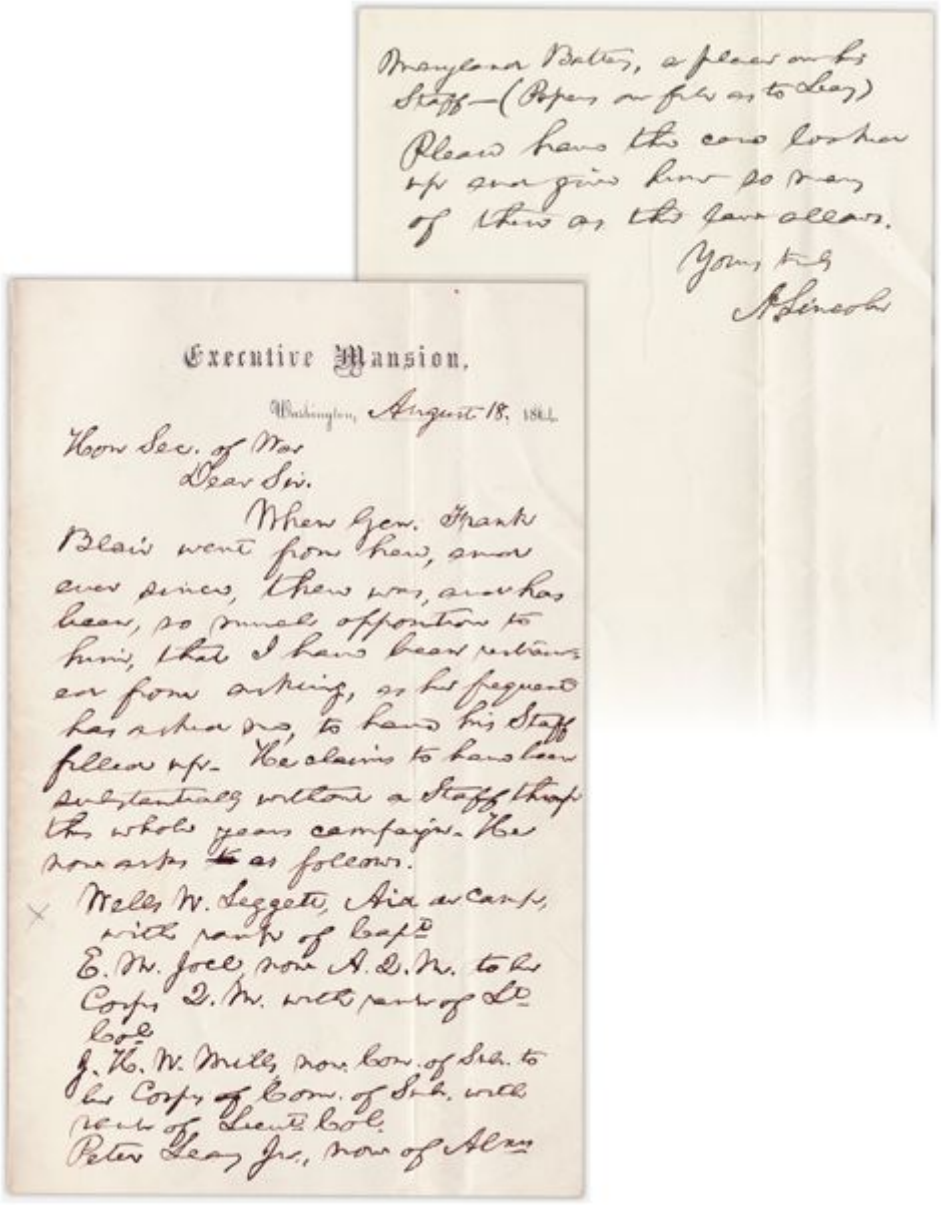
Alfred Mordecai, Jr.
Collection of Robert Marcus



LINCOLN PROMOTES JOEL QUARTERMASTER WITH THE RANK OF CAPTAIN, MARCH 1, 1864

Lt. Ephraim M. Joel, having been commended for his conduct at the end of the Vicksburg campaign, when he appropriated Confederate cannons for use by Union troops in the battle, is with this document raised by Lincoln to the rank of captain.

Shapell Manuscript Collection



Executive Mansion,

Washington, August 18, 1864.

Hon Sec. of War

Dear Sir.

When Gen. Frank Blair went from here, and ever since, there was, and has been, so much opposition to him, that I have been reluctant even from asking, as he frequently has others urged, to have his Staff filled up. He claims to have been substantially without a Staff through the whole years campaign. His now asks as follows.

Wells W. Leggett, Aid de Camp, with rank of Capt.

E. M. Joel, now A. Q. M. to the Corps Q. M. with rank of Lt. Col.

J. H. W. Mills, now Com. of Sub. to the Corps Com. of Sub. with rank of Lieut. Col.

Peter Leary Jr., now of Alex

Maryland Battery, a place on his Staff—(Papers on file as to Leary)

Please have this case looked up and give him so many of them as the law allows.

Yours truly

A. Lincoln

JOEL CONTINUES TO RISE IN THE RANKS, AUGUST 18, 1864

Lincoln appoints Ephraim M. Joel "now A.Q.M. to be Corps Q.M. with rank of Lt. Col. at the request of General Francis Preston Blair."

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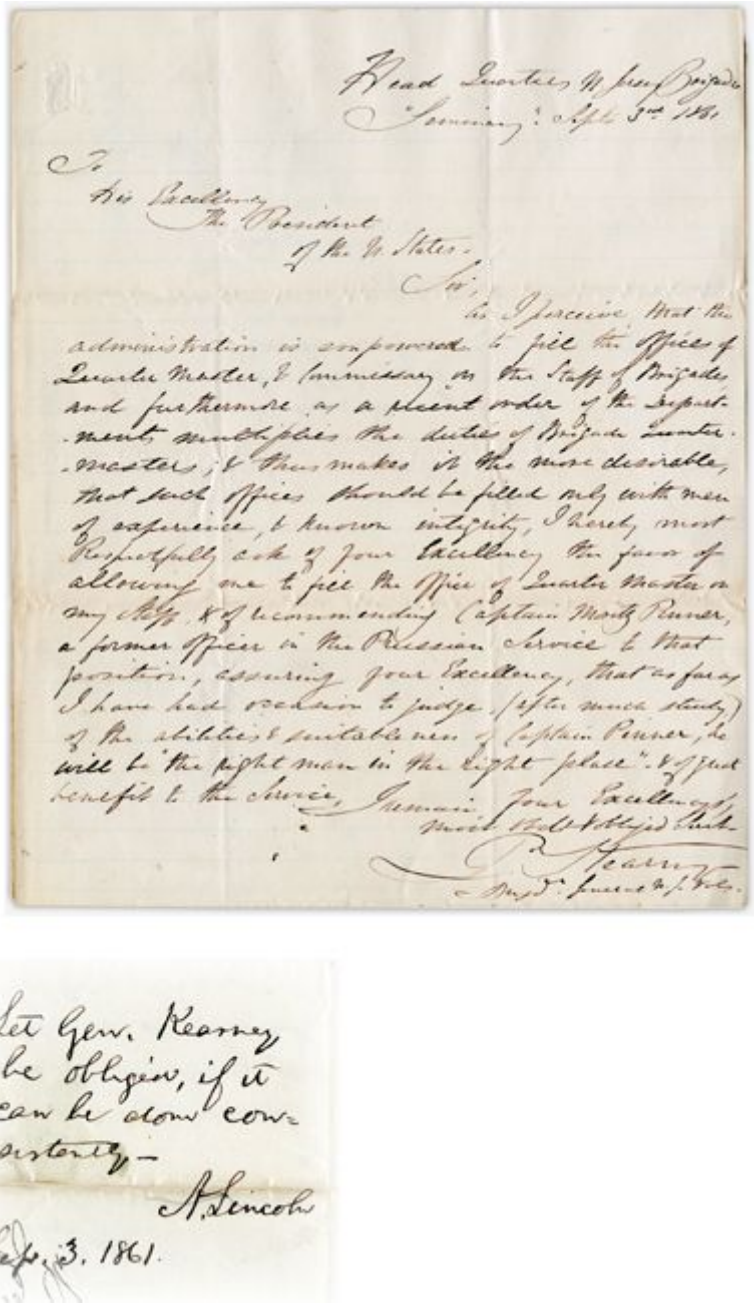


Let Gen. Kearney be obliged, if it can be done consistently—
A. Lincoln
Sept. 3. 1861.

PHILIP KEARNY TO LINCOLN, SEPTEMBER 3, 1861, WITH LINCOLN'S ENDORSEMENT OF MORITZ PINNER

At the request of General Philip Kearny, Lincoln endorses the appointment of Moritz Pinner, who had been active in electing Lincoln the year before, as quartermaster for Kearny's staff.
William Clements Library, University of Michigan

Levy was soon hard at work in the capital and, on the side, distributed food and clothing to Jewish patients in Washington area hospitals.[39] Within less than a year, however, he was charged with "conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline," for signing a false certificate relating to the pay of men under his command. He secretly withheld half of one clerk's pay—upon the order of a commanding officer,

he claimed—allegedly to prevent the man "from squandering one hundred dollars per month [on alcohol] to his own destruction." The sum involved was small, and Senator Samuel C. Pomeroy of Kansas apparently sought to intervene on Levy's behalf. Lincoln, however, was persuaded of Levy's guilt: "it makes too bad a record to admit of my interference—in fact, it could not be worse," he wrote. "To interfere, under the circumstances, would blacken my own character." Levy was therefore deprived of his rank and office in the army and "forever disqualified to hold any office of trust or profit in the United States."[40] Later, however, after hearing favorable reports on Levy from, among others, Richard Busteed (whom he had just appointed a U.S. district judge) and, it seems, after meeting personally with Rabbi Raphall, Lincoln reconsidered.[41] Justice was more important to him than being proven wrong.

On January 16, 1864, Lincoln renominated Levy as assistant quartermaster with the rank of captain. "Permit me to offer my sincere and heartfelt thanks for the generosity and justice with which you have treated my son-in-law Captain C. M. Levy," Raphall wrote him in gratitude. "My whole family unites with me in feeling that you are indeed his true benefactor."[42] Congress investigated and confirmed Levy's appointment, but Stanton blocked it; to him, "forever disqualified" meant just that. Senator Pomeroy protested to Lincoln that the original court martial was "an unjust imputation" and pleaded for Levy's reinstatement, but to no avail. It took another five years until, on February 18, 1869, outgoing president Andrew Johnson removed Levy's disability.[43]

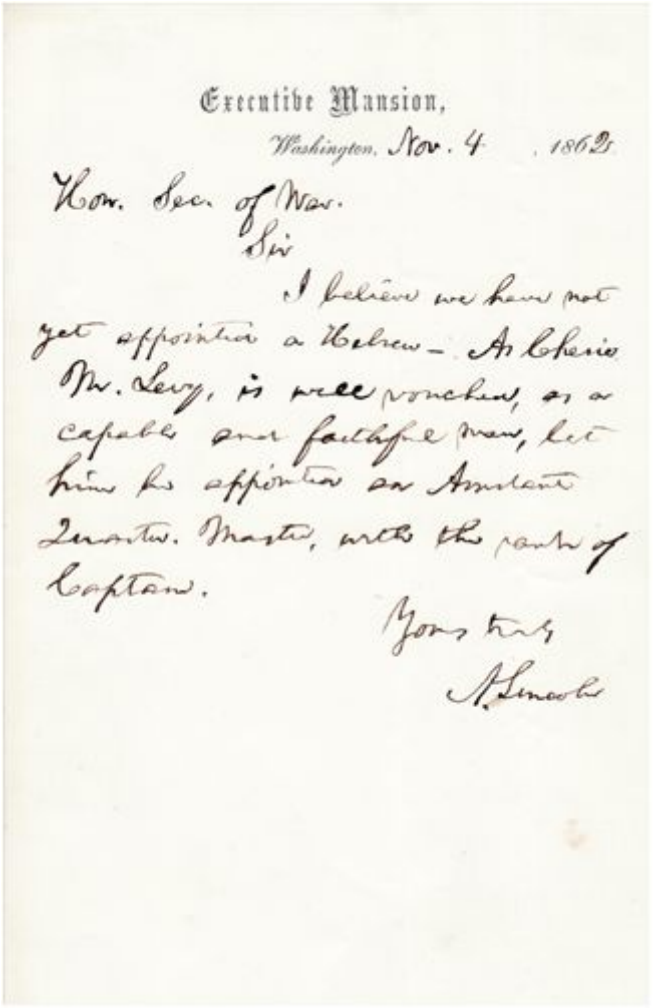
If quartermasters like Levy needed business experience (and connections) to be appointed, so did sutlers, and a disproportionate number of them turn out to have been Jewish as well. Sutlers were not military personnel but civilians licensed by military commanders to market provisions to soldiers in the field. Theirs was a dangerous but lucrative line of work with a long history. In William Shakespeare's play *Henry V,* set in the Hundred Years' War, a soldier named Pistol declares, "I shall sutler be Unto the camp, and profits will accrue."[44] The word *sutler* comes from a root meaning "to follow a mean or low occupation" (the word *soot* comes from the same cognate), the implication being that the sutler profited from the harsh conditions of war. Perhaps for that reason, Jews had long been permitted to serve as sutlers, even in Europe. Yet, however scorned and distrusted they were, sutlers—much like frontier peddlers of the day—were also indispensable. They offered for sale necessary and desirable items—

food, clothing, personal supplies, reading material, religious articles, and even, in one famous case, Passover provisions—not otherwise available where soldiers camped.[45]

MORRIS RAPHALL

A powerful New York rabbi, he was both a defender of slavery and a Unionist. In 1861 Raphall became the first rabbi invited to deliver an opening prayer before Congress—which he did, to the dismay of some, in a prayer shawl and skullcap, and partly in Hebrew. He was also one of four rabbis to have had face-to-face meetings with Lincoln in the White House.
Collection of Robert Marcus

"I believe we have not yet appointed a Hebrew."



Executive Mansion,
Washington, Nov. 4 1862

Hon. Sec. of War.
Sir

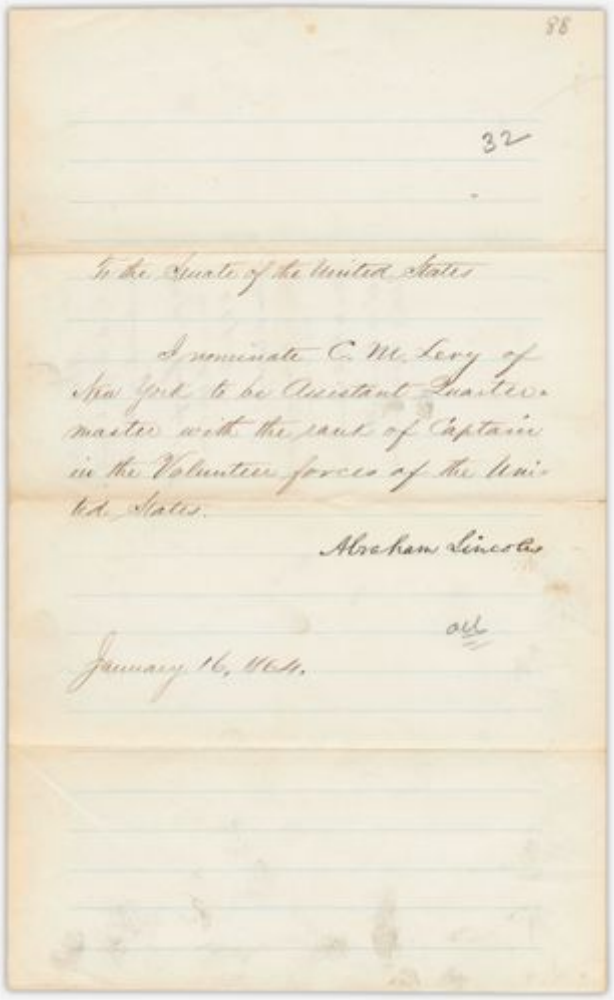
I believe we have not yet appointed a Hebrew — As there is Mr. Levy, is well vouched, as a capable and faithful man, let him be appointed an Assistant Quarter. Master, with the rank of Captain.

Yours truly
A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO EDWIN M. STANTON: APPOINTING A "HEBREW," NOVEMBER 4, 1862

Lincoln makes a historic military appointment: because he has "not yet appointed a Hebrew," he names C. M. Levy—the son-in-law of New York's leading Ashkenazi rabbi, Morris Raphall—an assistant quartermaster with the rank of captain.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

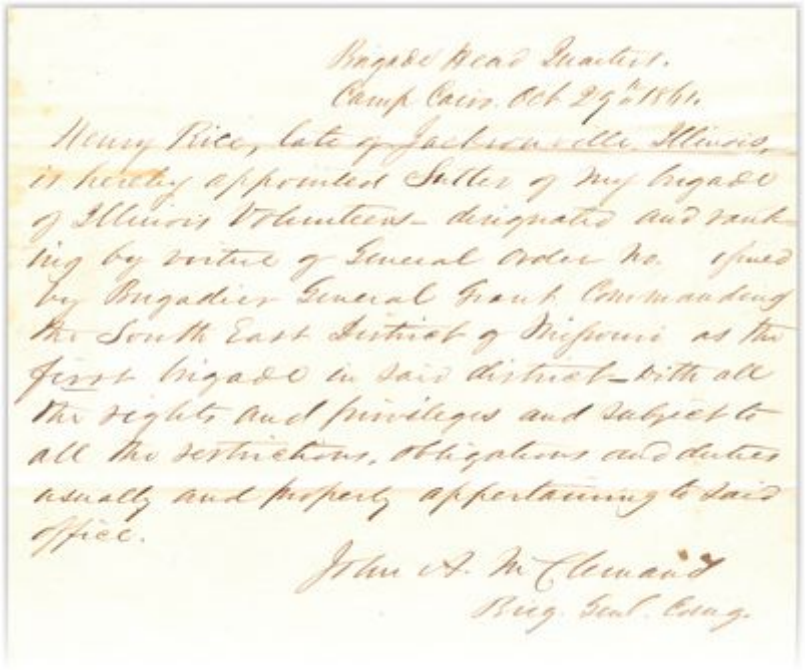


LINCOLN AGAIN NOMINATES C.M. LEVY, JANUARY 16, 1864

In October 1863, Captain C. M. Levy was dismissed from the army on grounds of "conduct prejudicial to Good order and military discipline." Lincoln here renominates Levy for the same position he had nominated him for fourteen months earlier.
U.S. National Archives & Records Administration

During the first year of the Civil War, generals sought Lincoln's approval for the appointment of sutlers. "I have never had my attention particularly drawn to the appointment of Sutlers," Lincoln confessed in September 1861.[46] In the case of Henry Rice, the Jewish clothier from Jacksonville, Illinois, mentioned in Chapter 2, whom he and General John A. McClernand knew personally, the president wrote three months later that he did "not distinctly understand how Sutlers are appointed" and would "be obliged" if the War Department "would make or cause to be made" his appointment as a sutler.[47] Sutler tokens in denominations of 5, 10, 25, and 50 cents from the brigade of Illinois volunteers organized by General McClernand bear Rice's name, as well as McClernand's. Later, when the War Department wisely decided that commissioned

officers should choose sutlers on their own, Jews continued to be disproportionately selected. At least two dozen Civil War sutlers are known definitively to have been Jews, and others had distinctively Jewish names, like Isaacks and Kohn.[48] What was essential, from Lincoln's perspective, was not religion or ethnicity but that a sutler, above all, be "a worthy and competent business man."[49]



Brigade Head Quarters.
Camp Cairo. Oct 29th 1861.
Henry Rice, late of Jacksonville Illinois,
is hereby appointed Sutler of my brigade
of Illinois Volunteers- designated and rank-
ing by virtue of General Order No. issued
by Brigadier General Grant Commanding
the South East District of Missouri as the
first brigade in said district- with all
the rights and privileges and subject to
all the restrictions, obligations and duties
usually and properly appertaining to said
office.
John A. McClernand
Brig. Gen. Comg.

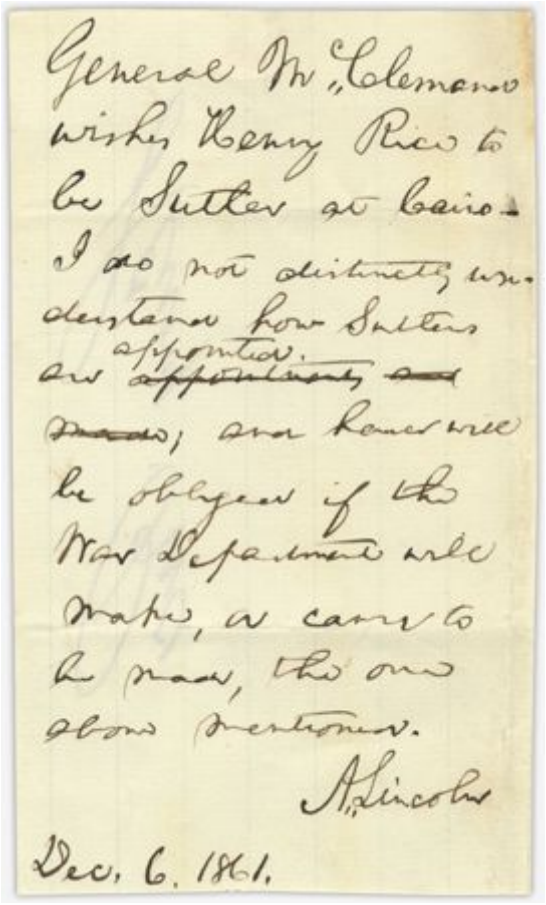
JOHN A. McCLERNAND APPOINTS HENRY RICE, OCTOBER 29, 1861

Union General John A. McClernand appoints Henry Rice a sutler of his brigade of Illinois Volunteers.
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

Where religion did matter most was in the military chaplaincy. Chaplains had accompanied American soldiers into battle since colonial days. They served in the Revolutionary War and in each subsequent American military engagement, including the Black Hawk War, in which Lincoln had fought. Regiments generally elected their own chaplains—people whom they looked up to for spiritual sustenance, psychological support, and moral uplift—and most of those selected, unsurprisingly, were Protestant. While some opposed the chaplaincy as unconstitutional, a violation of church-state separation, Congress rejected that view, believing chaplains necessary to meet soldiers' religious needs. On the eve of the Civil War, some thirty post chaplains were authorized to serve in the armed forces of the United States.[50]

The outbreak of the Civil War led to a rapid buildup of the armed forces. To this end, in the summer of 1861, Congress provided for the appointment of new chaplains,

one per regiment, to be elected by "vote of the field officers and company commanders." In a bid to ensure that only bona fide clergy were selected, Congress proposed an eligibility requirement: "The chaplain … must be a regular[ly] ordained minister of a Christian denomination."[51] A suggestion to make special provisions for the appointment of Roman Catholic chaplains, since so many Union recruits were Catholic, was voted down. Congressman Clement Vallandigham, an Ohio Democrat who opposed abolition and supported the South's right to secede, then moved to "strike out the words 'Christian denomination'… and in lieu thereof, to insert 'religious society.'" He explained that "there is a large body of men in this country … of the Hebrew faith" who were "excluded by this section." He also deemed the eligibility requirement a violation of the no-establishment clause of the First Amendment. His own proposal, he explained, would open the chaplaincy "to those at least who are of the Hebrew faith, and who, by the terms of the bill, are unjustly and without constitutional warrant, excluded from it." Vallandigham, however, was something of a congressional gadfly; many of his colleagues despised him, and later in 1863 he would be banished to the Confederate lines for the duration of the war. Moreover, having just voted down a special provision to aid Catholics, Congress was in no mood to think about Jews. The Vallandigham amendment was thus summarily rejected.[52]


General McClernand
wishes Henry Rice to
be Sutler at Cairo.
I do not distinctly un-
derstand how Sutlers
are ~~appointed~~ appointed ~~and~~
~~made~~; and hence will
be obliged if the
War Department will
make, or cause to
be made, the one
above mentioned.
A. Lincoln
Dec. 6. 1861.

LINCOLN APPROVES HENRY RICE AS SUTLER, DECEMBER 6, 1861

Rice, a German-born Jewish merchant from Jacksonville, Illinois, knew Lincoln personally. Rice had on occasion recommended Lincoln as a lawyer and later, during the war, dined with him at the White House. Lincoln approved the appointment of Rice as sutler in a handwritten note. He became, after the war, a leading philanthropist in New York City.
Shapell Manuscript Collection.

President Lincoln, on July 22, happily signed the congressional measure that expanded the armed forces. He apparently paid no attention to the eligibility requirement for chaplains. General Orders promulgated by the War Department back in May contained virtually the same requirements ("The chaplain … must be a regularly ordained minister of some Christian denomination"), and nobody had complained.[53] Most Americans imagined that the bulk of their countrymen were Christians of one sort or another. Vallandigham himself was conscious of this. His convoluted effort to explain why the bill's use of the term *Christian* was problematic is telling:

> While we are in one sense a Christian people and yet in another sense not the most Christian people in the world, this is yet not a "Christian Government," nor a Government which has any connection with any one form of religion in preference to any other form—I speak, of course, in a political sense alone.[54]

Isaac Mayer Wise, who was something of a one-man Anti-Defamation League in his day, had no similar difficulty in articulating his objections to the bill's language. "We were," he complained, "positively and unjustly deprived of a constitutional right."[55]

ABOUT SUTLERS

SUTLERS, ALTHOUGH CIVILIANS, were critical to the success of the army in the field. They sold what soldiers wanted, and they usually sold it on credit, which, to men who went an inordinate amount of time between paydays, was a blessing. At the sutler's store they could buy necessities like paper, ink, soap, polish, needles, and thread, as well as luxuries like sweets, tobacco, magazines, and sometimes even liquor. Sutlers, in fact, were the Civil War's equivalent of post exchanges—with one exception: they issued their own currency.

On the battlefield, soldiers without cash bought from the sutler. They would request a certain amount; the sutler would pay it out in tokens; and the soldiers would sign an order to the paymaster to repay the sutler (with interest) when funds arrived. Even when soldiers had money, they usually received their salaries in gold and silver coins in large denominations; there was a terrific shortage of small change. Sutlers solved that problem, too. They exchanged the large coins and bills for sutler tokens in the small amounts necessary to purchase the 5-, 10-, 25-, and 50-cent items that soldiers preferred.

A CIVIL WAR SUTLER AT HIS PLACE OF BUSINESS IN THE FIELD
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

HENRY RICE SUTLER TOKENS

A form of regimental currency used on the battlefield by soldiers—as credit and small change both—with which to buy what the army did not provide: notions, niceties, and often, in poorly equipped units, necessities. Here, we see all denominations from sutler Henry Rice.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Proof of this deprivation was not long in coming. On July 18, four days before Lincoln signed the congressional measure, the 65th Regiment of the 5th Pennsylvania Cavalry (known as the Cameron Dragoons), which was commanded by a Bavarian-born Jew named Max Friedman and included over thirty Jewish mounted cavalrymen, elected Michael M. Allen, a liquor dealer, as its regimental chaplain. Though not ordained, Allen had studied Hebrew and the Code of Jewish Law in Philadelphia and was a capable lay reader of the liturgy as well as an active figure in Jewish communal life. Impressing his colleagues with his piety, concern for others, and abilities as a preacher, he apparently won their confidence. As chaplain, Allen led nondenominational services for the troops on Sunday and lectured on topics like "Peace and Harmony." He also translated letters and taught English to those "not very well conversant with the English language." Being a regimental and not a Jewish chaplain, he never led Jewish services but instead traveled when he could to nearby synagogues on Saturdays and Jewish holidays. Still, since he was neither a Christian nor a regularly ordained minister, his service as a chaplain contravened regulations. When the breach was brought to the public's attention by a visiting worker from the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Allen had no legal basis for remaining in office. On September 23, the fifth day of the Jewish holiday of Sukkot, he wrote in his daily journal, "sent in my Resignation as Chaplain."[56]

MICHAEL ALLEN

The first Jew to serve as a regimental chaplain, Allen was elected to the post by the soldiers of the 5th Pennsylvania Cavalry, known as the Cameron Dragoons.
Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio

The field officers and company commanders of the Cameron Dragoons, several of whom were themselves Jewish, soon elected another member of the Jewish faith as their chaplain. One suspects that they did so purposely, as a test case, for the man they selected, Arnold Fischel, served as "teacher and lecturer" at New York's congregation Shearith Israel and was regularly described by the press as a "Reverend Doctor." His credentials exceeded those of many a Christian chaplain at that time, a few of whom were illiterate and impious. Secretary of War Simon Cameron, the namesake of the Dragoons, had no choice, nevertheless, but to reject Fischel's appointment. "You are respectfully informed … that the Chaplain appointed by 'the vote of the field officers and company commanders, must be a regular ordained minister of some Christian denomination,'" he informed Fischel on October 23. Had it not been for this legal impediment, he assured him, "the Department would have taken your application into its favorable consideration."[57]

A CIVIL WAR SEDER IN WEST VIRGINIA

THE CRITICAL ROLE played by sutlers in meeting the needs of troops in the field is well illustrated by the following story, recounted by Joseph A. Joel in the March 30, 1866, issue of the *Jewish Messenger,* of how a "thoughtful sutler," most likely G. W. Forbes, who was a "co-religionist," made it possible for twenty Jews in the 23rd Ohio regiment to observe the Passover seder in West Virginia in 1862. The commanding officer who permitted those troops to "keep the holydays" was General Rutherford B. Hayes, who went on to become the nineteenth president of the United States. Joel remained friendly with him and named one of his sons in his honor.

"Being apprised of the approaching Feast of Passover, twenty of my comrades and co-religionists belonging to the Regiment, united in a request to our commanding officer for relief from duty, in order that we might keep the holydays, which he readily acceded to. The first point was gained, and, as the Paymaster had lately visited the Regiment, he had left us plenty of greenbacks. Our next business was to find some suitable person to proceed to Cincinnati, Ohio, to buy us Matzos. Our sutler being a co-religionist and going home to that city, readily undertook to send them.… About the middle of the morning of erev Pessach [the Eve of Passover] a supply train arrived in camp, and to our delight seven barrels of Matzos. On opening them, we were surprised and pleased to find that our thoughtful sutler had enclosed two Hagodahs and prayer-books. We were now able to keep the seder nights, if we could only obtain the other requisites for that occasion. We held a consultation and decided to send parties to forage in the country.… About the middle of the afternoon the foragers arrived, having been quite successful. We obtained two kegs of cider, a lamb, several chickens and some eggs. Horseradish or parsley we could not obtain, but in lieu we found a weed, whose bitterness, I apprehend, exceeded anything our forefathers 'enjoyed'…

There, in the wild woods of West Virginia, away from home and friends, we consecrated and offered up to the ever-loving God of Israel our prayers and sacrifice.… enacting this commemoration of the scene that transpired in Egypt."

A RARE ASSOCIATION WITH AN 1862 BATTLEFIELD PASSOVER SEDER: A G.W. FORBES CIVIL WAR SUTLER'S TOKEN

Shapell Manuscript Collection

Cameron's letter, for all of its surface courtesy, mortified American Jews, for it confirmed that by official regulation and simply on account of their religion they were barred from the military chaplaincy. This placed the thousands of Jewish troops at a great disadvantage vis–à–vis their Christian counterparts, whose spiritual and pastoral needs were met by qualified chaplains. It also undermined constitutional guarantees of

religious equality in which Jews had placed great faith. Since chaplains were "the most numerous, visible, and direct representatives of organized religion in the camps of the Civil War armies," the requirement that they be "of some Christian denomination" in effect rendered the whole Jewish faith illegitimate.[58]

Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise looked to Congress to remedy this unhappy situation. He called upon Jews to "petition that body from all parts of the U. S.," to solicit signatures from their non-Jewish neighbors, and to send completed petitions "to your representative or senator." Six times in one issue of his newspaper, the *Israelite,* he printed the line "Forget not to attend to the petition to the Congress of the United States."[59] In response, a mass of petitions descended upon Congress, some from large communities like Baltimore (where Jews joined 700 Christians in urging a change in the law), and others from tiny communities like Columbus, Iowa, and Edinburgh, Indiana, where few if any Jews lived at all.[60]

PATRIOTIC COVER DEPICTING COLONEL MAX FRIEDMAN

Colonel Max Friedman was the founder of the 65th Regiment, 5th Cavalry—also known as the Cameron Dragoons—in which Jews were largely represented.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

CAMERON DRAGOONS

Into this largely Jewish regiment is enlisted one Joshua Pickering, on or about August 10, 1861; he served with Company G until his death at Darbytown Road, Virginia, on October 7, 1864. His commanding officer, Max Friedman, certifies his enlistment.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

The grandly named Board of Delegates of American Israelites, established in 1859 as the representative body of America's Jews but actually representing no more than a fifth of America's synagogues, believed that only President Lincoln's personal intervention would fix the problem. Though the Board too sent a "memorial" to Congress, it also took the unprecedented step of sending Rev. Dr. Fischel himself to Washington as its representative. His assignment was to lobby legislators, meet with the president, and, in addition, "take charge of the spiritual welfare of our coreligionists in the Camps & hospitals attached to the Department of the Potomac." Wisely, Fischel obtained letters of introduction from two non-Jewish friends of Lincoln's: the young U.S. district attorney of New York, Edward Delafield Smith, and former congressman and Republican stalwart Moses Hicks Grinnell. He also employed some back channels to get the president's attention. As a result, even though Lincoln's private secretary, John Nicolay, warned that prior to the adjournment of Congress Lincoln would have no time to read Fischel's letter, let alone see him, and even though hundreds of other petitioners were anxiously awaiting a moment of the president's precious time, Fischel refused to be discouraged. On Wednesday, December 11, 1861, he boldly called at the White House at 10:00 A.M. in hopes of gaining an audience with the president. Doubtless to the surprise of many, he was, according to the breathless letter he sent to the Board of Delegates that very day, "at once invited to his room and was received with marked courtesy." Lincoln read Fischel's materials, questioned him, and told him, according to Fischel, that "he fully admitted the justice of my remarks, that he believed the exclusion of Jewish chaplains to have been altogether unintentional on the part of Congress," and that he agreed "that something ought to be done to meet this case." With Congress in session, he refused to act unilaterally—as he had done in October, when without congressional authorization he made "a sort of quasi appointment" of three Protestant and two Catholic clergy to serve as hospital chaplains.[61] Instead, he told Fischel "that it was the first time this subject had been brought under his notice, that it was altogether

new to him, [and] that he would take the subject into serious consideration." He then invited Fischel to call again "tomorrow morning" to hear his views.[62]

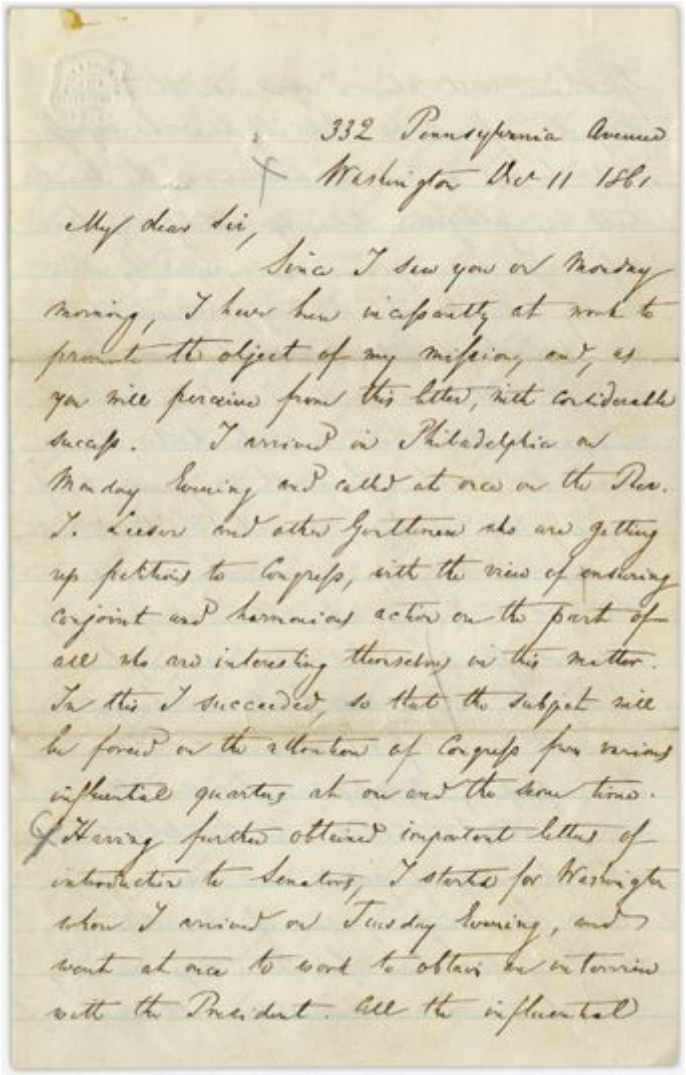
Instead of meeting with Fischel the next day, the president set aside time to consider a plan sent to him by George H. Stuart, chair of a newly formed Christian Commission, "to promote the spiritual and temporal welfare of the brave men in arms." The commission sought permission to distribute Bibles, hymnals, tracts, and other Christian religious publications to the troops and to sponsor prayer meetings and sermons of a revivalist nature. Lincoln, eager as usual to promote religious faith and charity, gave the plan his full support. "Your Christian and benevolent undertaking for the benefit of the soldiers, is too obviously proper, and praise-worthy, to admit any difference of opinion," he wrote. "I sincerely hope your plan may be as successful in execution, as it is just and generous in conception."[63]

In endorsing the work of the Christian Commission, however, Lincoln—who construed the word *Christian* very broadly—did not imagine that he was in any way shortchanging the needs of Jewish soldiers. To the contrary, two days later he reassured Fischel with the following letter: "My dear Sir: I find that there are several particulars in which the present law in regard to Chaplains is supposed to be deficient, all of which I now design presenting to the appropriate Committee of Congress. I shall try to have a new law broad enough to cover what is desired by you in behalf of the Israelites."[64]

The representatives of the YMCA were appalled.[65] Subsequently, one evangelical paper, which construed the word *Christian* narrowly, complained that if the law were changed, "one might despise and reject the Savior of men … and yet be a fit minister of religion." It warned that "Mormon debauchees, Chinese priests, and Indian conjurors" would stand next in line for government recognition—a tacit admission that the central issue under debate concerned the religious rights of non-Christians.[66]

Lincoln, working behind the scenes, effected a compromise. Instead of actually repealing the language requiring that a chaplain be of "some Christian denomination," congressional leaders acquiesced to let it stand. Then, they reinterpreted that language by construing it to read exactly as Jews and Lincoln wanted: "That no person shall be appointed a chaplain in the United States Army that is not a regularly ordained minister of some religious denomination." They won additional rank-and-file support by coupling this change to an amendment, strongly supported by the YMCA, that sought to improve the quality of the military chaplaincy as a whole by requiring candidates to

present “testimonials of … present good standing” as well as a recommendation “from some authorized ecclesiastical body” or “five accredited ministers belonging to said religious denomination.” These revised qualifications, quietly buried in a bill that became law on July 17, 1862, entitled “An Act to define the Pay and Emoluments of certain Officers of the Army and for other Purposes,” finally opened the military chaplaincy to non-Christians. It represented a major political victory for the Jewish community, serves as a case study in Lincoln’s consummate political skills, and remains a landmark in the legal recognition of America’s non-Christian faiths.[67]



332 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington Dec 11 1861

My dear Sir,

Since I saw you on Monday morning, I have been incessantly at work to promote the object of my mission, and, as you will perceive from this letter, with considerable success. I arrived in Philadelphia on Monday morning and called at once on the Rev. I. Leeser and other Gentlemen who are getting up petitions to Congress, with the view of endeavoring conjoint and harmonious action on the part of all who are interesting themselves in this matter. In this I succeeded, so that the subject will be forced on the attention of Congress from many influential quarters at one and the same time. Mr Henry further obtained important letters of introduction to Senators. I started for Washington where I arrived on Tuesday evening, and went at once to work to obtain an interview with the President. All the influential

LINCOLN RECEIVES FISCHEL, DECEMBER 11, 1861

Fischel writes to Henry Hart, president of the Board of Delegates, that despite a long line of people, some of whom had been waiting for three days, Fischel is, almost unbelievably, immediately received by Lincoln, who promises to take the matter into consideration, and requests to see Fischel again the following day.

American Jewish Historical Society

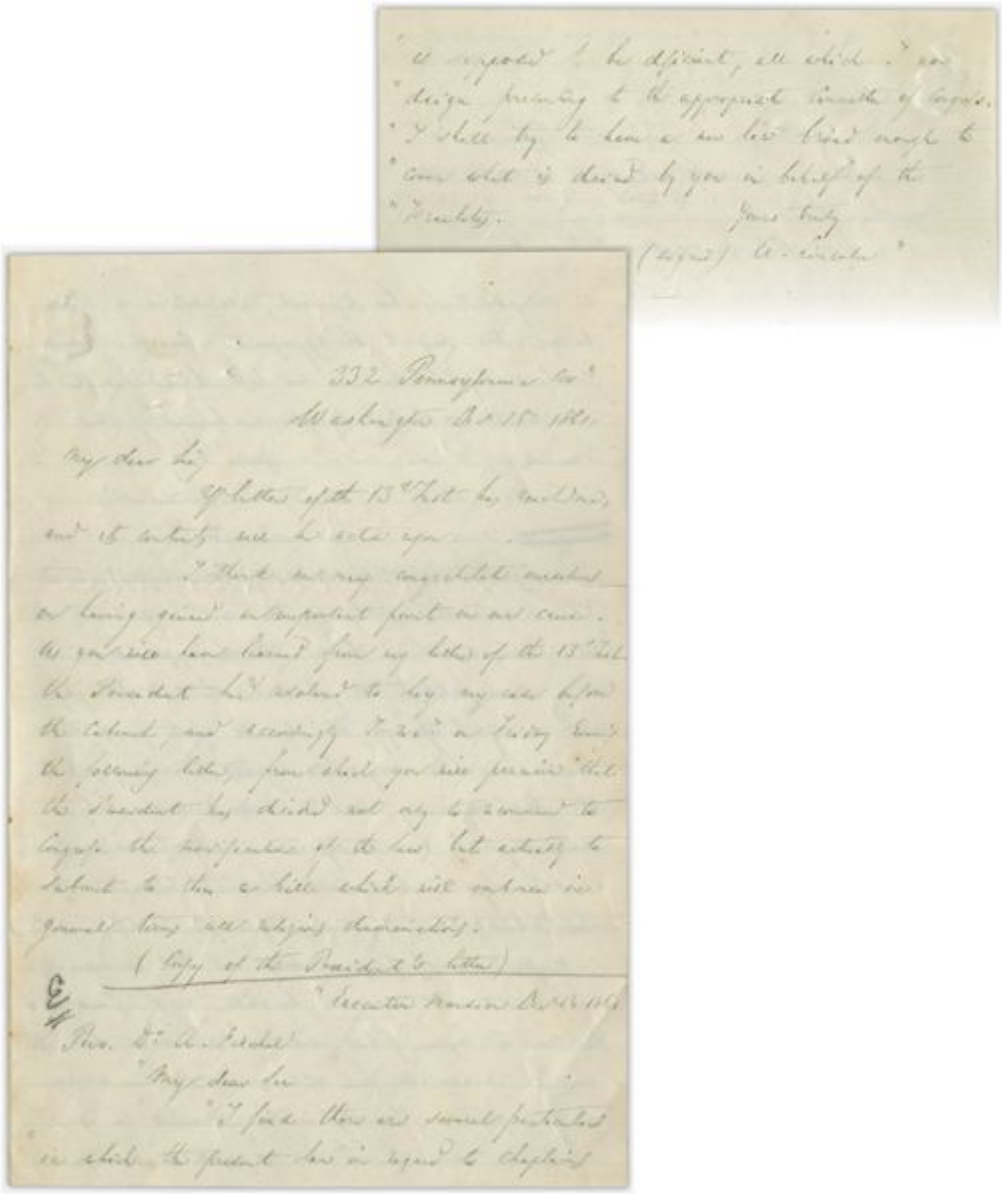
ARNOLD FISCHEL

Although the War Department had denied his request to become the Cameron Dragoon's military chaplain, as the regiment wished, a groundswell of Jewish insistence that Jews serving their country be allowed their own chaplains—and Fischel's own direct lobbying of Lincoln—led to a change in the law restricting military chaplaincies to Christians only.
American Jewish Historical Society

Abraham Lincoln demonstrated his support for the new legislation by appointing Jewish chaplains as soon as he was requested to do so. When, on August 21, Isaac Leeser and the Board of Ministers of the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia petitioned for a Jewish chaplain to meet the needs of the growing number of wounded Jewish servicemen in their area, Lincoln's secretary, John Hay, made clear to the surgeon general that the President would like this to be done. When, in short order, the surgeon general obligingly declared that it was "both legal and proper," the Board of Ministers recommended Rev. Jacob Frankel of Rodef Shalom congregation for the position. Lincoln accepted the recommendation, and in so doing fulfilled his promise to Fischel of nine months before. On September 18, 1862, Frankel became the first Jewish military chaplain in American history.[68]

The administration failed to be so obliging three weeks later when leaders of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites belatedly requested the appointment of a Jewish hospital chaplain in Washington, D.C. The man recommended, Arnold Fischel, was by all accounts highly deserving, having led the battle to amend the chaplaincy law, but a survey of the city's hospitals by the medical inspector general of the army located "but 7 Jews" and concluded that wounded Jewish soldiers were so few in number and so scattered "that it would be impracticable for a clergyman to find and attend to them." Lincoln, as a result, could make no appointment, and Fischel, whom the board had not paid and who was without funds, soon returned to Holland.[69]

"I shall try to have a new law broad enough to cover what is desired by you in behalf of the Israelites."



DECEMBER 15, 1861

Fischel's handwritten copy of Lincoln's famous chaplaincy letter written the previous day. "I shall try to have a new law broad enough to cover what is desired by you in behalf of the Israelites," Lincoln momentously wrote. Lincoln's original letter has apparently disappeared.
American Jewish Historical Society

Lincoln did appoint two other Jewish chaplains during the course of the war. On April 10, 1863, he appointed the first regimental Jewish chaplain, Rabbi Ferdinand Leopold Sarner, following the rabbi's election to that post by the heavily German-speaking 54th New York Volunteer Regiment. Sarner's impressive academic credentials

(a Ph.D. from the University of Hesse) coupled with his ability to preach in florid German seem to have had more to do with his appointment than his Judaism. In fact, some mistakenly considered him a German Lutheran! That he was actually a rabbi seems not to have impeded him from ministering to the needs of his mostly Christian regiment. Like Michael Allen and a host of subsequent Jewish chaplains, he apparently learned the art of non-denominational preaching.[70] A month later, on May 6, 1863, Lincoln appointed Rev. Bernard Gotthelf, the (unordained) leader of Louisville's Adas Israel congregation, to be a hospital chaplain in that city. Congressman Robert Mallory, a Lincoln ally, recommended the appointment, according to contemporary reports, because "a very respectable number of Jewish soldiers have been or are still receiving medical treatment at our hospitals." Local newspapers cheered the appointment, and Gotthelf ultimately served eighteen army hospitals, ministering to Jews and Christians alike.[71]

Lincoln's approach to the question of appointing Jews as chaplains bespoke his attitude not only toward Jews but toward religion generally. On the one hand, he was not initially troubled by the Christian provision in the chaplaincy law, for, as we have seen, the word *Christian* to him excluded no religious denomination. Nor did he display any compunction about endorsing the work of the "Christian Commission." Yet, evidence that Jews faced discrimination in the chaplaincy at once elicited his sympathy. To his mind all people of faith deserved to be treated equally. Thus, in addition to appointing Jews to the chaplaincy, Lincoln put forth the name of a Universalist minister named James Shrigley to be a hospital chaplain—upon the recommendation, among others, of Jewish congressman Leonard Myers. YMCA members opposed his appointment, Shrigley later recalled, because they considered him "not sound in his theological opinions." Among other heresies, they charged, he believed "that even the rebels themselves will finally be saved." Lincoln, however, was unmoved. "Well, gentlemen," Shrigley quoted him as replying, "if that be so, and there is any way under heaven whereby the rebels can be saved, then, for God's sake and their sakes, let the man be appointed"—and he was.[72]

ISAAC LEESER

German-born American, author, editor, and publisher of The Occident *and* American Jewish Advocate, *Leeser was one of the most important Jews in nineteenth-century America, well known as the first translator of the Jewish Bible into English. The idea that Jews, North and South, would kill one another, was anathema to him. Throughout the conflict, then, he confined himself to strictly Jewish issues—and when he finally did write to Lincoln, it was merely to request the appointment of a Jewish hospital chaplain in Philadelphia.*
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

LINCOLN APPOINTS A JEWISH CHAPLAIN

Jacob Frankel of Philadelphia, commissioned a hospital chaplain by Lincoln, became the country's first Jewish military chaplain on September 18, 1862.
Congregation Rodeph Shalom

In November 1864, Lincoln expressed willingness to make an even more controversial appointment. The 1st Wisconsin Heavy Artillery unanimously elected a Spiritualist medium named Ella E. Gibson (Hobart) as their chaplain; she was ordained a minister by the Religio-Philosophical Society of St. Charles, Illinois. "She is a woman," Lincoln pointed out to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton, when the nomination came to his attention. "The President has not legally anything to do with such a question, but has no objection to her appointment." Stanton, though, declined to appoint her "on account of her sex."[73] Still, the fact that Lincoln himself had no objection to the appointment bespeaks the breadth of his religious vision. Perhaps because he himself grew up as something of a religious outsider, he considered other religious outsiders—Jews, Universalists, and Spiritualist women among them—to be

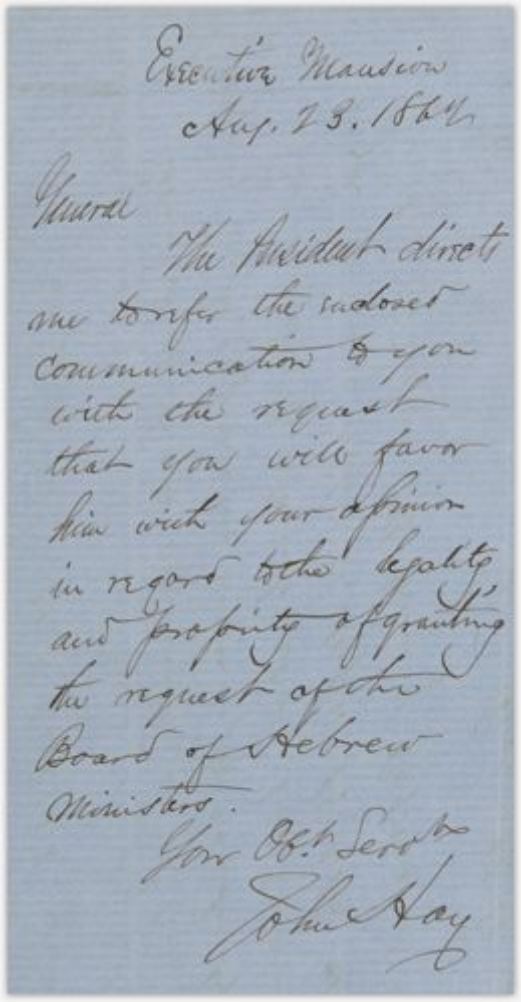
worthy of inclusion not only within the panoply of American religion but within the military chaplaincy as well.

From a Jewish perspective, Lincoln's frequent appeal to Americans as a "Christian people" nevertheless remained problematic. This was brought home in late 1862 when he issued an executive order concerning Sabbath observance within the armed forces. "The importance for man and beast of the prescribed weekly rest, the sacred rights of Christian soldiers and sailors, a becoming deference to the best sentiment of a Christian people, and a due regard for the Divine will," Lincoln declared, "demand that Sunday labor in the Army and Navy be reduced to the measure of strict necessity." Christian religious leaders from New York had lobbied for such an order, and in issuing it Lincoln echoed George Washington, who in 1776 had urged his troops "to live and act as becomes a Christian soldier defending the dearest rights and liberties of his country."[74]

There were, however, a hundred times more Jews in the country and in the armed forces than there had been in Washington's day, and to them, Lincoln's declaration was an affront. "Are we equals in this land?" Isaac Leeser demanded in his newspaper soon after the order appeared. He wondered in an editorial why those who observed the Sabbath on Sunday were protected, "while everything is done to make the observance of the Seventh day burdensome to the Jew." "Is this equality," he asked, "or are the rights of the minority of no importance in the eyes of the law-makers and the law-dispensers?"[75]

To reinforce his point, Leeser reprinted a moving letter to Lincoln (dated December 4, 1862) by a German-Jewish immigrant named Bernhard Behrend, the father of Adajah Behrend, an enlisted hospital steward. "I gave my consent to my son, who was yet a minor, that he should enlist in the United States army," Behrend wrote. "I thought it was his duty, and I gave him my advice to fulfill his duty as a good citizen, and he has done so. At the same time I taught him also to observe the Sabbath on Saturday, when it would not hinder him from fulfilling his duty in the army. Now I do not want that he shall be dragged either to the stake or the church to observe the Sunday as a Sabbath." Pleading for "justice," Behrend asked Lincoln "to proclaim in another order, that also all those in the army who celebrate another day as the Sunday may be allowed to celebrate that day which they think is the right day according to their own conscience."[76] No reply from Lincoln is extant. Nor is Behrend's letter included in

standard collections of Lincoln's correspondence. One suspects, however, that the Jewish community's complaints reached Lincoln's ears. Significantly, he never again, in his official correspondence, referred to Americans as a "Christian people," nor did he pay further heed to those who sought to publicly identify the government with Christianity. Instead, within a few weeks, Isaac Mayer Wise heard Lincoln reassure Jewish leaders that he would by no means allow any citizen to be "wronged on account of his place of birth or religious confession."[77]


Executive Mansion
Aug. 23. 1862

Surgeon

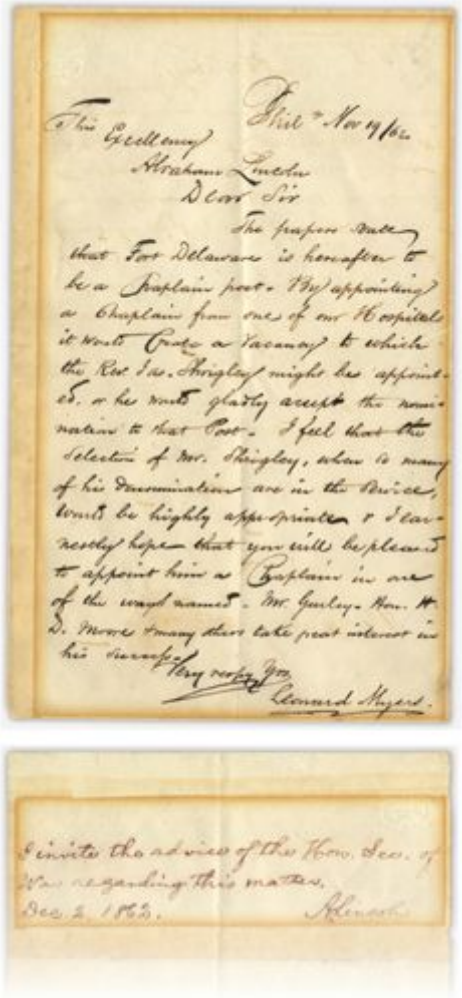
The President directs me to refer the enclosed communication to you with the request that you will favor him with your opinion in regard to the legality and propriety of granting the request of the Board of Hebrew Ministers.

Your Obt. Servt
John Hay

DOCKET BY JOHN HAY ON A LETTER FROM ISAAC LEESER TO LINCOLN, AUGUST 23, 1862

Tasked with writing Lincoln during the ongoing chaplaincy legislature reform, Leeser declared that as "Many Israelites are serving in the army of the United States … it is to be expected that not a few persons of our persuasion will … require spiritual no less than bodily care." A Jewish chaplain appointed by the president was needed now, he told the president. Lincoln's secretary, John Hay, directing Leeser's letter to the surgeon general, noted that the president wanted this to be done. And, within a matter of days, so it was.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Phil^a Nov 19/62

To his Excellency
Abraham Lincoln
Dear Sir

The papers state that Fort Delaware is hereafter to be a Chaplain post. By appointing a Chaplain from one of our Hospitals it would create a vacancy to which the Rev. Jas. Shrigley might be appointed, or he would gladly accept the nomination to that Post. I feel that the selection of Mr. Shrigley, when so many of his denomination are in the Service, would be highly appropriate & I earnestly hope that you will be pleased to appoint him as Chaplain in one of the ways named. Mr. Gurley, Hon. H. D. Moore & many others take great interest in his success.

Very respy Yrs
Leonard Myers.

I invite the advice of the Hon. Sec. of War regarding this matter.
Dec. 2. 1862. A Lincoln

LEONARD MYERS TO LINCOLN, NOVEMBER 19, 1862

To the Jewish Civil War-era Republican congressman Leonard Myers goes this distinction: he was elected from a district with notably few co-religionists. This helps to explain, then, his request as a newly elected congressman on behalf of James Shrigley, a Gentile clergyman seeking appointment. On December 2, 1862, Lincoln forwards Myers's request and begins a correspondence with Myers that would last through the rest of Lincoln's life.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

Lincoln's reassurance to Jewish leaders came in response to the most notorious official act of anti-Semitism in American history. On December 17, 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant issued a sweeping order, known as General Orders No. 11, expelling "Jews as a class" from his war zone (the Department of the Tennessee), stretching from Northern Mississippi to Cairo, Illinois, and from the Mississippi River to the Tennessee River.[78]

For months, Grant had been worried about cotton speculators and smugglers in the area under his command. Since some of the men his troops caught were Jews, he became persuaded that all smugglers, speculators, and traders were Jews, whether they

were actually Jewish or not. Just as Southerners dubbed all Northerners "Yankees," whether or not they hailed from New England, so Grant and others in the military often characterized all smugglers and traders as "Jews." Grant wanted as few of them in the area under his command as possible.

In July 1862, Grant ordered the commander of the District of the Mississippi to "examine all baggage of all speculators coming South," and to turn back those who were carrying gold ("specie"). "Jews," he admonished, "should receive special attention." In August, a soldiers' newspaper quoted Grant as calling Jews "a nuisance." It intimated that he had plans to "abate" that nuisance. Nothing happened for several months, but on November 9, as he prepared to move south in preparation for the decisive battle at Vicksburg, Grant tightened his regulations against Jews: "Refuse all permits to come south of Jackson for the present," he ordered. "The Isrealites [*sic*] especially should be kept out." The very next day he strengthened that order: "no Jews are to be permitted to travel on the Rail Road southward from any point … they are such an intolerable nuisance that the Department must be purged for [*sic*] them." Writing in early December to General Sherman, whose quartermaster had created problems by selling cotton "to a Jew by the name of Haas," Grant explained that "in consequence of the total disregard and evasion of orders by the Jews my policy is to exclude them so far as practicable from the Dept."[79]

But until December 17, Grant had not gone so far as to expel Jews from his department. Indeed, when Colonel John Van Deusen Du Bois, on December 8, 1862, angrily ordered "All Cotton-Speculators, Jews and other Vagrants having no honest means of support, except trading upon the miseries of their Country" to leave Holly Springs, and gave them "twenty-four hours or they will be sent to duty in the trenches," Grant insisted that the draconian order be rescinded. "Instructions from Washington," he reminded Du Bois, "are to encourage getting Cotton out of the country."[80] Notwithstanding his private opinions and actions, Grant understood that he still had to publicly uphold President Lincoln's policy, which permitted those loyal to the Union to trade in cotton.

All that changed on December 17. Grant, according to multiple sources, received a visit that day from his sixty-eight-year-old father, Jesse R. Grant, accompanied by members of the prominent Mack family of Cincinnati, significant Jewish clothing manufacturers. Harman, Henry, and Simon Mack, as part of an ingenious scheme, had

formed a secret partnership with the elder Grant. In return for 25 percent of their profits, he agreed to accompany them to his son's Mississippi headquarters, act as their agent to "procure a permit for them to purchase cotton," and help them secure the means to transport that cotton to New York.[81]

ULYSSES S. GRANT

Having failed in the antebellum military—failed, even worse, in civilian life—his rise from colonel to general in chief of the Armies of the United States was, perhaps, the unlikeliest, but most deserved, in military history. Yet his issuance of what he would later call his "Jew Order," expelling the Jews from parts or all of the states of Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, and Mississippi, tarnished his reputation.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

According to journalist Sylvanus Cadwallader, an eyewitness, General Grant waxed indignant at his father's crass attempt to profit from his son's military status and raged at the Jewish traders who "entrapped his old father into such an unworthy undertaking." He refused to provide the permit, sent the Macks homeward "on the first train for the north," and in high dudgeon, immediately issued the order expelling "Jews as a class" from his territory.[82] Jesse R. Grant's involvement in this scheme provides "a psychological explanation" for General Orders No. 11, according to John Y. Simon, the scholarly editor of *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant.* In a classic act of displacement, the general "expelled the Jews rather than his father."[83]

market. A great deal of smuggling is
going on to the Holly Spring Army. but this
is mostly managed by Union men & Jews
instigated by a sense of gain. It is
not war [illegible] one sign to the fact that the
Entire South is united against us.

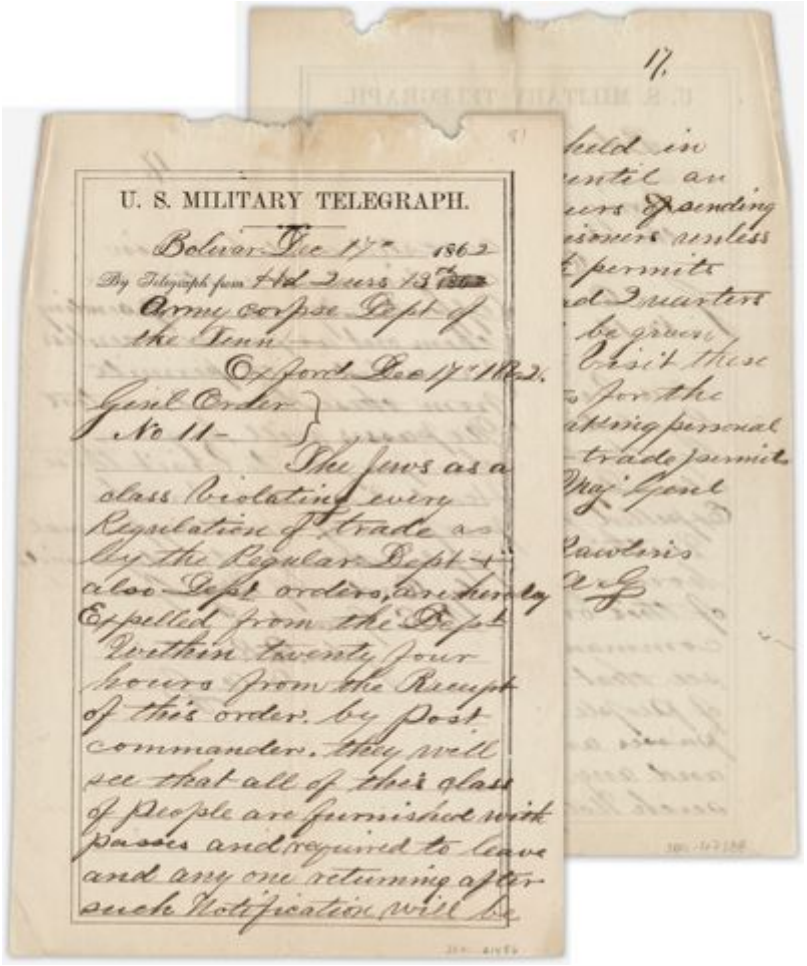
WILLIAM T. SHERMAN TO PHILEMON B. EWING, NOVEMBER 2, 1862

Written just two days before Lincoln's official handwritten request for the appointment of C.M. Levy, a "Hebrew," and during a time of intense anti-Semitism, Sherman reports in passing, "A great deal of smuggling is going on in the Holly Spring Army, but this is mostly managed by Union men and Jews instigated by a sense of gain." This pervasive prejudice would help give rise, a month later, to Grant's notorious General Orders No. 11, whereby all Jews were to be driven from his area of control. The order would be countermanded by Lincoln immediately after it first was brought to his attention.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

Fortunately for the thousands of Jews who lived in the territory under his command, Grant was soon distracted. Less than seventy-two hours after what Grant would later call his "Jew order"[84] was issued, his forces at Holly Springs were raided by 3,500 Confederate troops led by Major General Earl Van Dorn. Simultaneous raids to the north by troops of the dreaded Confederate cavalryman General Nathan Bedford Forrest, inflicted significant damage to Grant's army and tore up fifty miles of railroad and telegraph lines. Communications to and from Grant's headquarters were disrupted for weeks by these surprise attacks. As a result, news of Grant's order expelling the

Jews spread slowly and did not reach army headquarters in a timely fashion—sparing many Jews who might otherwise have been banished.[85]


U. S. MILITARY TELEGRAPH.

Bolivar Dec 17th 1862

By Telegraph from Hd Qrs 13th Army corps Dept of the Tenn

Oxford Dec 17th 1862.

Genl Order No 11-

The Jews as a class violating every Regulation of trade established by the Regular Dept & also Dept orders, are hereby Expelled from the Dept within twenty four hours from the Receipt of this order. by Post commander. they will see that all of this class of People are furnished with passes and required to leave and any one returning after such Notification will be

GENERAL ORDERS NO. 11

When Grant expelled the Jews "as a class" from the area under his command, he perpetrated the most blatant state-sanctioned act of anti-Semitism in American history. Later, when Lincoln rescinded the order, and later still, when running for president, Grant claimed the "order was made and sent out without any reflection." In fact, he said, it had been drafted by a subordinate and that he, Grant, in the press of warfare, had approved the decree without even looking at it.
Chicago History Museum

To be sure, some Jewish traders in the vicinity of Grant's army in northern Mississippi were treated roughly. A "Mr. Silberman" from Chicago, temporarily in Holly Springs, was reportedly imprisoned for twelve hours just for the "crime" of seeking to telegraph General Grant to find out if the expulsion order he received was genuine. An unnamed young Jewish trader and his fiancée, traveling through Grant's department on their way east, described in the *Jewish Record* how they were detained, forbidden to change out of wet clothes, robbed of their horse and buggy, verbally

abused, and also had one of their trunks burned and their pockets picked in the wake of the order. Their expulsion, if not their mistreatment, was explained by Brigadier General James Tuttle, commander of the Union garrison in Cairo, Illinois, with the utmost simplicity: "you are Jews, and … neither a benefit to the Union or Confederacy."[86]

HENRY MACK

In December 1862, Grant's frustration and anger with the cotton speculators and rapacious businessmen trading illegally in the conquered areas of the South was only exacerbated by the knowledge that his father, Jesse Root Grant, was one of them. Henry Mack, Jesse's partner, was a prominent Jewish clothing manufacturer from Cincinnati.
Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio

But it was only when Grant's order reached Paducah, Kentucky, eleven days after it was issued, that a whole community of Jews found itself expelled. On Sunday, December 28, 1862, Paducah's provost marshal, L. J. Waddell, sent Cesar Kaskel and every other Jew in the city an official notice ordering them "to leave the city of Paducah, Kentucky within twenty-four hours after receiving this order." Women and children were expelled too, and in the confusion—so it was recalled years later—one baby was almost forgotten, and two dying women had to be left behind in the care of neighbors.[87]

As they prepared to leave their homes, Cesar Kaskel and several other Jews sent a telegram to President Lincoln, describing their plight and pronouncing themselves "greatly insulted and outraged by this inhuman order, the carrying out of which would be the grossest violation of the Constitution, and our rights as good citizens under it."[88]

The president, in all likelihood, never saw that telegram because of the attacks on the telegraph lines. He was also at this time busy preparing to issue the Emancipation Proclamation (January 1, 1863). The irony of his freeing the slaves while Grant was expelling the Jews was not lost on some contemporaries. The *Memphis Daily Bulletin* published the two documents one above the other. The juxtaposition of these events also shaped the responses of several Jewish leaders to Grant's order. They feared that Jews would replace blacks as the nation's stigmatized minority.[89]

Fearing the worst, Kaskel wasted no time. "On my way to Washington, in order to get this most outrageous and inhuman order of Major General Grant countermanded," he announced in the press. He begged the journalists to whom he told his story "to lend the powerful aid of the press to the suffering cause of outraged humanity [and] to blot out as quick as possible this stain on our national honor."[90]

Arriving in the nation's capital just as the Jewish Sabbath was concluding on January 3, Kaskel called at once upon Cincinnati's outgoing Republican congressman, John Addison Gurley, who enjoyed ready access to the White House. Together, they immediately went over to see President Lincoln.

Lincoln turned out to have no knowledge whatsoever of the order, for it had not reached Washington. According to an oft-quoted report, he resorted to biblical imagery in his interview with Kaskel, a reminder of how immersed he was in the Bible and how, like many nineteenth-century Americans, he linked Jews to ancient Israel, and America to the Promised Land:

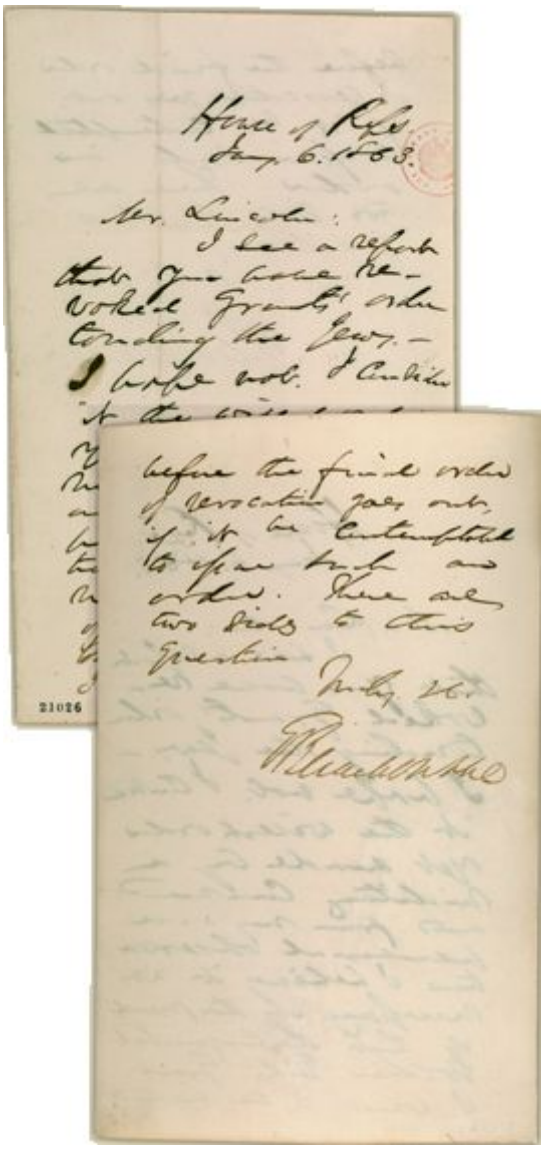
> LINCOLN: And so the children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan?
>
> KASKEL: Yes, and that is why we have come unto Father Abraham's bosom, asking protection.
>
> LINCOLN: And this protection they shall have at once.[91]

Whether or not such a conversation actually took place, when Lincoln did hear about the order, he instantly instructed the general in chief of the army, Henry Halleck, to countermand General Orders No. 11. On January 6, 1863, several urgent telegrams went out from Grant's headquarters in obedience to that demand. "By direction of the General in Chief of the Army at Washington," they read, "the General Order from these Head Quarters expelling Jews from this Department is hereby revoked."[92]

GENERAL ORDERS NO. 11: "THE WISEST ORDER YET MADE BY A MILITARY COMMAND"

ANTI-SEMITISM was not only evident among Lincoln's cabinet and generals; it also was apparent in members of Congress. Elihu Washburne, an associate of Lincoln's since their days as attorneys in Illinois and a long-standing congressman from that state, as well as a frequent correspondent with the president, wrote immediately to Lincoln on the day that Lincoln revoked Grant's order expelling the Jews, hoping the report of its revocation was incorrect. "I consider it the wisest order yet made by a military command." Believing it "necessary," he pressed Lincoln to reconsider before it was made official. Washburne, a committed abolitionist, ironically, supported emancipation for blacks yet expressed contempt for Jews.

Elihu Washburne
Courtesy of Library of Congress

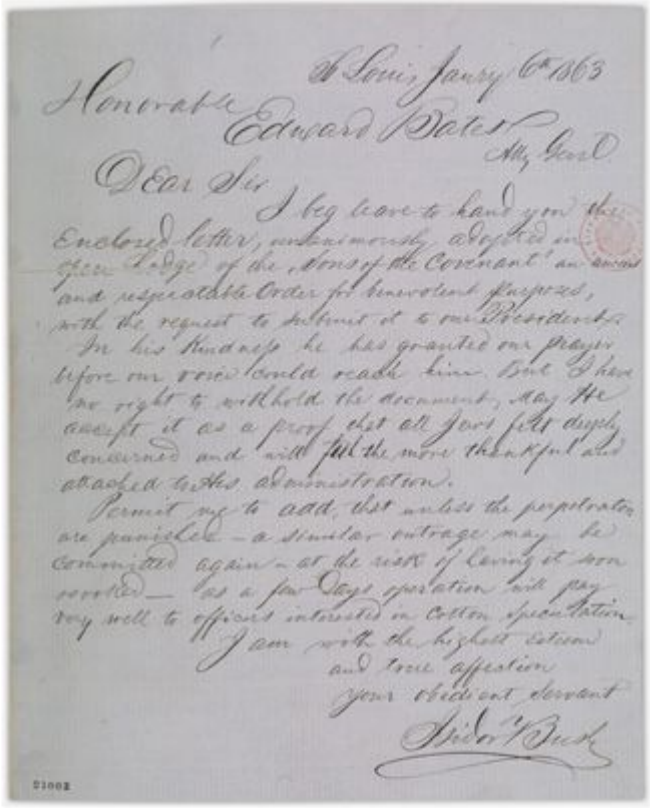


Elihu Washburne to Lincoln, January 6, 1863
Courtesy of Library of Congress

Some days after Lincoln acted, an eloquent plea from B'nai B'rith's Missouri lodges, addressed to the president, reached Washington. It described Jews as a "class of loyal citizens" who had been "driven from their homes, deprived of their liberty, and injured in their property without having violated any law or regulation" and who were "sacrificing their lives and fortunes for the union and the suppression of this rebellion." It called upon the president "to annul the Order and to protect the liberties even of your humblest constituents." Disappointingly, Attorney General Edward Bates, who forwarded this poignant document to Lincoln, expressed "no particular interest in the subject."[93]

Lincoln proved far more solicitous. When on January 7 a delegation of Jewish leaders arrived in Washington to thank him for revoking General Orders No. 11, he carved out time to meet with them. According to Isaac Mayer Wise, who participated in the meeting and wrote a widely circulated account of what transpired, the president reaffirmed that he knew "of no distinction between Jew and Gentile" and promised that he would allow no citizen to be "wronged on account of his place of birth or religious confession." "To condemn a class," he emphatically continued, "is, to say the least, to wrong the good with the bad. I do not like to hear a class or nationality condemned on account of a few sinners."[94]

"... tho a Jew, is a man of personal respectability in St. Louis."



St Louis, Jany 6th 1863

Honorable Edward Bates
Atty Genl

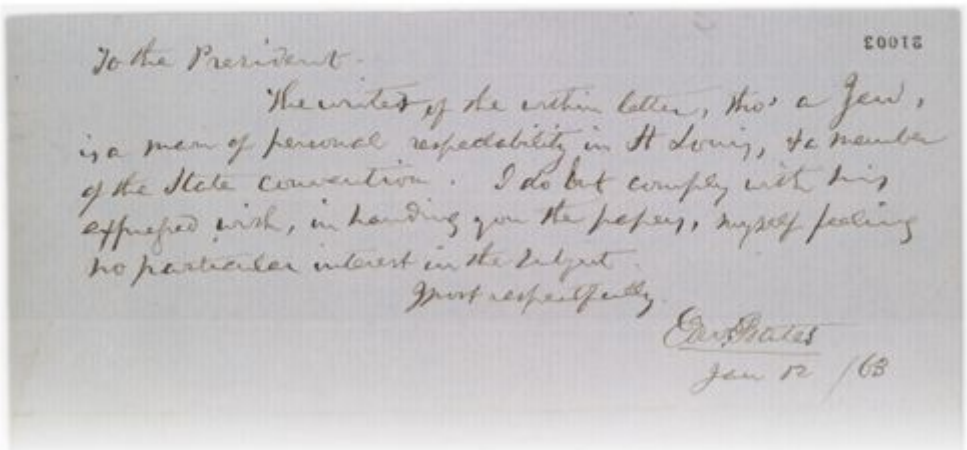
Dear Sir

I beg leave to hand you the Enclosed letter, unanimously adopted in open Lodge of the "Sons of the Covenant" an ancient and respectable Order for benevolent purposes, with the request to submit it to our President.

In his kindness he has granted our prayer before our voice could reach him. But I have no right to withhold the document, May He accept it as a proof that all Jews felt deeply concerned and will feel the more thankful and attached to His administration.

Permit me to add, that unless the perpetrators are punished — a similar outrage may be committed again — at the risk of having it soon revoked — as a few Days operation will pay very well to officers interested in Cotton speculation.

I am with the highest esteem and true affection
your obedient servant
Isidor Bush



To the President.

The writer of the within letter, tho' a Jew, is a man of personal respectability in St Louis, & a member of the State convention. I do but comply with his expressed wish, in handing you the papers, myself feeling no particular interest in the subject.

Most respectfully
Edw Bates
Jan 12 /63

ISIDOR BUSH TO EDWARD BATES, JANUARY 6, 1863

The B'nai B'rith petition had been sent to Lincoln by acquaintance Isidor Bush, in care of Attorney General Edward Bates, who, in forwarding the petition to the president, noted that Bush "tho a Jew, is a man of personal respectability in St. Louis."

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

By revoking General Orders No. 11, ensuring that the chaplaincy was opened up to Jews, and appointing numerous Jews to public and military positions of trust, Lincoln dramatically improved the status of Jews in the United States. He impressed even those like Rabbis Raphall and Wise who had earlier opposed his election. Many who regularly interacted with Lincoln—including military men, Evangelical leaders, even

his own attorney general—displayed no similar sympathies. They exhibited unabashed prejudice against Jews and Judaism. By contrast, during his first two years in office, Lincoln displayed extraordinary sensitivity toward Jews and Jewish interests. More than any previous president, he befriended Jews, defended Jews, and promoted Jewish equality.

THE ANTI-SEMITIC GENERALS

Generals Butler, Sherman, McClellan, and Grant were, Lincoln knew, prejudiced at best and persecutory at worst. The letters illustrated here bear unhappy but vivid witness to the anti-Semitism of Lincoln's military leaders.

It is conceded in this case, that Samuels, when arrested, had on his person a paper prima facie showing that he was going North to obtain medical supplies for the rebels. Will the officer in command at Fortress Monroe please give him an opportunity of trying to prove that this was not his real object, and report the evidence, with his opinion on it, to me?

A. Lincoln

Let the prisoner Samuels be discharged.

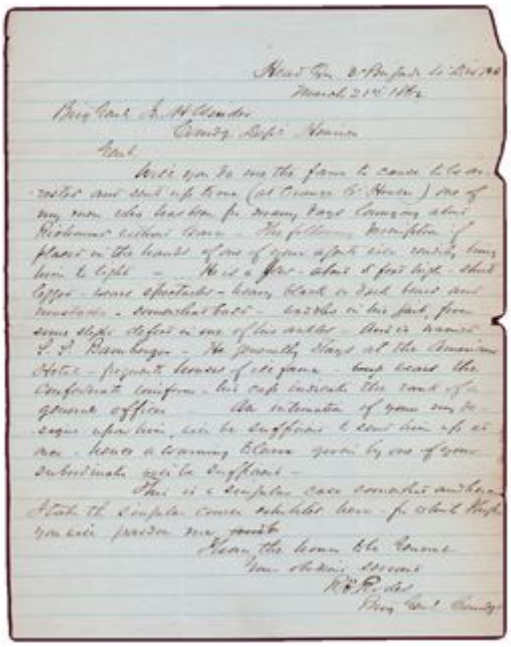
A. Lincoln

Dec. 10. 1864

BENJAMIN F. BUTLER TO LINCOLN, SEPTEMBER 15, 1864

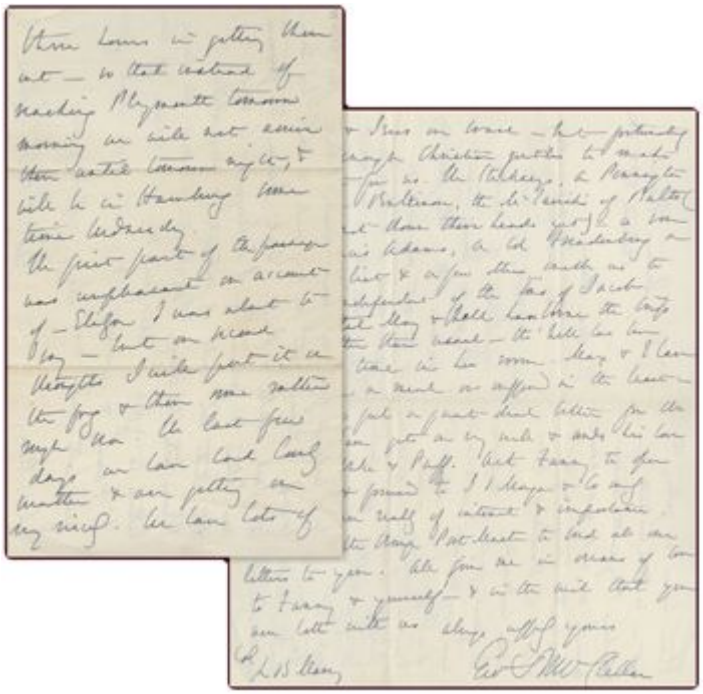
Butler—whose anti-Semitism had been called to Lincoln's attention in the past, in particular in an instance involving Jews who fell into Butler's hands at Fortress Monroe—arrested Abraham Samuels, a Jewish Virginian accused in 1864 of trying to pass through the Union lines to obtain medical supplies for the Confederate army. While trusting Butler as a general, Lincoln nonetheless ordered Butler on September 15, 1864 to give Samuels the "opportunity of trying to prove" that his objective was not criminal, and then, having reviewed the evidence, Lincoln ordered him freed on December 10, 1864. It would take two orders—and three months—until Butler finally acceded to Lincoln's request to free Samuels.

Shapell Manuscript Collection



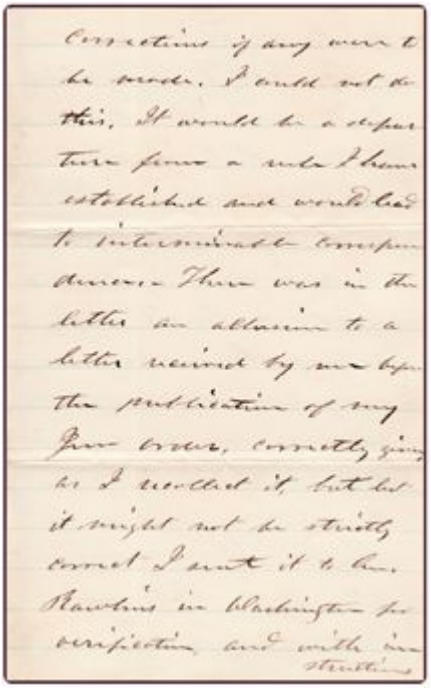
ROBERT EMMETT RODES

Anti-Semitism was also rampant in the South during the war. Confederate general Robert Emmett Rodes requests on March 21, 1862 that an AWOL "Jew" be arrested and sent to him at once; he proceeds to describe Major Salomon S. Bamberger in the most unflattering terms—and suggests he may be found in a brothel.
Shapell Manuscript Collection



GEORGE B. McCLELLAN

"We have lots of Germans and Jews on board," General McClellan complains of shipmates in 1875, "but fortunately there are enough Christian gentiles to make it pleasant for us … & a few others enable us to be quite independent of the sons of Jacob."
Shapell Manuscript Collection



Corrections if any were to
be made. I could not do
this. It would be a depar-
ture from a rule I have
established and would lead
to interminable correspon-
dence. There was in the
letter an allusion to a
letter received by me before
the publication of my
Jew order, correctly given
as I recollect it, but let
it might not be strictly
correct I sent it to Gen.
Rawlins in Washington for
verification and with in-
structions

Jew order,

ULYSSES S. GRANT, THE PUBLICATION OF "MY JEW ORDER…," AUGUST 14, 1868

Running for president in 1868, General Grant wrote to his father, concerned that his infamous "Jew order" of six years before, which expelled the Jews as a class from the area of his command, might haunt him in seeking votes from among the "Israelites." Grant's father, Jesse, had been embroiled in the controversy surrounding the issuance of the order.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

FIRST READING OF THE EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN

Lincoln, as portrayed in Francis Bicknell Carpenter's famous rendering of the event, reads to his cabinet his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation on September 22, 1862.
U.S. Senate Collection

CHAPTER FIVE

I MYSELF HAVE A REGARD FOR THE JEWS

1863

"Another year commenced, and with it perhaps a new era in the history of the country, certainly a new era for liberty," a nineteen-year-old Jewish telegraph operator named Edward Rosewater wrote in his diary on January 1, 1863.[1] Rosewater, born in Bohemia, had immigrated to the United States with his parents when he was thirteen years old and in the summer of 1862 began work as an army telegrapher in the War Department telegraph office, located in the old library opposite the office of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. He was one of eight operators working there and the only Jew. Abraham Lincoln spent a great deal of time in the telegraph office. "Every morning about 8 o'clock [he] comes in to read Dispatches which are copied into books," Rosewater wrote to his future wife, Leah. "His house being next to this, he is here often." Rosewater and the other young telegraphers enjoyed many an interaction with the president. "Sometimes," he wrote Leah, "he tells an anecdote, or reads a Story aloud and laughs (You could hear him ½ mile)."[2]

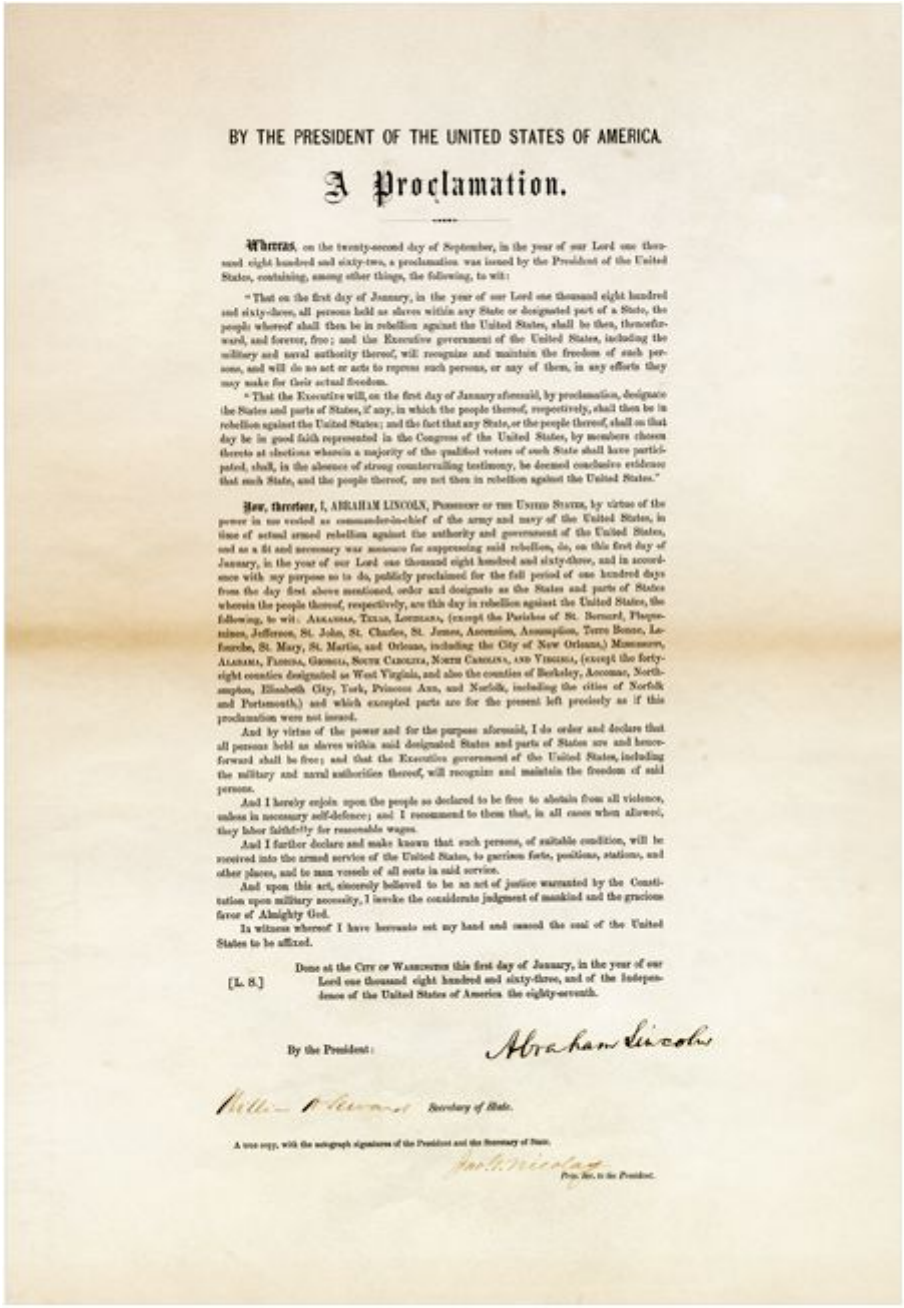
On January 1, Rosewater joined a large crowd of local residents at the president's traditional New Year's Day reception at the Executive Mansion. "The President looked rather cheerful," he recorded. "His whiskers cut within an inch of his face, [he] stood in [the] center of [the] room and shook hands with everyone."[3] Following the reception, at 4:00 P.M., Rosewater reported to his post at the telegraph office. Lincoln, meanwhile, ascended to his study. His hands still quivering from the hours spent shaking hands at the reception, he prepared to affix his signature to the Emancipation Proclamation. "I never in my life," he declared, "felt more certain that I was doing right than I do in signing this paper." Though his arm remained "stiff and numb," he was determined that no trembling be reflected in his signature, lest some conclude that "he had some compunctions." The document is signed in a bold, clear hand.[4] At eight that evening, Rosewater, who was

still on duty, transmitted the official text of the Emancipation Proclamation from the telegraph office. As Lincoln watched, he tapped out the epoch-making words that freed over 3 million slaves: "And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice, warranted by the Constitution, upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind, and the gracious favor of Almighty God."[5]

Rosewater, a staunch opponent of slavery, had every reason to be proud of his role in telegraphing to the world news of the "new era for liberty." He became a Republican politician after the war, then served for years as editor of the *Omaha Bee*. Other Jews, however, doubted the president's actions. *The Jewish Record* of New York, for example, deplored the Emancipation Proclamation. "To proclaim the African equal to the surrounding races, would be a farce," it declared.[6] Isaac Mayer Wise, noting support for the Proclamation from groups that aimed to write Christianity into the Constitution, likewise warned against those who sought "to free the black and enslave the white man."[7] Isaac Leeser, recalling Grant's order expelling the Jews, wondered whether the ultimate aim of the proclamation was "to give freedom to the negro, only to bring expulsion from the Union territory to the descendants of the Hebrew race."[8] On the other hand, the young Washington Jewish lawyer Simon Wolf personally congratulated Lincoln on the historic proclamation. In his memoirs, he quoted Lincoln's perceptive reply: "It was not only the negro that I freed, but the white man no less."[9] Rabbi Henry Vidaver of Warsaw, who arrived in America on the eve of the Civil War, marshaled biblical language to describe the Emancipation Proclamation to readers of the Hebrew newspaper *Hamagid* in Europe: "All slaves purchased in perpetuity by residents of the South are from this day forth free men," he exulted. He understood, as Lincoln himself did, that the Emancipation Proclamation was transformative and final.[10]

Lincoln explained just how final the Emancipation Proclamation was in a letter to Major General John A. McClernand, a friend and fellow lawyer from Illinois, who deemed the action a mistake. "I have issued the emancipation proclamation, and I can not retract it," Lincoln explained, recalling a biblical injunction from the Book of Esther ("… for the writing which is written in the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, may no man reverse.")[11] To drive the point home, he also employed what he called a "coarse but an expressive" figure of speech that, we have seen, he employed only once before, in a letter to the Jewish political powerbroker August Belmont: "Broken eggs can not be mended."[12]

On the very same day—January 1, 1863—that Edward Rosewater transmitted Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation over the telegraph lines, Lincoln's podiatrist (the nineteenth-century term was chiropodist), Issachar Zacharie, his closest Jewish friend after Abraham Jonas and a "favored family visitor at the White House,"[13] began his brief career as a spy, appointed by the president himself. Zacharie was something of a mystery man; historians consider him one of Lincoln's "most enigmatic intimates."[14] He spelled his name in multiple ways (Issachar, Issacher, Issachor, Isachar, Zacharie, Zacharia, Zachariah). He concealed the year of his birth; it was more likely 1825 than oft-cited later dates.[15] He hid the place of his birth; although sometimes listed as Charleston, it was actually Chatham in North Kent, England. He also provided conflicting stories concerning his immigration. Only thanks to a surviving ship's manifest, do we now know that he arrived from England on August 24, 1832, in care of his parents, Jonathan and Amelia Zacharia.[16] He especially tried to mask his lack of education, pretending to have studied with great doctors and to have written learned books, when in fact he had trouble writing standard English (most of his letters were written for him by others) and admitted to friends that "I lack education."[17] In 1844, in another act of concealment, he married Mary Anne Lawson in Philadelphia in a ceremony performed by a Baptist minister.[18] For some time, he lived with his wife's non-Jewish family, but like many intermarried Jews of the time, he also maintained ties with members of the Jewish community, later insisting that "I have always been proud to acknowledge that I was an Israelite." Abraham Lincoln certainly knew him as a Jew.[19]



BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

A Proclamation.

Whereas, on the twenty-second day of September, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two, a proclamation was issued by the President of the United States, containing, among other things, the following, to wit:

"That on the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, all persons held as slaves within any State or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States, shall be then, thenceforward, and forever, free; and the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authority thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of such persons, and will do no act or acts to repress such persons, or any of them, in any efforts they may make for their actual freedom.

"That the Executive will, on the first day of January aforesaid, by proclamation, designate the States and parts of States, if any, in which the people thereof, respectively, shall then be in rebellion against the United States; and the fact that any State, or the people thereof, shall on that day be in good faith represented in the Congress of the United States, by members chosen thereto at elections wherein a majority of the qualified voters of such State shall have participated, shall, in the absence of strong countervailing testimony, be deemed conclusive evidence that such State, and the people thereof, are not then in rebellion against the United States."

Now, therefore, I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States, by virtue of the power in me vested as commander-in-chief of the army and navy of the United States, in time of actual armed rebellion against the authority and government of the United States, and as a fit and necessary war measure for suppressing said rebellion, do, on this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and in accordance with my purpose so to do, publicly proclaimed for the full period of one hundred days from the day first above mentioned, order and designate as the States and parts of States wherein the people thereof, respectively, are this day in rebellion against the United States, the following, to wit: Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana, (except the Parishes of St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Jefferson, St. John, St. Charles, St. James, Ascension, Assumption, Terre Bonne, Lafourche, St. Mary, St. Martin, and Orleans, including the City of New Orleans,) Mississippi, Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia, (except the forty-eight counties designated as West Virginia, and also the counties of Berkeley, Accomac, Northampton, Elizabeth City, York, Princess Ann, and Norfolk, including the cities of Norfolk and Portsmouth,) and which excepted parts are for the present left precisely as if this proclamation were not issued.

And by virtue of the power and for the purpose aforesaid, I do order and declare that all persons held as slaves within said designated States and parts of States are and hereforward shall be free; and that the Executive government of the United States, including the military and naval authorities thereof, will recognize and maintain the freedom of said persons.

And I hereby enjoin upon the people so declared to be free to abstain from all violence, unless in necessary self-defence; and I recommend to them that, in all cases when allowed, they labor faithfully for reasonable wages.

And I further declare and make known that such persons, of suitable condition, will be received into the armed service of the United States, to garrison forts, positions, stations, and other places, and to man vessels of all sorts in said service.

And upon this act, sincerely believed to be an act of justice warranted by the Constitution upon military necessity, I invoke the considerate judgment of mankind and the gracious favor of Almighty God.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington this first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the Independence of the United States of America the eighty-seventh.

[L. S.]

By the President:

Abraham Lincoln

William H. Seward, Secretary of State.

A true copy, with the autograph signatures of the President and the Secretary of State.

John G. Nicolay, Priv. Sec. to the President.

THE LELAND-BOKER EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

Lincoln authorized this signed souvenir edition of his keystone Emancipation Proclamation to be sold at Philadelphia's Great Central Fair in June 1864, in order to raise money for the war effort. At $10 apiece, however, not all of them sold—and those that remained were given away to libraries. Today, of the forty-eight copies signed by Lincoln, only twenty-six are known to exist.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

A central mystery concerning Zacharie concerns how he became such a skilled and successful chiropodist, celebrated by such luminaries as Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, and, of course, Lincoln himself. Chiropody was a brand-new field in Zacharie's day—the word had only come into existence in 1785—and it was far from a respectable one.

Medical science paid scant attention to foot discomforts, and surgeons considered problems like corns and bunions beneath their dignity; they relegated them to lowly "corn cutters" some of whom dabbled in folk medicine and dentistry on the side. The skills needed to alleviate foot discomforts were thus learned from those experienced in the field and were often passed down from parents to children.[20]

The first serious English-language medical text on foot care, *A Treatise on Corns, Bunions, the Diseases of Nails, and the General Management of the Feet* (1845), was written by a proud and communally active Jew named Lewis Durlacher, of London, who served as "surgeon-chiropodist" to three successive British monarchs and was also the son, father, and grandfather of chiropodists. An American edition of his well-regarded work was published in Philadelphia soon after the London edition appeared.[21]

Another early British chiropodist, a German immigrant of uncertain background named John Eisenberg, likewise published a book on chiropody in 1845. Entitled *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot with Instructions for their Treatment to which is added Advice on the Management of the Hand,* the volume was expensively produced and elegantly written, but its contents (including veiled attacks on Durlacher) were greeted with scorn. "Fine semblance, no substance," the reviewer for the *British and Foreign Medical Review* concluded. "We warn our readers all and sundry against meddling with the charming cheat."[22] A medical journal for surgeons dismissed the work as "scarcely deserving of even the brief attention we have given to it."[23] Little more is known about Eisenberg, but in 1860, Issachar Zacharie would pirate his book and publish most of it under his own name in America. He also borrowed six illustrations from Durlacher's book for his own, again without any acknowledgment.[24]

Much as he undoubtedly learned from these books, Zacharie must also have had a teacher to train him in the science and art of chiropody. Who that was remains another of Zacharie's many mysteries. On one occasion, he published a "certificate," purportedly from the great English surgeon Sir Astley Paston Cooper (1768–1841), dated 27 June 1837, attesting that "I. Zacharie studied the profession of Chiropodist under me."[25] Since Zacharie was no more than twelve years old in 1837 and living in poverty in the United States, while Cooper died in England in 1841, that claim is easy to reject. Zacharie dedicated both editions of his book *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot* (1860, 1876) to the great American

surgeon Valentine Mott, who had studied under Cooper. “I am indeed rejoiced that this tribute of my respect and admiration has been accepted by you, and that you consider the labors of an humble individual, upon a neglected branch of knowledge, not unworthy [of] your kind protection and consideration,” he wrote. Strangely, that dedication is dated 1844, sixteen years before the first edition of his volume had even appeared in the United States, and it stops short of saying that Zacharie himself had studied with Mott, which he almost certainly did not.[26] It seems more likely that Zacharie studied chiropody in Philadelphia where the first chiropody office ever known in the United States was opened in 1841 by an English-born Jew named Julius Davidson.[27] Had he, as an obituary claims, also studied under Dr. Thomas Dent Mutter, the eminent professor of surgery at Philadelphia’s Thomas Jefferson Medical College, he would not likely have considered himself lacking in education.[28] Much still remains mysterious about Zacharie’s life and training, but this much is known with certainty: he was living in Philadelphia with his wife’s family and his own two small children when the census taker found him in 1850, and beginning several years before then, in his twenties, he started taking testimonials from public figures whose feet he successfully treated.[29]

> *“… broken eggs can not be mended. I have issued the emancipation proclamation and I can not retract it.”*

Executive Mansion,
Washington, January 8, 186
Major General McClernand
My dear Sir
Your interesting communication by the hand of Major Scates is received. I never did ask more, nor ever was willing to accept less, than for all the States, and the people thereof, to take and hold their places, and their rights, in the Union, under the Constitution of the United States. For this alone have I felt authorized to struggle, and I seek neither more nor less now. Still, to use a coarse, but an expressive figure, broken eggs can not be mended. I have issued the emancipation proclamation, and I can not retract it.
After the commencement of hostilities I struggled nearly a year and a half to get along without touching the "institution"; and when finally I conditionally determined to touch it, I gave a hundred days fair notice of my purpose, to all the States and people, within which time they could have turned it wholly aside, by simply again becoming good citizens of the United States. They chose to dis[...]
As to any dread of my having a "purpose to enslave, or exter[...]
safety, so far as I am concerned.
I think you would better not make this letter public; but you may rely confidently on my standing by whatever I have said in it. Please write me if anything more comes to light.
Yours very truly
A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN TO JOHN A. McCLERNAND, JANUARY 8, 186[3]

Lincoln would later tell the artist Francis Bicknell Carpenter that "as affairs have turned out," the Emancipation Proclamation was "the central act of my administration, and the great event of the nineteenth century." But the "turning out" was not without contention, and Lincoln emphatically defended his proclamation: "broken eggs can not be mended," he declared. "I have issued the emancipation proclamation, and I can not retract it."

Shapell Legacy Partnership

Shrewdly, Zacharie began by soliciting commendations from doctors in Philadelphia and nearby Baltimore. They attested, in testimonials dating as early as August 27, 1846, that his "method"—avoiding use of the knife, spilling no blood, minimizing pain, maximizing comfort, and operating quickly—was "rational" and "scientific." They also

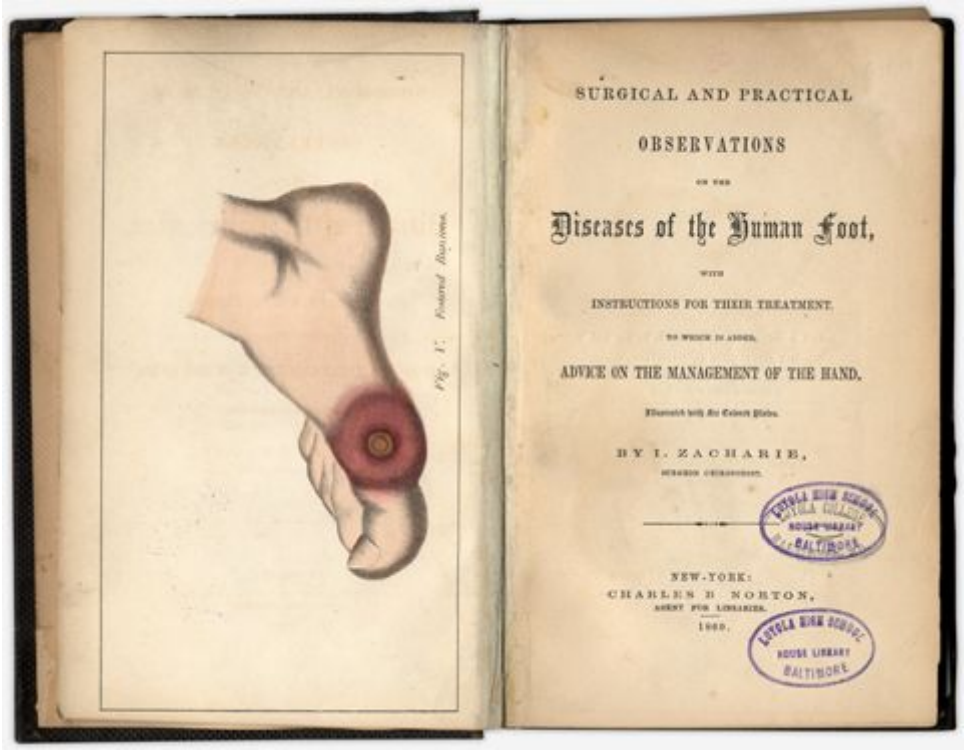
addressed him as "Doctor," a professional degree that he ambitiously aspired to but never actually attained.[30] On a trip to the nation's capital, the freshly titled "doctor" courageously employed his method on the corns of Lincoln's "beau ideal," Senator Henry Clay. "I take pleasure in saying," Clay wrote in a January 29, 1848, testimonial, "that Dr. Zacharie operated on me for Corns, with perfect comfort, and to my entire satisfaction, and I derived great and immediate benefit from the exercise of his skill and judgment."[31] That commendation naturally opened many doors to the young chiropodist, and within the year he had won additional testimonials from such luminaries as Senators Lewis Cass, Thomas Hart Benton, and John C. Calhoun.[32]

For several years during the gold rush, Zacharie and his family lived in California. He was the only chiropodist listed in the San Francisco city directory of 1856 and is remembered as the "pioneer practitioner in that city."[33] Much like Abraham Jonas when he moved to Kentucky, he also became a leader in Freemasonry, a meeting ground where upwardly mobile Jews and Protestants could safely interact. In keeping with the air of mystery that he so frequently projected, he became especially devoted to Masonry's Order of the Secret Monitor, influenced by Dutch Masonry, which focused upon mutual assistance ("to search out and call upon any Brother who may be in danger or distress, or who may have fallen into ill health or may be in need of fraternal monition, sympathy, consolation or assistance"). Years later he would bring that secretive order back to England, becoming its first Supreme Ruler.[34]

In 1858, Zacharie returned from California and took up residence in New York. By then, he boasted of having collected some "1500 certificates" attesting to his skills from "some of the most eminent men in the United States." Though still only in his thirties, he was well on his way to becoming chiropody's foremost American booster. The *New York Atlas* characterized him that year as "the most successful operator of his class ever known in New York" and gushed that "professors of chiropody" of his type were nothing less than "benefactors of the human race."[35]

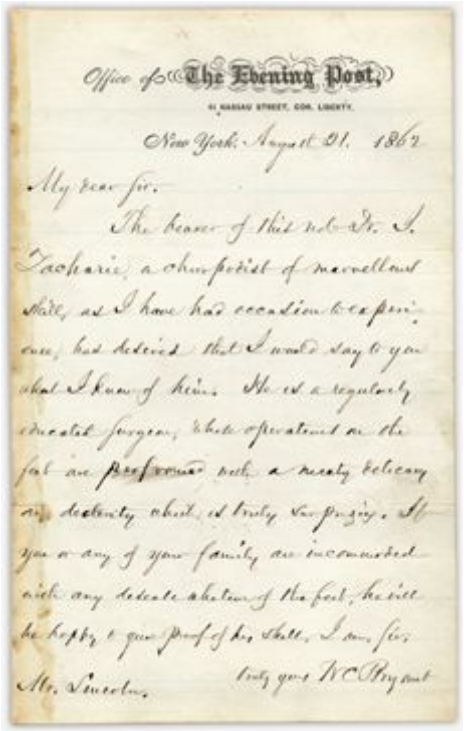
One of the "eminent men" whose feet Zacharie treated in New York was the esteemed poet and longtime editor of the *New-York Evening Post,* William Cullen Bryant. Known to be "an indefatigable walker," Bryant regularly tramped three miles to and from work and was once said to have walked forty miles in a single day.[36] So it is, perhaps, not surprising that he became particularly interested in chiropody. "Diseases of the feet," he knew, were the cause "of great suffering and inconvenience, and few

persons are wholly exempt from them." After watching Zacharie in action in 1859, Bryant praised his "knowledge of the structure of the human foot and the consummate dexterity of his operations." He also became one of his patients.[37]



INSCRIBED COPY OF ZACHARIE'S BOOK

Zacharie published Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot *in 1860—which shared, at the very least, the exact same title of a book published abroad, by another chiropodist, years earlier. While his authorship is suspect, he was nonetheless an expert healer, not only of foot complaints but of hand and back maladies as well.*
Shapell Manuscript Collection



Office of The Evening Post,
41 NASSAU STREET, COR. LIBERTY.

New York: August 21. 1862

My dear Sir.

The bearer of this is Dr. I. Zacharie, a chiropodist of marvellous skill, as I have had occasion to experience, and desired that I would say to you what I know of him. He is a regularly educated surgeon, whose operations on the feet are performed with a nicety delicacy and dexterity about it truly surprising. If you or any of your family are incommoded with any delicate skeleton of the feet, he will be happy to give proof of his skill. I am Sir,

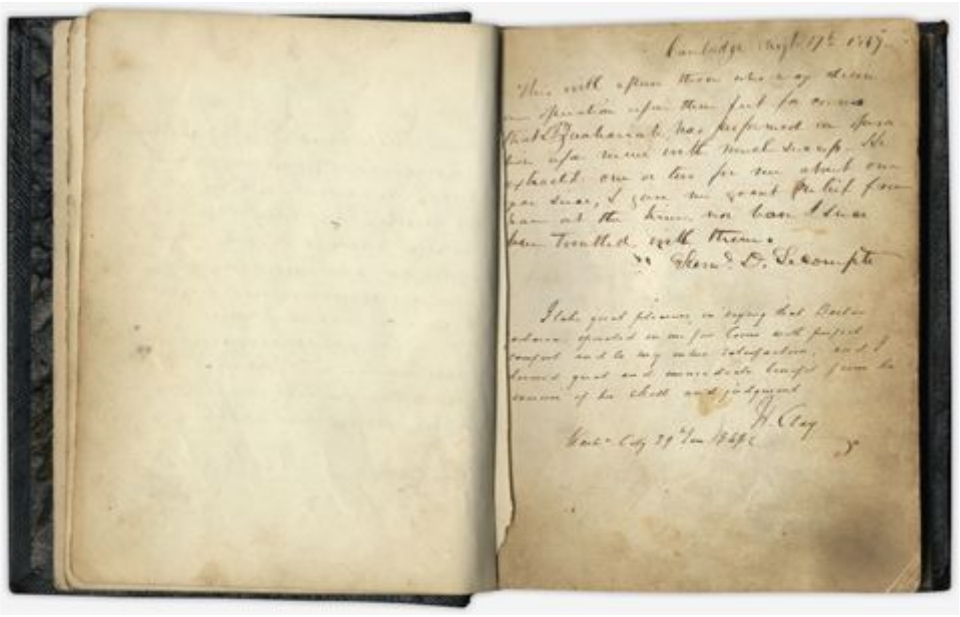
Truly yours W C Bryant

Mr. Lincoln.

THE INTRODUCTION, AUGUST 21, 1862

With this letter of introduction to Lincoln, Issachar Zacharie began his unique connection with the president—the end of which, just as at the beginning, would see him as a man of mystery. Here William Cullen Bryant, the powerful editor of the New-York Evening Post, *tells the president of the chiropodist's "marvelous skill."*

Shapell Manuscript Collection



TESTIFYING TO ZACHARIE

Some of the 1500 testimonials of Issachar Zacharie's skill that he had personally assembled, which included Henry Clay, John C. Calhoun, Lewis Cass, Thomas Hart Benton, William H. Herndon, as well as top Union generals.

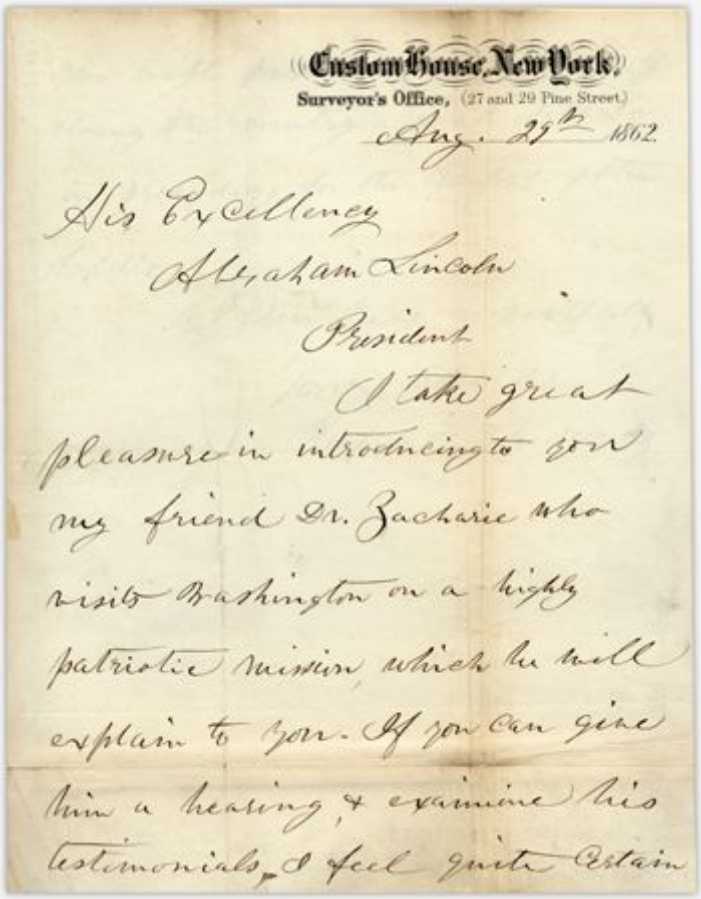
Shapell Manuscript Collection

In the summer of 1862, with the Civil War raging, Northern morale ebbing, and William A. Hammond, an energetic young surgeon general newly installed in Washington committed to the establishment of a permanent hospital and ambulance corps for the military,[38] a plan was hatched, perhaps by Zacharie himself, to improve the lives of soldiers by establishing a chiropody corps "to inspect the feet of the men and keep them in order for marching." Bryant, who loved the idea, agreed to recommend Zacharie to be its chief. "His skill in this branch is truly astonishing," he informed Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and then expounded at length on the "importance of maintaining the feet of our soldiers."[39] On the same day, August 21, 1862, Bryant provided Zacharie with a personal letter of introduction to Abraham Lincoln. He had been one of Lincoln's earliest New York supporters, served as emcee when Lincoln spoke at Cooper Union, and often corresponded with him. He expected that his recommendation would carry weight with the president, and probably for that reason, his carefully chosen words focused more on Zacharie's medical skill than on his executive abilities:

> The bearer of this note, Dr. I. Zacharie, a chiropodist of marvelous skill, as I have had occasion to experience, has desired that I would say to you what I know of him. He is a regularly educated surgeon, whose operations on the feet are performed with a nicety, delicacy and dexterity which is truly surprising. If you or any of your family are incommoded with any disease whatever of the feet, he will be happy to give proof of his skill.[40]

These letters became part of a small-scale lobbying effort on behalf of Zacharie and the proposed chiropody corps. George Opdyke, the Republican mayor of New York City, penned a letter of his own to Lincoln in praise of Zacharie ("I beg to commend him to your favorable consideration as the Chief of a Corps of Chiropodists which, I learn, and I hope truly, is to be organized for the benefit of the country, by keeping in good marching condition, the feet of those who go forth to fight our battles").[41] Rufus F. Andrews, surveyor of the Port of New York, gave Zacharie a letter of introduction to Lincoln as well, most likely the catalyst for the first meeting between Lincoln and Zacharie three weeks later.[42] The *New-York Evening Post* and the *New York Herald* likewise published articles favoring the chiropody corps.[43] The *Herald* colorfully depicted Zacharie as being "distinguished by a splendid Roman nose, fashionable whiskers, an eloquent tongue, a dazzling diamond breastpin, great skill in his profession, an ingratiating address, a perfect knowledge of his business and a plentiful

supply of social moral courage."[44] Zacharie himself, meanwhile, kept Stanton and Hammond informed of these tributes, and pleaded for "favorable consideration."[45]



Custom House, New York.
Surveyor's Office, (27 and 29 Pine Street)
Aug. 29th 1862.

His Excellency
Abraham Lincoln
President

I take great pleasure in introducing to you my friend Dr. Zacharie who visits Washington on a highly patriotic mission, which he will explain to you. If you can give him a hearing, & examine his testimonials, I feel quite certain

THE CATALYST FOR THE FIRST MEETING, AUGUST 29, 1862

Adding to the recommendation from William Cullen Bryant just a week before, New York Custom House official Rufus F. Andrews also recommends Dr. Issachar Zacharie to Lincoln—this time, as a friend "who visits Washington on a highly patriotic mission." This missive was most likely the catalyst for the first meeting between Lincoln and Zacharie three weeks later.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

In September, Zacharie traveled to Washington to argue his case in person. According to published reports, he treated the feet of three generals, George McClellan, Ambrose Burnside, and most important of all in terms of his later career, Nathaniel P. Banks. He also treated Secretary of State William Seward, and other members of the cabinet.[46] Then, on September 20, he met with Abraham Lincoln, probably for the first time, and in the course of just five days would treat Lincoln for back, wrist, and foot problems. "Dr. Zacharie, has, with great dexterity, taken some troublesome corns from my toes," the president wrote in a testimonial striking for its lack of pretentiousness.

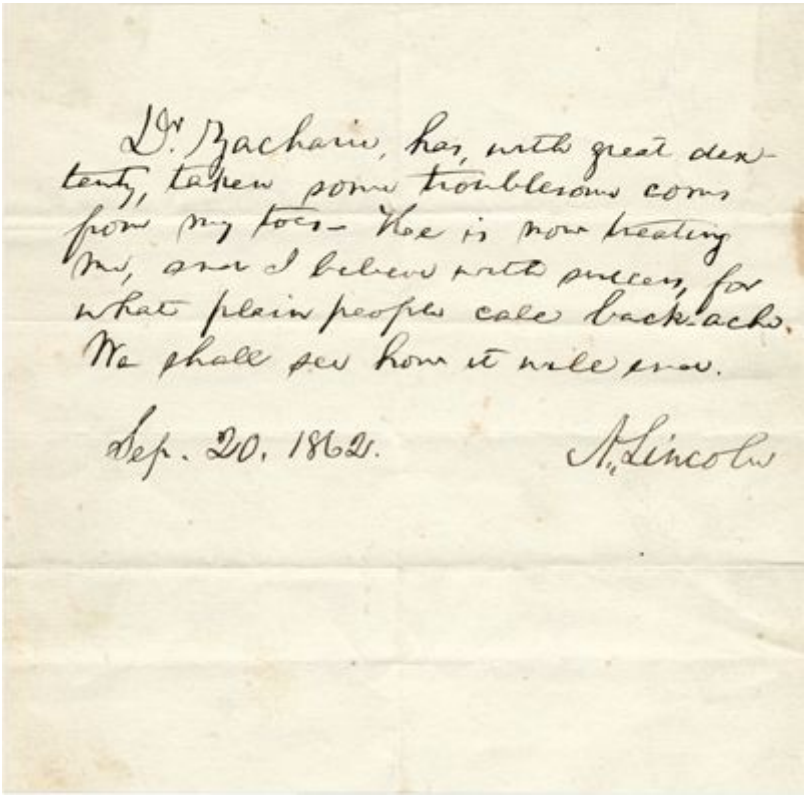
"He is now healing me, and I believe with success, for what plain people call back-ache. We shall see how it will end."[47]

Apparently it ended well, for two days later, on September 22, the very day that he delivered the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet, announcing his decision to emancipate slaves on January 1, 1863, Lincoln made time during a momentous week to pen a more formal testimonial attesting that he had met with Dr. Zacharie in the Executive Mansion. Presumably, Zacharie presented to him his plan for the chiropody corps; he also again treated Lincoln's famously painful feet. "Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with great success, and considerable addition to my comfort," Lincoln wrote.[48]

Three days after that, on September 25, which happened to be the first day of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, the president invited Zacharie back into his office seeking treatment for a sprained wrist.[49] In the meanwhile, on September 23, Lincoln had co-signed, along with William Seward, yet another testimonial for Zacharie, this one likely written with Surgeon General Hammond in mind. Noting "numerous testimonies of the highest character," as well as their own "personal experience," Lincoln and Seward endorsed Zacharie's "very great success … in operating upon corns, bunions & other troubles of the feet," and expressed their "desire that the Soldiers of our brave army may have the benefit of the Doctor's surprising skill."[50] Stanton followed that up the next day with a thirty-day pass to Zacharie, "for the purpose of operating upon the feet of the soldiers for corns, bunions" in and around Washington.[51]

New Yorkers seem to have assumed, following all of these testimonials and accolades, that Zacharie's mission had been crowned with success. *Vanity Fair,* a humorous New York weekly, went so far as to publish an anonymous "Ode to Dr. Zacharie"—might it have been the work of William Cullen Bryant?—praising the chiropodist's skill and celebrating his appointment to the military.[52]

"Dr. Zacharie … is now treating me, and I believe with success, for what plain people call back-ache."



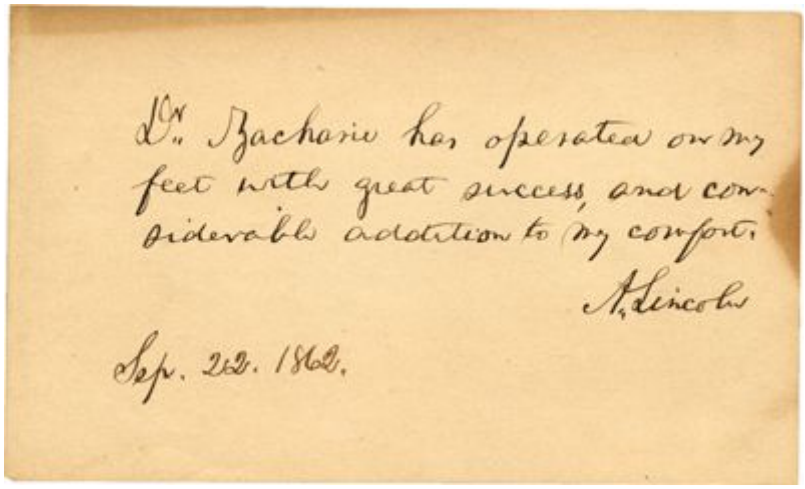
Dr. Zacharie, has, with great dexterity, taken some troublesome corns from my toes— He is now treating me, and I believe with success, for what plain people call backache. We shall see how it will end.

Sep. 20. 1862. A. Lincoln

THE FIRST LINCOLN TESTIMONIAL, SEPTEMBER 20, 1862

Of all the hundreds of testimonials affirming the wondrous talents of Issachar Zacharie, this is the most interesting: "Dr. Zacharie, has, with great dexterity, taken some troublesome corns from my toes—He is now treating me, and I believe with success, for what plain people call back-ache. We shall see how it will end." It is the first of three such testimonials Lincoln would write for Zacharie, written within three days of one another, and suggests that from the very beginning, Lincoln found something compelling in the able and affable doctor. It also serves as yet another example of Lincoln's striking humility: for having been for the first twenty-one years of his life a manual worker, he had yet to forget what "plain people call back-ache."

Shapell Manuscript Collection



Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with great success, and considerable addition to my comfort.

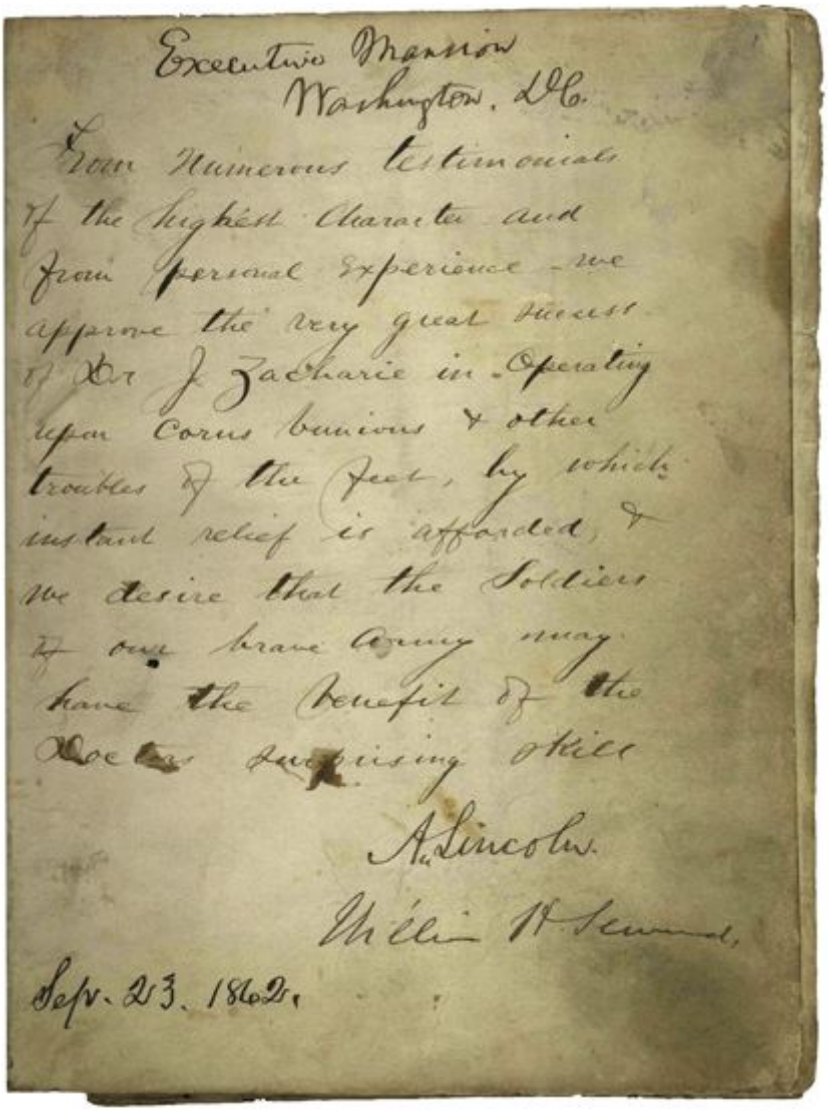
A. Lincoln

Sep. 22. 1862.

THE SECOND TESTIMONIAL: A SURPRISING GESTURE ON A LANDMARK DAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 1862

Within five days of Antietam, the single bloodiest battle in American history, and on the very day that Lincoln issued his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet, he found time to gratify Zacharie's request for a second endorsement.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

"... we desire that the soldiers of our brave army may have the benefit of the Doctor's surprising skill."


Executive Mansion
Washington, D.C.

From Numerous testimonials of the highest character and from personal experience we approve the very great merit of Dr J Zacharie in Operating upon Corns bunions & other troubles of the feet, by which instant relief is afforded, & we desire that the Soldiers of our brave Army may have the benefit of the Doctors surprising skill

A. Lincoln.

William H. Seward,

Sept. 23. 1862.

THE THIRD TESTIMONIAL, SEPTEMBER 23, 1862

Lincoln wrote yet another endorsement of Zacharie's "surprising skill" in "operating upon corns, bunions and other troubles of the feet." Here, in a document headed, dated, and signed by him, and signed as well by Secretary of State Seward, both men testify "from personal experience" to the "instant relief" provided by the good doctor, and express their desire that the soldiers bravely serving have access to the same.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Surgeon General Hammond, who like so many surgeons seems to have held chiropody in low esteem, paid no heed to any of this. He received any number of well-intentioned suggestions from politicians and citizens extolling treatments and remedies of every kind (Bryant, for example, was a great devotee of homeopathic medicine[53]), and with his elevated sense of professionalism, Hammond proceeded to reject most all of them—even when they came addressed to him from the president of the United States.[54] Just a few days after he met with Zacharie, to take one instance, Lincoln specifically requested Hammond to allow a Dr. S. W. Forsha of Ohio to treat soldiers with a special "balm" that, Forsha had promised, would "insure ninety percent of all the flesh wounds to be well and the Soldiers to be in a healthy condition and fit for duty within thirty days." Hammond ignored the request; when it was repeated, he bluntly informed the president that Forsha was nothing but "an ignorant quack."[55] What Hammond thought of Zacharie at the time has not been preserved, but in 1864, when he was dismissed, the surgeon general admitted that he had refused to sanction the "corn doctor['s] … entrance into the army, although he was supported by the President and other prominent politicians."[56] As a result, notwithstanding all of the many endorsements Zacharie collected, including those of Lincoln and Seward, no chiropody corps came into being.

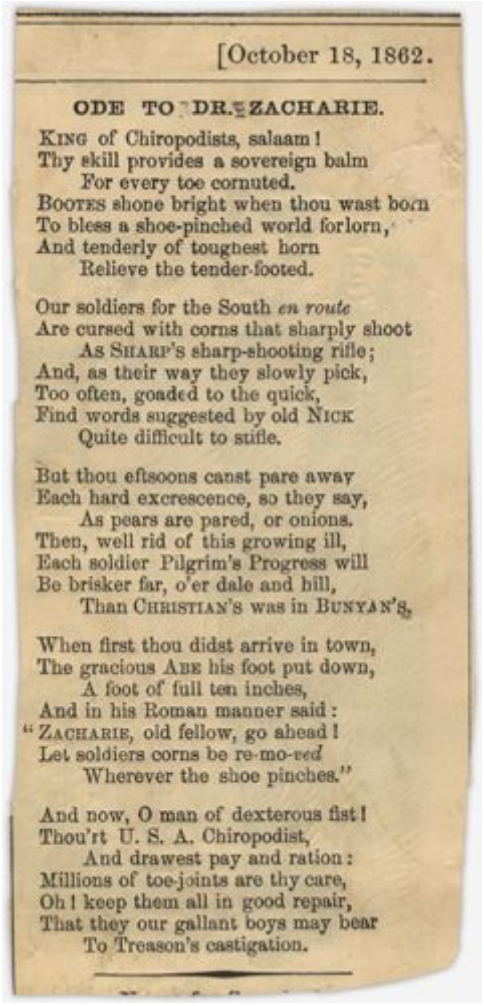
Nevertheless, Lincoln, Seward, and Banks—new friends whom the affable chiropodist made in Washington after treating their feet successfully—all tried to assist him. Banks, on October 6, recommended Zacharie's skills ("I have experienced the benefit of his professional skill and commend him to your favor") to the commander of Fort Monroe, John A. Dix. Zacharie later claimed to have relieved the feet of some 5,000 soldiers at the Virginia fort. He published an advertisement claiming that "all soldiers having corns, bunions or bad nails upon their feet, can have them cured without pain" and declared in capital letters that he was serving "UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE SECRETARY OF WAR."[57] But there is no evidence that he received any such authority or military commission, and he never was paid. In 1874, when he sought retroactive compensation for his work, Congress's Committee on War Claims scornfully turned him down, insisting that he had been merely "plying his vocation; and voluntarily sought to pursue the same in the lines of the Union Army."[58]

Zacharie, who made up in ambition, imagination, and determination whatever he lacked in education, returned to Washington after seven weeks at Fort Monroe with a

new and highly secretive plan. After meeting with Lincoln, who appreciated his skills and took a personal liking to him, Zacharie exultantly wrote Seward that, pending a kind word from him, he would "obtain what I desire": the opportunity to accompany General Banks to New Orleans.[59] The very next day, on November 25, Lincoln wrote a revealing letter to Banks providing his consent:

> Dr. Zacharie, whom you know as well as I do, wishes to go with you on your expedition. I think he might be of service, to you, first in his peculiar profession, and secondly, as a means of access to his countrymen, who are quite numerous in some of the localities you will probably visit. This, however, is not an order, nor a request even, for you to take him; but a permission merely, excepting his case from a general prohibition which I understand to exist.[60]

Banks, at the time, was collecting men and matériel for a secretive expedition, by boat, to New Orleans. Lincoln had appointed him to replace the unpopular General Benjamin F. Butler as commander of what was then known as the Department of the Gulf. A key goal of Banks's mission was to pacify the population and win its goodwill so as to entice Louisiana back into the Union.[61] As Lincoln clearly knew, Jews (many of them intermarried and assimilated) played an outsized role in the politics of the region. On the eve of the Civil War, Judah P. Benjamin had been Louisiana's U.S. senator; Henry M. Hyams, its lieutenant governor; and Edwin Warren Moise, the speaker of its legislature—all of them Jews.[62] Overall, as many as 2,000 Jews lived in New Orleans. Butler, a notorious anti-Semite, had alienated Jews during his tenure, jailing several of them and insulting all of them ("my experience with men of the Jewish faith or nation," the general explained, "has been an unfortunate one."[63] Butler, in a letter to the attorney general in October 1862, wrote: "They are Jews who betrayed their Savior & also have betrayed us."[64])



[October 18, 1862.

ODE TO DR. ZACHARIE.

KING of Chiropodists, salaam!
Thy skill provides a sovereign balm
For every toe cornuted.
BOOTES shone bright when thou wast born
To bless a shoe-pinched world forlorn,
And tenderly of toughest horn
Relieve the tender-footed.

Our soldiers for the South *en route*
Are cursed with corns that sharply shoot
As SHARP'S sharp-shooting rifle;
And, as their way they slowly pick,
Too often, goaded to the quick,
Find words suggested by old NICK
Quite difficult to stifle.

But thou eftsoons canst pare away
Each hard excrescence, so they say,
As pears are pared, or onions.
Then, well rid of this growing ill,
Each soldier Pilgrim's Progress will
Be brisker far, o'er dale and hill,
Than CHRISTIAN'S was in BUNYAN'S.

When first thou didst arrive in town,
The gracious ABE his foot put down,
A foot of full ten inches,
And in his Roman manner said:
"ZACHARIE, old fellow, go ahead!
Let soldiers corns be re-mo-*ved*
Wherever the shoe pinches."

And now, O man of dexterous fist!
Thou'rt U. S. A. Chiropodist,
And drawest pay and ration:
Millions of toe-joints are thy care,
Oh! keep them all in good repair,
That they our gallant boys may bear
To Treason's castigation.

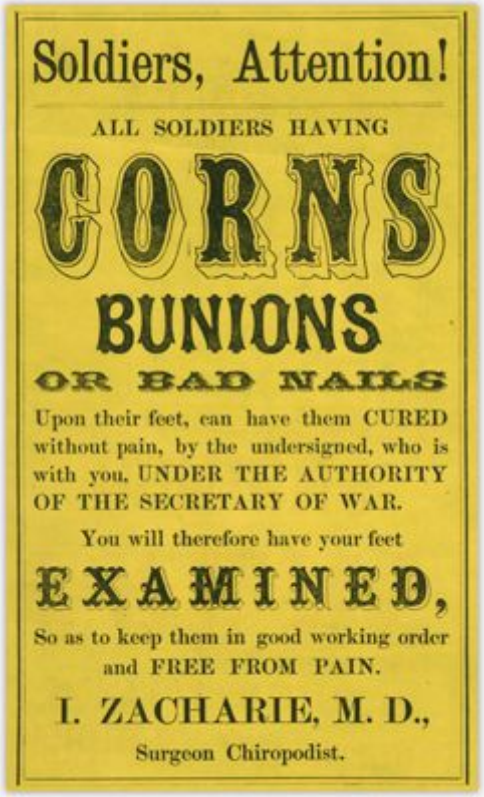
"ODE TO DR. ZACHARIE": OCTOBER 18, 1862

From the first, and short-lived, incarnation of Vanity Fair *magazine—then a Manhattan-based humorous weekly published between 1859 and 1863—came this "Ode to Dr. Zacharie," celebrating his well-known friendship with President Lincoln. Though published anonymously, it may have been authored by William Cullen Bryant.*
Vanity Fair

Lincoln, who understood what a great mistake that policy had been, hoped that Zacharie, being Jewish himself and with his Jewish connections in New Orleans,[65] could win back the affections of his Jewish "countrymen" by surreptitiously promoting pro-Union sentiments among them. He assumed that Zacharie's chiropody skills would come in handy for Banks as well. As to the "general prohibition" to which Lincoln referred in his letter to Banks, that seems to have been a reference to General Ulysses S. Grant's orders of November 9 and 10 barring Jews from traveling south. "Refuse all permits to come south of Jackson for the present," the general had ordered. "The Isrealites [*sic*] especially should be kept out."[66]

Zacharie received his official instructions from General Banks on January 1, 1863, when his intelligence mission commenced. “In pursuance to your instructions from the President,” the general wrote, “I desire you during your continuance in the city to mingle freely with its people of all classes, especially with your own countrymen; to ascertain and report as far as possible the nature of its public opinion, as well as the opinion of individuals.” In addition, like any spy, he was instructed to be on the lookout for “the plans of the public Enemy, the character of his troops … the extent of their supplies and ammunition, and the different organizations of which their army may be composed.” “Spare no expense in obtaining that which is of importance,” Banks added.[67]

Zacharie soon set to work. He collected information on firms sending supplies to the Confederacy. He passed along reports (some accurate, some not) on Confederate troop movements. He gathered information on the misdeeds of General Butler. He promoted the work of his patron, General Banks, whom he fawningly compared, in one of his letters to Lincoln, to the man he knew Lincoln idealized, Henry Clay.[68] And, just as he had been instructed to do, he spent a great deal of time aiding Jews. He befriended Jews whom General Butler had offended and hired selected Jews to gather intelligence for him. He met with the most revered Jewish religious leader in New Orleans, Rev. James K. Gutheim, a prominent Confederate supporter who faced banishment to the Confederacy for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to the man he called “the Dictator of Washington,” and offered him kind words of reassurance. To his superiors, he soothingly explained that “in his heart” Gutheim “wishes the Union restored.… It is his wife who influences him.”[69] He also met with scores of other Jews who, as “registered enemies,” needed to leave town. “The Doctor,” the *New York Herald* reported, “appears to have taken them under his wing; for he has been beset with them morning, noon and night, and his elegant apartments at the St. Charles Hotel have sometimes been crowded with Israelites, waiting his leisure, in order to obtain his advice as to what they should do.”[70] Amid these exertions, he reassured the president that he was meeting with success, “not only among my own people but among the most wealthy & influential of citizens.” Radiating optimism, he wrote that “the people every day are becoming more favorably disposed to the Government.”[71] He sent similar reports to Banks and Seward.[72]



ZACHARIE BROADSIDE

Under the imprimatur of "the Authority of the Secretary of War," Zacharie advertises his painless podiatry in this broadside, circa 1862.
Maine Historical Society

Empowered to hire assistants to help him gather intelligence, Zacharie hired local Jews of long acquaintance and had the inspired idea of disguising them as peddlers to give them some "good excuse" for their travels through the state. He thought that providing them with "merchandise for sale" would provide "a cloak to their real object."[73] Other intelligence gatherers in New Orleans, like George S. Denison, the acting collector of customs and undercover spy for Treasury secretary Salmon P. Chase, knew nothing of this and deeply suspected Zacharie. The chiropodist's own Jewish background only compounded such suspicions; one scholar writes of Denison's "lack of tolerance for foreigners in general and Jews in particular."[74] In correspondence with Chase, Denison wrote derisively that one of Zacharie's "Israelite friends" sought to "take a large stock of goods to Donaldsonville. The reason given is the same as before —that the Dr. wants his friends' cooperation, which would be imperfect unless said friend pretends to be selling goods." Denison, of course, did not "believe a word of it." He described Zacharie as a "vulgar little scoundrel … who takes bribes, and whose only object is to make money."[75] Louisiana's military governor, George F. Shepley,

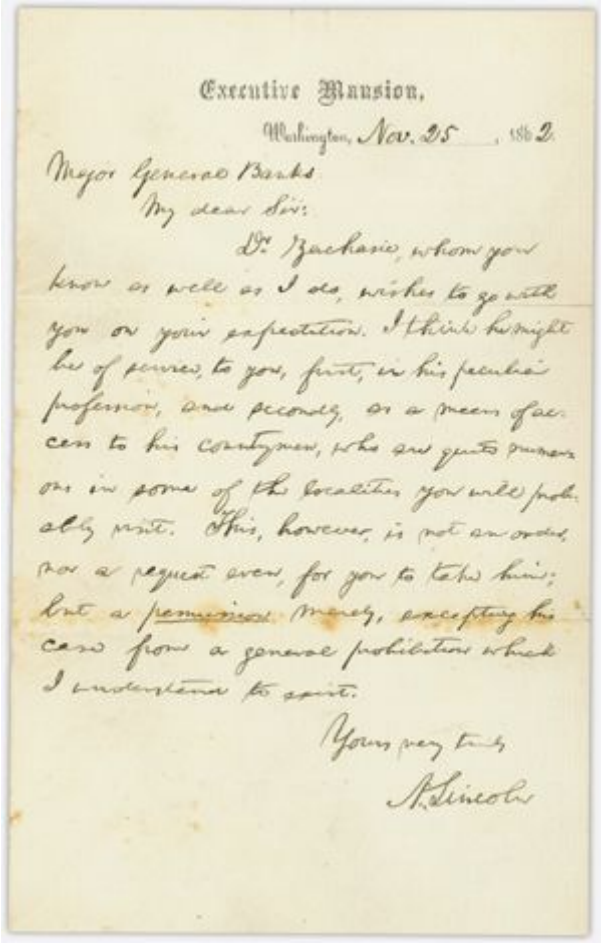
viewed Zacharie's activities, including his allegiance to Banks, as proof that "the Christ killers … have it all their own way."[76] Even former congressman Michael Hahn, who was born of Jewish parents but did not identify as Jewish, expressed doubts about Zacharie. "The general report prevails here," he wrote Lincoln, "that he obtains important commercial and other privileges from the government officers here for persons who pay him heavy sums of money &c. This should be stopped."[77]

Whether Zacharie actually succumbed to the corruption and theft that characterized the Department of the Gulf while he was there, or whether instead his financial dealings served as camouflage for the larger goal with which Lincoln had entrusted him is disputed.[78] When he departed, even General Banks, who knew of the accusations against him, seemed uncertain. "Doctor Zacharie," he wrote Seward, "has been the subject of remark on the part of some parties here who suspect him of speculation. There is much crimination and recriminations among officers of the government on this subject in which I have no part and of which I have no knowledge. I can only say that Doctor Zacharie has had no favors whatever from the Government and has asked for none at my hands."[79]

In March, Zacharie was called east to confer with the president. "Will have the honor of seeing you in day or two," he telegraphed him from New York soon after he arrived there.[80] Their meetings were secret, but it is known that the former Democratic Jewish congressman, Emanuel B. Hart (who was friendly with Seward), was present. Zacharie had agreed to help set up an exchange of Southern cotton for Northern goods and that was likely on the agenda. Zacharie may also have been involved in an abortive plan to buy cotton directly from Southern planters to help overcome the drastic shortage of cotton affecting mills both in the North and in Europe. There may even have been some more ambitious plan afoot to find an end to the war—for when the meetings concluded, Seward authorized an enormous $5 million line of credit for Banks for an unspecified purpose (the funds were never used).[81] Whatever the case, Zacharie departed "quite agitated on account of the great responsibility" resting upon him, and expressed the hope to Lincoln, who placed so much trust in him, that "everything will be consummated to realize your best wishes."[82]

Coincident with the meetings with Zacharie in March 1863, Lincoln was visited by a long-bearded Canadian self-proclaimed prophet with fiery eyes and hair below his shoulders. His name was Henry Wentworth Monk (1827–96), and his object was

nothing less than to end the Civil War, restore the Jews to Palestine, save mankind from doom, and promote world peace. After close study of the Book of Revelations, Monk, in 1852, had renounced property and wealth, ceased to cut his hair or adorn his body, and became a man with a mission. He set off for the Land of Israel, arriving on New Year's Day, 1854, and joined the Christian agricultural settlement established by the Anglican convert John Meshullam in Artas, near Bethlehem. It was there that Monk met the young Pre-Raphaelite painter William Holman Hunt, who painted his portrait and used him as his model for Christ. Monk returned to Canada after eighteen months and published his *A Simple Interpretation of the Revelation* (1857). He thought to settle permanently in Jerusalem until Hunt's patron, the great English art critic John Ruskin, challenged him to prove his prophetic powers by bringing the American Civil War to an end. That challenge explained Monk's sudden appearance at Lincoln's door.[83]



Executive Mansion,

Washington, Nov. 25, 1862.

Major General Banks

My dear Sir:

Dr. Zacharie, whom you know as well as I do, wishes to go with you on your expedition. I think he might be of service to you, first, in his peculiar profession, and secondly, as a means of access to his countrymen, who are quite numerous on in some of the localities you will probably visit. This, however, is not an order, nor a request even, for you to take him; but a permission merely, excepting his case from a general prohibition which I understand to exist.

Yours very truly

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO NATHANIEL BANKS, RECOGNIZES JEWS AS ZACHARIE'S "COUNTRYMEN," NOVEMBER 25, 1862

Lincoln urges General Banks, newly in command of the Department of the Gulf, to make somewhat mysterious use of their mutual friend, Dr. Zacharie. "He might be of service, to you, first, in his peculiar profession," he

suggests, "and secondly, as a means of access to his countrymen, who are quite numerous in some of the localities you will probably visit." Lincoln's use of the term countrymen suggests his understanding, steeped in the Old Testament, that the Jews did not comprise just a religion but also a people and a nation. He would use this term repeatedly when referring to Jews.
John Hay Library, Brown University Library

Standing among the crowd that regularly gathered in hopes of winning an audience with the president, Monk's Christ-like appearance naturally caught Lincoln's attention; he was ushered in. According to the description of what followed, quoted from a contemporary letter by Monk's biographer, Monk presented his peace plan, which entailed each side giving up its central war objective, and Lincoln jocularly dismissed it. He then inquired how Canadians viewed his Emancipation Proclamation. That led to a remarkable exchange:

> MONK: Why not follow the emancipation of the Negro by a still more urgent step—the emancipation of the Jew?
>
> LINCOLN: The Jew—why the Jew? Are they not free already?
>
> MONK: Certainly, Mr. President, the American Jew is free, and so is the English Jew—but not the European. In America we live so far off that we are blind to what goes on in Russia and Prussia and Turkey. There can be no permanent peace in the world until the civilized nations, led, I hope by Great Britain and the United States, atone for what they have done to the Jews—for their two thousand years of persecution—by restoring them to their national home in Palestine, and making Jerusalem the capital city of a reunited Christendom.
>
> LINCOLN: That is a noble dream, Mr. Monk, and one shared by many Americans. I myself have a regard for the Jews. My chiropodist is a Jew, and he has so many times "put me on my feet" that I would have no objection to giving his countrymen "a leg up." But the United States is, alas, at this moment a house divided against itself. We must first bring this dreadful war to a victorious conclusion, which no compromise can do—and then, Mr. Monk, we may begin again to see visions, and dream dreams. Then you will see what leadership America will show to the world![84]

Lincoln's parting comment to Monk, an apt and clever wordplay that subtly poked fun at the dreams of the self-proclaimed prophet, drew upon the ancient words of the Hebrew prophet, Joel: "Your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."[85] Joel's promise of restoration in the aftermath of the punishing blows inflicted by "my great army which I sent among you" may also have provided solace to the beleaguered president. He was already looking forward to leading America in a post–Civil War world.

Even more significant was Lincoln's unequivocal assertion that "I myself have a regard for the Jews," the most direct statement of respect for Jews attributed to him

during his lifetime, and one that comports with his friendships and actions since he first became personally acquainted with Jews back in New Salem.

Many, including Generals Butler, Sherman, McClellan and Grant, held different views. A visiting English lawyer, strategist, and scholar named Edward Yates similarly warned Lincoln in a letter that the Jews were the "most venomously opposed" to his administration, the "perpetual enemies of liberty [and] progress,… animated by the worst feelings toward the communities on which they prey & fatten & for which they never labor or fight," and were "the spies & most malignant aiders of the Rebels & of every corrupt thing." He urged that not "a single Jew shd on any pretense be allowed to pass or be within or near the lines."[86] Lincoln's "regard for the Jews" though led him systematically to ignore all such suggestions. Earlier, as we have seen, he had appointed a "Hebrew" as an assistant quartermaster just two days after General Sherman had warned against smuggling on the part of "Jews instigated by a sense of gain."[87] He had also appointed Jewish chaplains and abrogated an order expelling Jews "as a class," over the objection of cabinet members and generals. As for Zacharie, not only did the president describe him to Monk as "my chiropodist," he also indicated that his feet benefited from Zacharie's gentle ministrations "many times"— far more often than standard chronologies of his day-to-day activities preserve.[88] The clever wordplay ("he has so many times 'put me on my feet' that I would have no objection to giving his countrymen 'a leg up'") is vintage Lincoln and reprises the very word—*countrymen*—that Lincoln had previously used in characterizing Zacharie's fellow Jews. The account indicates that Zacharie was on Lincoln's mind at that time and hints at his belief that through Zacharie he could reach out to other Jews—Zacharie's "countrymen"—as well.

It was likely this belief that brought Zacharie, in September 1863, face-to-face with the most prominent Jew and the highest-ranking member of the Confederate cabinet: its secretary of state, Judah P. Benjamin. Zacharie's patron, General Banks, had long advocated a negotiated settlement to end the Civil War "with honor to the North and without humiliation to the South." He thought that a deal based upon gradual emancipation, with compensation for the loss of slave property, might end the bloodshed and also cast him in the role of peacemaker and statesman, perhaps even propelling him to the presidency.[89] In July 1863, Banks sent his first emissaries into the Confederacy to talk peace. Zacharie was supposed to have been among them and spent two hours with Abraham Lincoln setting forth his plans, but officials in Washington

eventually denied him a pass—partly because they distrusted him and partly because the more radical members of the cabinet opposed negotiations with the Confederacy.[90] Zacharie's friends Martin Gordon Jr. of New Orleans (a relative of Jefferson Davis)[91] and David Pretts did make it to Richmond, and Gordon reported back that many Southerners wanted peace and were sympathetic to just the kind of plan that Banks had proposed.[92] Meanwhile, Lincoln secretly recalled Zacharie to Washington, sat closeted with him for two days, and promised him "every facility to carry out my plans." He also provided him with an introduction to Major General John Gray Foster at Fort Monroe, mentioning the "high degree" of confidence in which Banks held Zacharie. In coded language ("any kindness you may show him will be appreciated by me"), he ordered Foster to help Zacharie pass through the lines to the Confederate capital of Richmond. Zacharie, in evident excitement, shared the news with Banks, whose presidential dreams he artfully fed. "If I am successful," he assured him, "you as well as I are made for life."[93]

I MYSELF HAVE A REGARD FOR THE JEWS

The self-proclaimed "Prophet" Henry Wentworth Monk, here depicted in 1858 by William Holman Hunt, shared a conversation with Lincoln about restoring Jews to their homeland, in which Lincoln proclaimed, "I myself have a regard for the Jews."
National Gallery of Canada

On September 27, 1863, Zacharie met with Judah P. Benjamin—once in the company of several other Confederate leaders, and then, unexpectedly, again at night

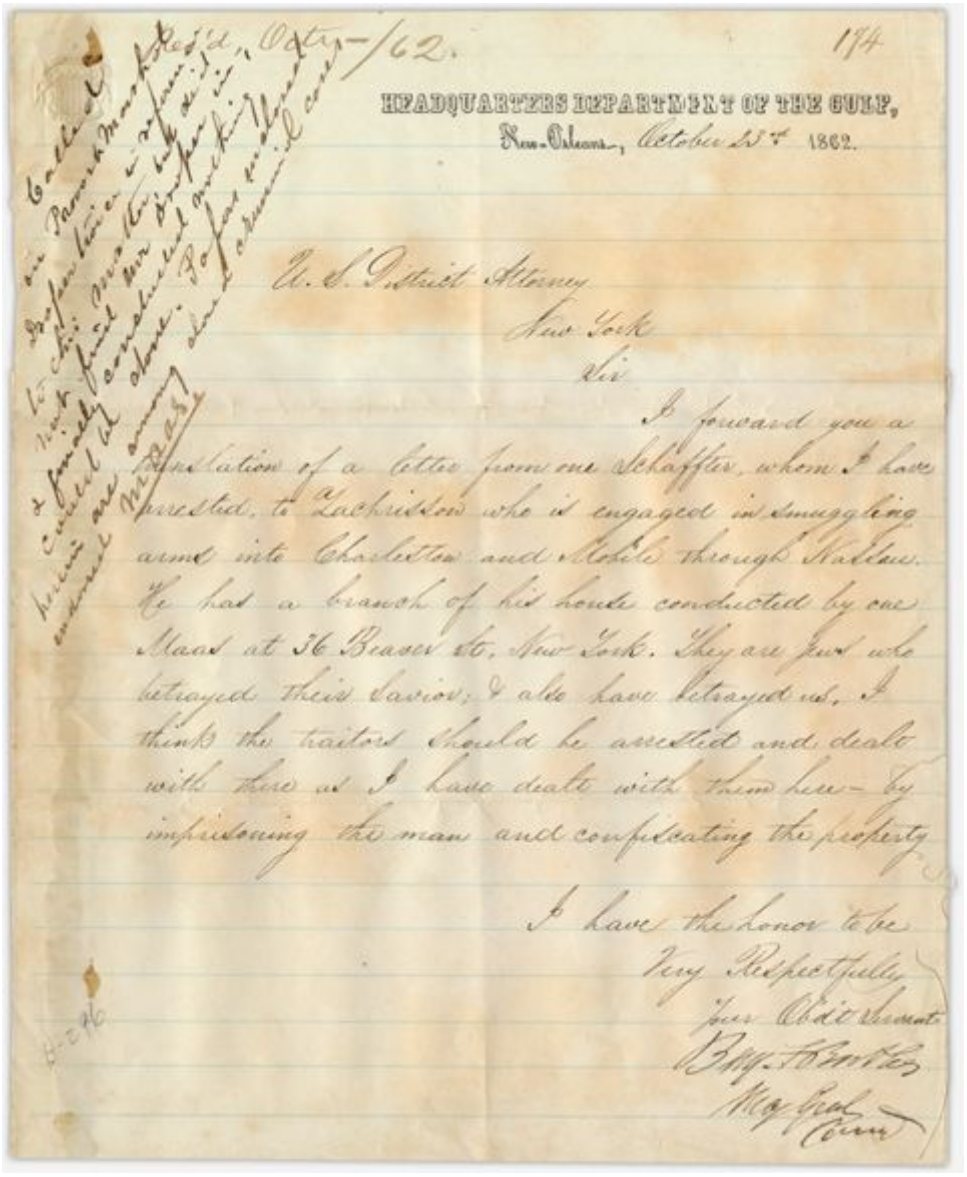
alone. The recent Confederate surrender of Vicksburg, coupled with the bloody defeat at Gettysburg, where 20,000 Confederate soldiers fell in battle, had darkened the mood in Richmond. Benjamin's hopes for European intervention on the Confederacy's behalf were dimming fast. Still, Benjamin insisted to visitors that "self-government" had to be the basis for any peace—"All we are struggling for is to be let alone."[94] Whether, in private conversation, he intimated to Zacharie that further concessions were possible is unknown, but whatever transpired when they met face-to-face, the chiropodist came away from the encounter overcome with excitement. The fawning letter that he sent to Benjamin the very next day shows him eager to ingratiate himself with the Jewish secretary of state. He expressed joy "that the confederate flag was waving over my head," treacherously declared that "I would gladly join the armies of the confederacy if I did not know that I could be of more service to you from where I am," and closed suggestively with the hope that Benjamin would "never regret the interview we had last night."[95] A day later—having been denied the opportunity to visit his father in Savannah—Zacharie was safely back in the Union. "Just returned," he telegraphed Lincoln. "Will be with you tomorrow afternoon."[96]

Zacharie spent two hours debriefing the president. During that time, he later reported to Banks, Lincoln "lock[ed] his doors … preventing any person from having access to him" and "seemed to be delighted with my revelations." According to the *New York Herald,* those revelations included a far-fetched plan, a variant of one suggested by the respected political leader Francis Preston Blair Sr., to restore the Confederate states to the Union while assisting the Confederate government and armies to capture Mexico for the Confederacy, with Jefferson Davis to be its president. Lincoln's cabinet, which had not received prior notice of Zacharie's mission, was unenthusiastic—especially in the wake of the battlefield successes that made Union victory so much more likely. "Send for Genl. Banks. He is your friend and you can trust him with your confidence in carrying out any negotiation, and let me go down and tell Benjamin," Zacharie implored.[97] Lincoln found the conversation exhausting. "I have been so worn down today," he wrote, begging the forgiveness of chemist and patent officer Benjamin Sherwood Hedrick, for not meeting with him. Though Lincoln promised to reflect on Zacharie's "happy thought," he clearly had no intention of handing the role of peacemaker over to a potential rival. Instead, he and Seward ordered Zacharie to "lay quiet until the time arrives for them to act."[98] Zacharie, meanwhile, became more and

more impatient. Lincoln, he complained, "reminds me of the man that won the Elephant at a Raffle. He does not know what to do with it."[99] A week later, he concluded that the president "lacks stability. He has it in his powers to stop all fighting in 24 hours if he would follow out my program."[100] By the end of December 1863, having still heard nothing from Lincoln and Seward, Zacharie expressed "no confidence in them—they are affraid [*sic*] if they make Peace—that their party will not like it."[101] By then, Zacharie understood that his hopes of seeing Benjamin again and negotiating, along with General Banks, an end to the Civil War were effectively dead. Before long, ads promising that "corns, bunions, inverted nails, enlarged joints, and diseases of the foot cured without pain or inconvenience to the patient by Dr. Zacharie" returned to New York's newspapers.[102]

What briefly drew Zacharie back to Washington early in 1864 was the age-old Jewish commandment to redeem the captive. A request came to him to help free Goodman L. Mordecai, a young Jewish Confederate from Charleston who had been imprisoned in Washington, D.C. The twenty-four-year-old Mordecai was the son of one of South Carolina's wealthiest Jewish merchants, Benjamin Mordecai, remembered for his "magnificent" donation of $10,000 (the equivalent in today's money of about $250,000) to advance the interests of his "noble commonwealth" when it seceded from the Union. The younger Mordecai had also loyally served the Confederate army and then worked as a commercial agent for South Carolina blockade runners. While attempting to cross the Potomac Bridge into Washington, he was captured and incarcerated in the Old Capitol prison. Friends of Mordecai's, including the prominent New York Jewish businessman and communal leader Samuel A. Lewis (whose niece, Ada, was Mordecai's fiancée), interceded with Lincoln, and Zacharie personally visited with the president to procure the young man's release. On February 4, when Mordecai and Zacharie came to Lincoln's office to say thank you, the garrulous chiropodist let drop that Mordecai "had fought against the government and that [his] father at that time was prominent in the Confederacy." According to the account Mordecai published many years later, Lincoln grasped his hand and responded, "I am happy to know I am able to serve an enemy!"[103]

"They are Jews who betrayed their Savior; & also have betrayed us."



HEADQUARTERS DEPARTMENT OF THE GULF,
New-Orleans, October 23d 1862.

U. S. District Attorney
New York
Sir

I forward you a translation of a letter from one Schaffter, whom I have arrested, to Zachrisson who is engaged in smuggling arms into Charleston and Mobile through Matlam. He has a branch of his house conducted by one Maas at 56 Beaver St. New York. They are Jews who betrayed their Savior, & also have betrayed us. I think the traitors should be arrested and dealt with here as I have dealt with them here - by imprisoning the man and confiscating the property

I have the honor to be
Very Respectfully
Your Obdt Servant
Benj. F. Butler
Maj Genl Comd

BENJAMIN F. BUTLER'S ANTI-SEMITISM

General Benjamin F. Butler, military governor of New Orleans, was notorious for, among other things, his anti-Semitism. Writing of arrested smugglers on October 23, 1862, he says, "They are Jews who betrayed their Savior; & also have betrayed us."

Shapell Manuscript Collection

JUDAH P. BENJAMIN, FEATURED ON THE CONFEDERATE $2 BILL

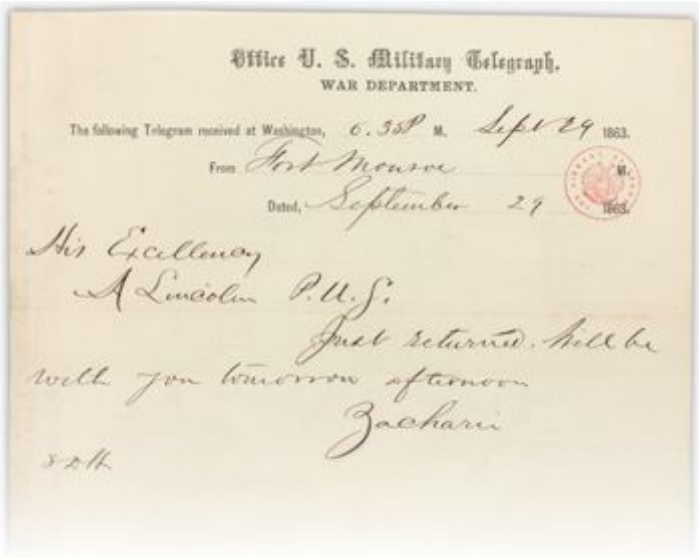
Judah Philip Benjamin's appearance as the first Jew on American currency was not his only remarkable achievement. The second Jewish United States senator, he was the first to serve as a professing Jew and the first Jew to be considered for nomination to the United States Supreme Court (he declined two offers). When his home state of Louisiana seceded, he became the first Jewish cabinet member, serving the Confederacy as attorney general, secretary of war, and, until its collapse, secretary of state. After the war Benjamin fled to England, where he became a successful barrister.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Six weeks later, after another plea from Zacharie, Lincoln also freed the chiropodist's Savannah nephew Jacob [James] G. Cohen, who was imprisoned in Philadelphia—either justly, for running the blockade, or, as he insisted, unjustly, while trying to escape from the Confederacy. Cohen, in a letter, had pleaded with his "dear uncle" to "properly represent my case to the President at Washington & get my release," and on March 16, writing on that same letter, Lincoln responded with typical magnanimity: "Let this man take the [loyalty] oath of Dec. 8 and be discharged."[104]

Lincoln's magnanimity on these two occasions restored Zacharie's devotion to the president and probably explains the two gifts that he sent to the Executive Mansion in 1864: a barrel of hominy in February ("eat it with much enjoyment"), and a box of fine pineapples in May.[105] His success in freeing Jewish captives likewise explains the highly unusual testimonial reception accorded him on May 7, 1864, at his private residence in New York. There he was thanked for exerting "his influence" and employing his "power through the clemency of the President, to aid many … and enable them to return to the North and to freedom," as well as "for his efforts" during the war "to soften the hardships and alleviate the distresses of our [Southern] co-religionists." The lavish present tendered him on that occasion by those "in whose behalf [his] noble and fraternal efforts were so successfully used," makes clear how many felt indebted to him for using his position and influence with the president to render important "services towards the Israelites of America."[106]

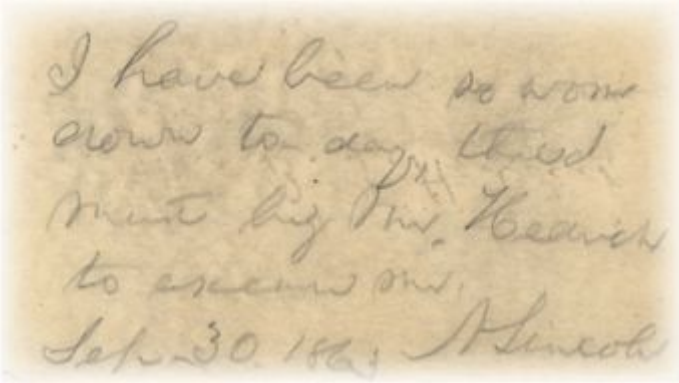
While Issachar Zacharie was tending feet, collecting intelligence, assisting Jews caught up in the fighting, and working to end the war, thousands of other Jews, at least 20 percent of eligible Jewish males, were serving as battlefield soldiers. Lincoln was well aware of their contributions. When he revoked Ulysses S. Grant's order expelling the Jews, he explicitly explained, through General Halleck, that he did so because it "proscribed an entire religious class some of whom are fighting in our ranks."[107] He also knew about the heavily immigrant 82nd Regiment in his home state of Illinois,

commanded by one of his German-American political friends, Friedrich Hecker. It included what became known as the "Jewish Company" in the Civil War, Company C. Chicago's Jews raised $11,000 (equivalent to about $250,000 today) in recruiting bonuses for those who signed up to fight in the company's ranks, and a high proportion of its soldiers, as well as its company commander, Colonel Edward S. Salomon, were Jews.[108]


Office U. S. Military Telegraph.
WAR DEPARTMENT.
The following Telegram received at Washington, 6.35P M. Sept 29 1863.
From Fort Monroe
Dated, September 29 1863.
His Excellency
A Lincoln P.U.S.
Just returned. Will be
with you tomorrow afternoon
Zacharie

SEPTEMBER 29, 1863

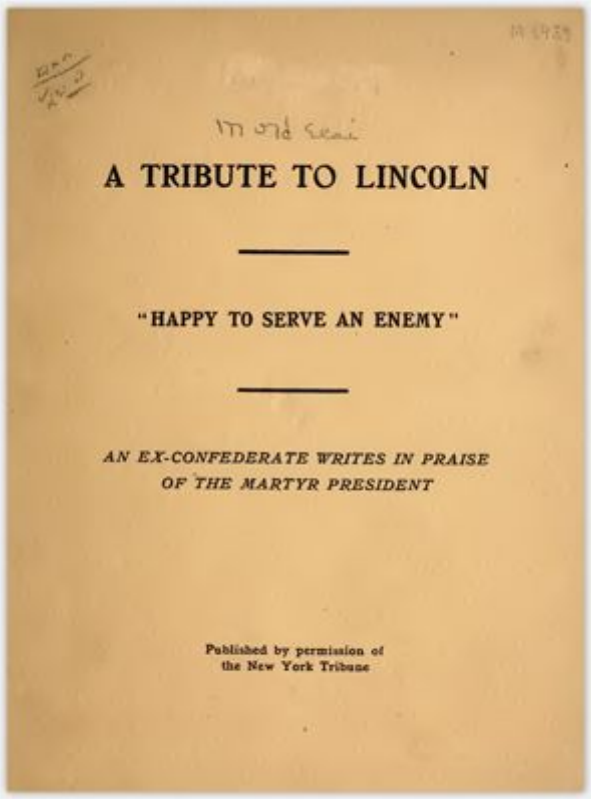
A telegram from Zacharie to Lincoln stating, "Just returned. Will be with you tomorrow afternoon."
Courtesy of the Library of Congress


I have been so worn
down to day, that I
must beg Mr. Hedrick
to excuse me.
Sep 30 1863 A Lincoln

"WORN DOWN," SEPTEMBER 30, 1863

Lincoln spent two hours with Zacharie on September 30, 1863, behind closed doors, discussing the latter's secret peace mission, and afterward, Lincoln was too "worn down," he writes here, to even meet with another caller—and so begs to be excused. That the card is written in pencil, rather than the more labor-intensive process of pen and ink, suggests his exhaustion.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

The 82nd Illinois Regiment made its reputation at the Battle of Gettysburg, Pennsylvania (July 1–3, 1863), when, according to a standard account, "Colonel Salomon with the 82nd, made a charge upon the pits in his front, driving the Confederates back.… During the three days' fighting, Colonel Salomon had two horses shot from under him while leading his regiment." Some 131 of the soldiers under his command were killed, wounded, or captured during the battle.[109]


A TRIBUTE TO LINCOLN

"HAPPY TO SERVE AN ENEMY"

AN EX-CONFEDERATE WRITES IN PRAISE OF THE MARTYR PRESIDENT

Published by permission of the New York Tribune

"HAPPY TO SERVE AN ENEMY"

Confederate Prisoner of War Goodman Mordecai's grateful account of how Zacharie, "an influential friend of the President," procured his release from jail. Lincoln, he recorded, was "happy to serve an enemy."
New York Daily Tribune

One hundred forty miles away, in Philadelphia, Sabato Morais, the religious leader of Mikveh Israel Congregation, mounted the podium to speak on Saturday, July 4, not knowing how the battle in Gettysburg had turned out. "The murky clouds which have long hovered all over the American horizon [are] gathered at length menacingly nearer to our houses," he cried. "Behold, my hearers! The deplorable consequences and weep. The dust raised by the feet of invasion has tarnished our escutcheon. Havoc and devastation rage in our borders." Unusually that year, the anniversary of America's independence coincided with the seventeenth day of the Hebrew month of Tammuz, the

anniversary of the day when the walls of Jerusalem were breached prior to the destruction of the Second Temple. That mournful commemoration and the fear that the same Confederate forces that had penetrated into Northern territory in Gettysburg might soon threaten Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington, D.C., led Morais to a fervent prayer: "Encircle Pennsylvania with Thy Mighty shield, protect the lives of her inhabitants." Still, in spite of all the gloom, he remained mindful of July 4 and what that meant. His sermon memorably recalled independence as "the event which four score and seven years ago brought to this new world light and joy."[110]

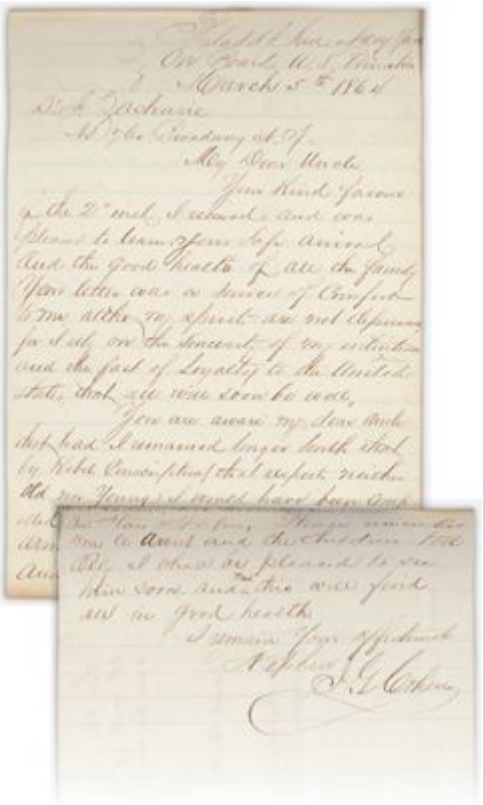
Whether Abraham Lincoln borrowed the phrase "four score and seven years ago" from Morais for the commemorative address that he delivered at Gettysburg on November 19 cannot be known.[111] While both may independently have reworked the famous King James translation of Psalm 90:10 ("The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years"), it is also possible that Lincoln read Morais's sermon, which was published in the *Jewish Messenger*. Other Morais sermons certainly made their way to the president. The prominent Philadelphia publisher Abraham Hart, who was the president of Mikveh Israel, sent him one in April 1862 because he thought that Lincoln would appreciate how it "breathes Loyalty to the Union without exultation, or being Triumphant over the loss of our misguided Brothers in the South."[112] He also sent him a later Morais sermon advocating sympathy and charity for Civil War victims and their families. It was acknowledged on January 9, 1864, by John Hay.[113]

Far more important for Jews than the adaptation of the biblical quote was the fact that Lincoln, in his Gettysburg Address, managed to strike an appropriately religious tone without being in any way parochially Christian. While Edward Everett, in his two-hour oration at Gettysburg, invoked Christianity no fewer than five times,[114] Lincoln, having been enlivened to Jewish sensitivities, may purposely have employed the novel and more inclusive phrase "this nation, under God." In so doing, he paid silent homage to the Jews who had fallen side-by-side with Christians at Gettysburg and reimagined America in language that embraced Jews as equals.

Eight weeks after the Battle of Gettysburg, on Saturday, August 29, 1863, Jews and Christians once again fell side-by-side. This time, though, they were executed as deserters by order of the United States government. The executions took place before

25,000 troops assembled at Beverly Ford on the Rappahannock River in Virginia. The five men shot included two Protestants, two Catholics, and one Jew.[115]

Desertion plagued the Union army during the Civil War: some 200,000 soldiers reputedly deserted just between 1863 and 1865. Ideology motivated some of these deserters. Others deserted to take care of family. Still others deserted because they were mistreated, or not paid, or frightened, or because they suffered from what would today be called combat fatigue. A few, though, sought to enrich themselves by enlisting, pocketing recruitment bounties, and then deserting in order to "enlist" again, usually under a different name. Desertion, whatever its cause, sapped military morale and endangered the war effort. Seeking to combat it, military leaders urged that deserters be tried and publicly executed, as a warning to others.[116]



Let this man take
the oath of Dec. 8.
and be discharged.

A. Lincoln

March 16, 1864.

To Secretary of Navy.

A FAVOR FOR ZACHARIE, MARCH 16, 1864

Zacharie's nephew J. G. Cohen, a rebel accused of blockade-running, would owe much to his uncle's friendship with Lincoln, beginning with this note, written on the back of Cohen's impassioned plea for help from his uncle, forgiving his allegiance to the Confederate army. "Let this man take the oath of Dec 8 and be discharged," a common and required oath of loyalty to the Union.

U.S. National Archives & Records Administration

EDWARD SELIG SALOMON

Colonel Edward Selig Salomon was a German-Jewish immigrant who enlisted in the 24th Illinois as a first lieutenant. A hero of Gettysburg and Atlanta, he won quick promotions for battlefield bravery and rose to command the 82nd Illinois, Hecker's German and Jewish regiment organized in Chicago. Later brevetted a brigadier general, he remained active in veterans' affairs for the rest of his life.

Collection of Robert Marcus

SALOMON'S PISTOLS

Popular with those above and those below, Edward Salomon gravitated after the war to politics, first becoming the clerk of Cook County, Illinois, a role in which he was celebrated and honored by the local citizens with the presentation of these dueling pistols.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

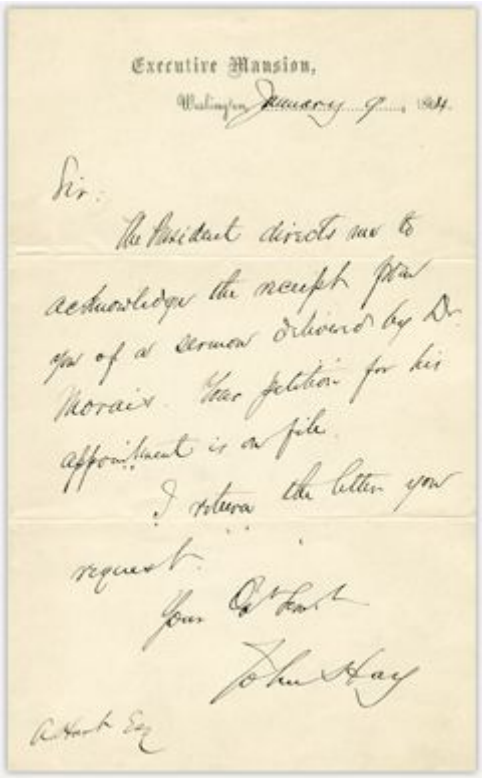
Abraham Lincoln preferred to be merciful when it came to deserters. "When I think," he once explained to Congressman Henry L. Dawes, "of these mere lads, who had never before left their homes, enlisting in the enthusiasm of the moment for a war of which they had no conception and then in the camp or on the battle field a thousand miles from home, longing for its rest and safety, I have so much sympathy for him that I cannot condemn him to die for forgetting the obligations of the soldier in the longing for home life. There is death and woe enough in this war without such a sacrifice."[117] Lincoln therefore spared the lives of many condemned soldiers, especially if they were willing to reenlist and fight.

The Jewish lawyer Simon Wolf recounted the story of one such reprieve in his memoirs. Wolf, accompanied by Republican Thomas Corwin, a former Ohio senator who was a lawyer in Washington at the time, came to the White House at 2:00 A.M. to plead for the life of a condemned Jewish soldier. The soldier had deserted his unit allegedly in order to be with his mother, "who was on her death bed." She had begged to see him so as to "give him a parting blessing." Lincoln, Wolf recalled, listened sympathetically but explained that he was under pressure from Secretary of War Stanton to crack down on military deserters and that it was "impossible to do anything." Wolf nevertheless made a final plea: "Mr. President," he entreated, "what would you have done under similar circumstances? If your dying mother had summoned you to her bedside to receive her last message before her soul would be summoned to its Maker, would you have been a deserter to her who gave you birth rather than a deserter in law but not in fact to the flag to which you had sworn allegiance?" Lincoln, perhaps recalling being summoned to the bedside of his own dying mother when he was just nine years old, was clearly moved. He "ordered a telegram to be sent to stop the execution." The reprieved soldier, according to Wolf, returned to his regiment and died heroically at the Battle of Cold Harbor.[118]

SABATO MORAIS

The Italian-American rabbi Sabato Morais, passionately antislavery and pro-Lincoln, preached on Lincoln's, and the nation's, suffering.

Courtesy of the Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies, University of Pennsylvania



Executive Mansion,

Washington January 9, 1864.

Sir:

The President directs me to acknowledge the receipt from you of a sermon delivered by Dr. Morais. Your petition for his appointment is on file.

I return the letter you request.

Your Obt Servt

John Hay

A. Hart Esq

JOHN HAY TO ABRAHAM HART, JANUARY 9, 1864

Lincoln's secretary, John Hay, thanks Abraham Hart, the president of Mikveh Israel synagogue, for sending Lincoln a Thanksgiving sermon by Dr. Sabato Morais. The letter was written six weeks after the Gettysburg Address, in which Lincoln's indelible line of "four score and seven years ago" might have been directly borrowed from Morais's July 4 sermon, given earlier that year.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

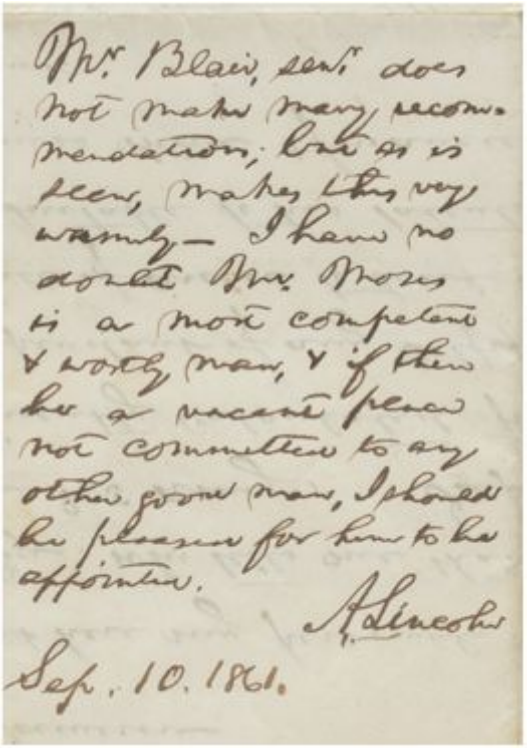
JEWISH SOLDIERS SERVING LINCOLN: A SAMPLING

THE WAR PROVIDED one of the most central and crucial meeting points for Lincoln to interact with Jews and they with him: over 7,000 Jewish men served Lincoln in the Union army. The broader documentation of Lincoln's involvement with Jewish soldiers is the evidence of this meeting point of the thousands of Jews who faithfully served Lincoln and the Union cause. Jewish patriotism was a product of a number of instrumental factors, namely: high rates of Jewish immigration to the U.S. in the late 1850s, the strong desire of Jews to integrate into American society, of Jews identifying with the values Lincoln was embodying in fighting the war, and a sense that Lincoln was welcoming them into his army.

The Shapell Roster of Jews in the Service of the Union and Confederate Armies and Navies During the American Civil War period of 1861–1865 is based on a parallel section in Simon Wolf's, *The American Jew as Soldier, Patriot and Citizen,* and provides remarkable evidence of Jewish patriotism—on both the Union and Confederate sides. With military records now consolidated and placed under the control of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, the Shapell Manuscript Foundation was able to expand and correct the Wolf study by about 1,500 Jewish names, while also eliminating numerous duplicate entries.

BREVET LIEUTENANT ISAAC MOSES OF NEW YORK

Collection of Robert Marcus


Mr. Blair, sen. does not make many recommendations, but as is seen, makes this very warmly— I have no doubt Mr. Moses is a most competent & worthy man, & if there be a vacant place not committed to any other good man, I should be pleased for him to be appointed.

A. Lincoln

Sep. 10. 1861.

LINCOLN RECOMMENDS ISAAC MOSES: "I HAVE NO DOUBT MR. MOSES IS A MOST COMPETENT & WORTHY MAN," SEPTEMBER 10, 1861

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

BADGE OF BREVET CAPTAIN AARON LAZARUS OF PENNSYLVANIA

Shapell Manuscript Collection

SERGEANT LEOPOLD KARPELES OF PENNSYLVANIA, WINNER OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR

Collection of Robert Marcus

BREVET BRIGADIER GENERAL FREDERICK KNEFLER OF INDIANA, CONSIDERED THE HIGHEST RANKING JEW IN LINCOLN'S ARMY

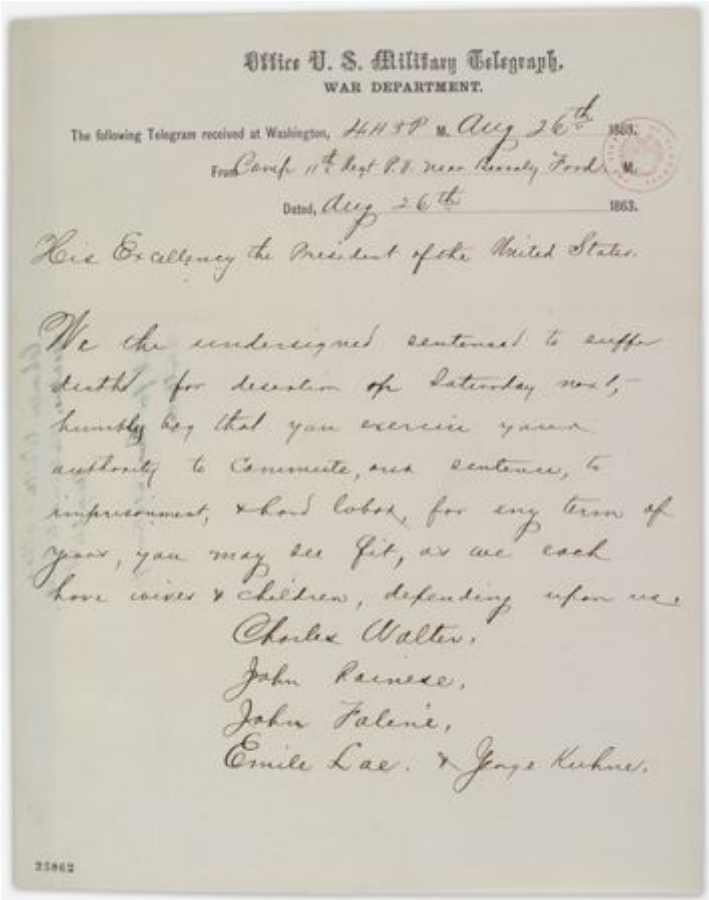
Courtesy of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio

COLONEL MARCUS M. SPIEGEL OF OHIO WAS MORTALLY WOUNDED DURING THE RED RIVER CAMPAIGN

Collection of Jean Powers Soman

LEOPOLD NEWMAN OF NEW YORK, WAS WOUNDED AT THE BATTLE OF CHANCELLORSVILLE, AND REPORTEDLY RECEIVED THE COMMISSION OF BRIGADIER GENERAL WHILE ON HIS DEATHBED–FROM LINCOLN HIMSELF

Collection of Robert Marcus



Office U. S. Military Telegraph.
WAR DEPARTMENT.

The following Telegram received at Washington, 4H 8P M. Aug 26th 1863.
From Camp 11th Regt P.V. near Beverly Ford Va.
Dated, Aug 26th 1863.

His Excellency the President of the United States.

We the undersigned sentenced to suffer death, for desertion on Saturday next, humbly beg that you exercise your authority to Commute our sentence, to imprisonment & hard labor for any term of years, you may see fit, as we each have wives & children, depending upon us.

Charles Walter,
John Rainese,
John Faline,
Emile Lae. & Jaye Kuhne.

25862

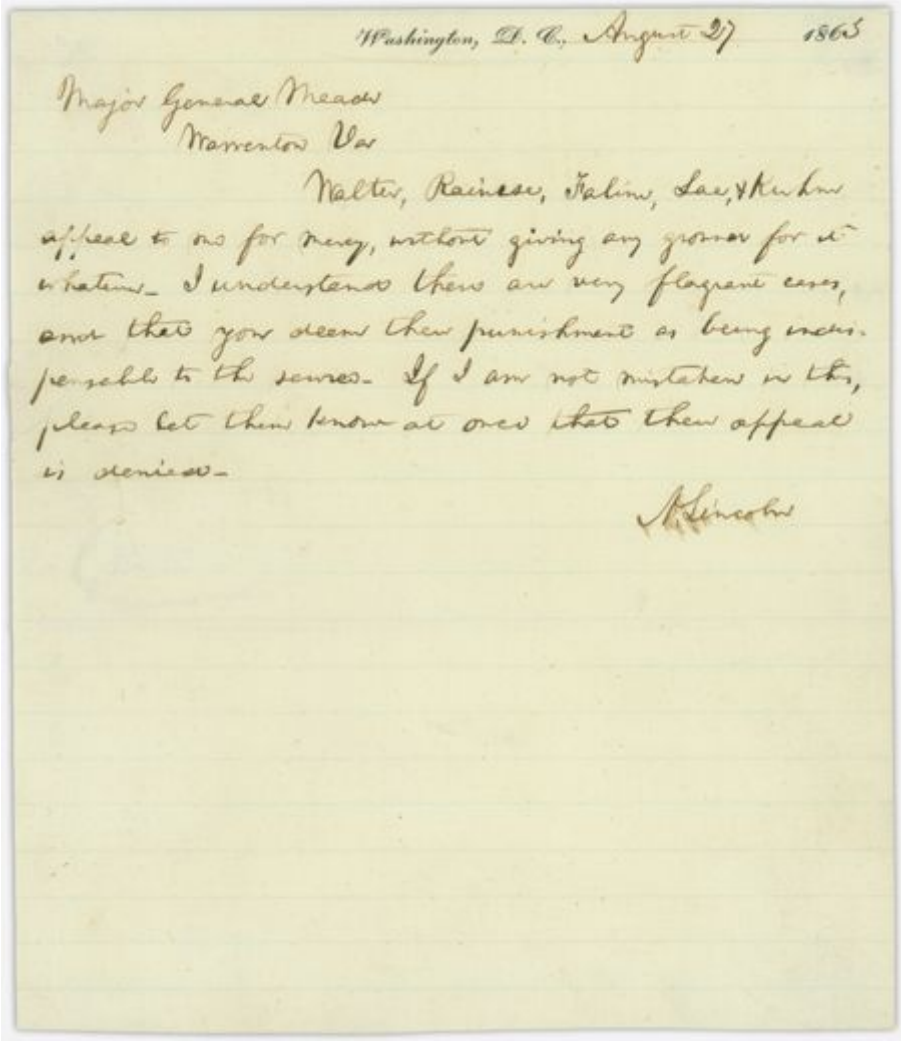
WALTER, RAINESE, FALINE, LAE, AND KUHNE TO LINCOLN: "HUMBLY BEG," AUGUST 26, 1863

The five condemned men appeal to Lincoln for clemency in a telegram dated August 26, 1863.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Stories like that of Wolf circulated widely during Lincoln's presidency. In addition to all of his other duties, Lincoln became the "pardoner-in-chief," extending clemency to hundreds of prisoners convicted by civil courts and hundreds more convicted by military ones. Where judges and generals called for justice, he often responded with mercy.[119]

But the case of the five men sentenced to die at Beverly Ford proved different. They were charged with being "bounty jumpers," for they had enlisted and been paid to serve as substitutes for conscripted men, in exchange for payments of hundreds of dollars, and then deserted. Unlike most deserters, in this case, prosecutors claimed, it was greed—not fear—that drove them to run away. The five had signed up with the 118th Pennsylvania and were caught and arrested on August 13, 1863. Seven days later, they were court-martialed and sentenced to die by firing squad. On August 25, the men pleaded with General Meade to defer their sentence, since there were neither priests

nor rabbis available to help them "in preparing to meet our God." They sought mercy on behalf of their wives and children and asked that their sentences be commuted "to hard labor instead of death, as we think we have been wrongfully sentenced; as we, being foreigners, were led astray by other soldiers, who promised us there would be no harm done."[120] Meade was unmoved. He was determined, he wrote Lincoln, to execute the men to "deter others from imitating their bad conduct."[121]



Washington, D. C., August 27 1863

Major General Meade
Warrenton Va

Walter, Rainese, Falin, Lae, & Kuhn appeal to me for mercy, without giving any ground for it whatever. I understand these are very flagrant cases, and that you deem their punishment as being indispensable to the service. If I am not mistaken in this, please let them know at once that their appeal is denied.

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO GEORGE MEADE: "THEIR APPEAL IS DENIED," AUGUST 27, 1863

At 9:00 A.M., Lincoln responds to the appeal of the soldiers condemned to death by allowing General George Meade, in the face of these "flagrant cases," to proceed as he deems fit.

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

Rec'd 10 20 AM
In Cipher

United States Military Telegraph.
War Department.

Head Qrs A of P
Aug 27th 9 30 AM 1863

His Excellency
A. Lincoln
Prest. U.S.

Walter, Rionese, Faline, Lae and Kuhn were to have been executed yesterday. Their execution was postponed by my order till Saturday the 29th that time might be given to procure the services of a Roman Catholic Priest to assist them in preparing for death. They are substitute conscripts who enlisted for the purpose of deserting after receiving the bounty, and being the first of this class whose cases came

25872

GEORGE MEADE TO LINCOLN, AUGUST 27, 1863

General Meade confirmed Lincoln's telegram of a half hour earlier, and added that he had postponed the execution in order to procure the services of a Roman Catholic priest; curiously, Meade made no mention to Lincoln of the need for a rabbi.

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

BENJAMIN SZOLD

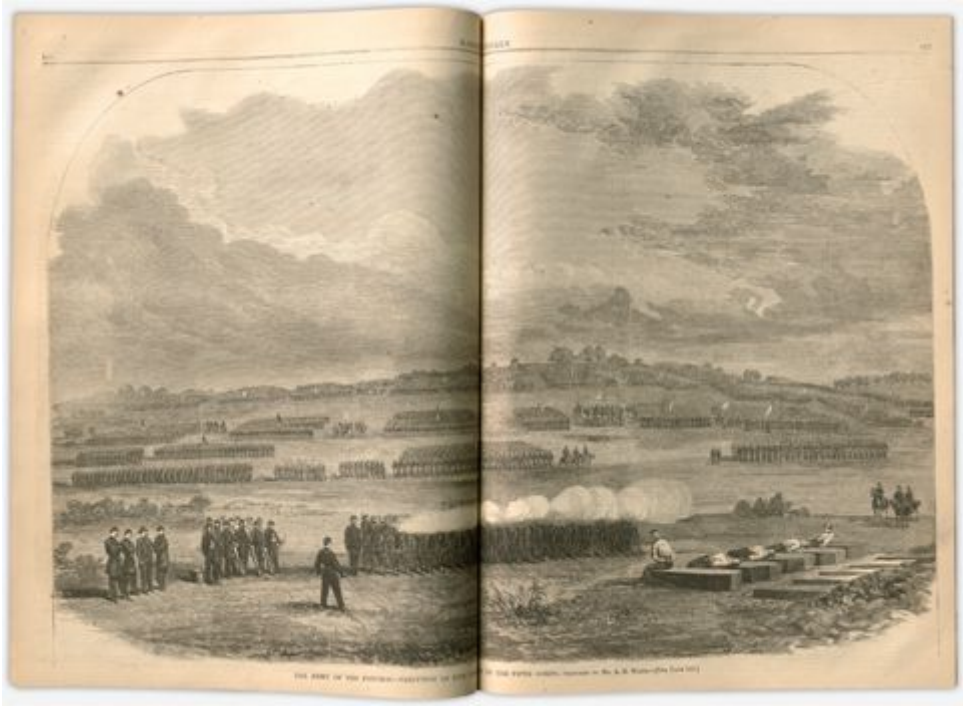
The Hungarian-born rabbi Benjamin Szold of Baltimore lobbied Lincoln to commute the death sentence of a Jewish bounty jumper. Still leaving the door open, the final decision, the president insisted, had in this case to be made by General Meade—and he wished him success on his mission. It is likely that only with Rabbi Szold's visit did Lincoln come to know that one of the deserters was Jewish.
Jewish Museum of Maryland

The following day, August 26, the condemned men sent a telegram to Lincoln, likewise requesting commutation of their sentences to "imprisonment & hard labor, for any term of years."[122] Unaccountably, they failed to repeat to the president the reason why they felt, as foreigners, that they had been wrongfully sentenced, likely sealing their fate. Since they appealed for mercy "without giving any ground for it whatever," Lincoln turned them down at 9:00 a.m. the next day: "I understand these are very flagrant cases," he informed Meade in a telegram, "and that you deem their punishment as being indispensable to the service. If I am not mistaken in this, please let them know at once that their appeal is denied."[123]

Meade responded at once: The "execution was postponed by my order till Saturday the 29th that time might be given to procure the services of a Roman Catholic Priest to assist them in preparing for death. They are substitute conscripts who enlisted for the purpose of deserting after receiving the bounty, and being the first of this class whose cases came before me, I believed that humanity the safety of this Army, and the most vital interests of the Country, required their prompt execution as an example.… In view of these circumstances I shall therefore inform them their appeal to you is denied."[124]

Father Constantine L. Egan, a Catholic chaplain, came to accompany the doomed Catholic men. Even though Meade's telegram to Lincoln made no mention of a rabbi, Baltimore's Rabbi Benjamin Szold was asked to accompany the condemned Jew, a twenty-two-year-old private named George Kuhne. Hoping to arrange clemency, Szold "hurried to the White House, hoping to have a personal interview with the President." Lincoln was closeted with his cabinet at the time, so the quick-thinking rabbi, perhaps believing that Kuhne deserted out of fear, marked in his Bible the verse in Deuteronomy that reads, "What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? Let him go and return unto his house lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart (20:8)." It was delivered to the president with a short note. Before long, Lincoln emerged laughing heartily. "If I were to follow the instructions laid down here," he smiled, "I would not have a man in the field in a week's time." Lincoln sent Szold to talk to the general himself, who listened patiently but turned down the plea for clemency. Szold, disregarding Sabbath

restrictions, then traveled to the condemned man, and the two recited Psalms and prayers. As the time neared, Szold "kissed the accused, who convulsively clung to him."[125]



HARPER'S WEEKLY

General Meade, who had sent out a press release ahead of the executions, was looking for wide coverage of the case, and he achieved it: all of the major Northern newspapers were on the scene. The image shows one of the men, likely Kuhne, having been the first to march out, still sitting up following the shots. Despite the executions, the rate of desertion only continued to rise, and the effort in deterrence was a failure.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

A solemn procession, accompanied by the military band playing the death march, paraded the condemned prisoners, "their coffins carried in front of them and their hands tied behind them," before the assembled 25,000 troops ordered to watch the grisly scene.

The Jewish prisoner, along with Rabbi Szold, occupied the right-most position and marched out first, for Judaism was recognized as being "the most ancient of religious creeds." Soldiers at the scene, as well as military and press accounts, highlighted the unusual presence of multiple religious leaders ("a Catholic priest, a Jewish Rabbi and a Methodist preacher") at the execution, evidence of how novel it was, at that time, to witness "the minister, the priest and the rabbi engaged in earnest, fervent prayer."[126] Each prisoner was then seated at the edge of his coffin with eyes bandaged. While the

troops watched, fifty muskets simultaneously fired. The two Protestants, the two Catholics, and the Jew were shot to death. “It made me feel worse,” one soldier wrote two weeks later, “to see those five men shot that day than to see a thousand men shot down in battle.”[127] The eerie scene was concluded with the band playing “The Girl I Left Behind Me,” an enlivening military marching tune. The soldiers were then required to march “by the bodies to see that the work of the executioner had been effectually done.”[128]

EDWIN FORBES DEPICTS THE LANDSCAPE OF THE EXECUTION

Forbes’s drawing of the execution of five deserters from the 118th PA Volunteers in Beverly Ford, Virginia, shows the grim scene witnessed by 25,000 soldiers.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Whether justice was actually “effectively done” when the five unfortunate bounty jumpers were summarily tried and shot is doubtful.[129] Judging from the many subsequently published lists of “substitutes enlisted at headquarters … who have deserted,” the executions, for all of the publicity that they garnered, had far less of a deterrent effect than General Meade had hoped. What Meade did teach his troops at Beverly Ford was an enduring lesson in religious pluralism. Deserters, he showed, could be Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish, and however harshly they themselves might be punished, their faith and their clergy would still be accorded the greatest of respect.

"The troops were massed on the side of a hill about one mile from Beverly Ford, the graves of the condemned men were dug under a tree on the rise of ground opposite a small stream running between the troops and the place of execution…"

Camp near Beverly Ford Va
September 3rd/63
Dear Mother
Yours of the 30th August I rec'd yesterday
I am sorry to learn that you are sick and little
James also. the sudden changes from extreme heat
to such cool weather as we have had lately will cause
a great deal of sickness throughout the country.
you say there is a bill for taxes on [illegible] income
you must not pay that. officers in the army pay
taxes on their [illegible] every time they are paid off
it is deducted from their pay on the [illegible].
on the afternoon of the 29th August our whole corps
were ordered out to witness the execution of
five deserters from the 118th PV they were substitutes
for drafted men, the day was beautiful and
the appearance and manoeuvres of the troops grand,
the troops were massed on the side of a hill about
one mile from Beverly Ford, the graves of the con-
demned men were dug under a tree on the rise
of ground opposite, a small stream running between
the troops and the place of execution, we got into posi-
tion directly opposite at 2½ o'clock. at 3 o'clock

…ght out and marched through the
… coffins carried in front of them
… behind them, and a brass band
…arch, they were dressed in white
… caps, they were accompanied
…st, a Jewish Rabbi and a Methodist
… they arrived at the place of execution
… their coffins in front of their
…ances with the clergy and bid their
…ne of them prayed or spoke loud
…ut I could not understand him
…ne of the others [illegible] white
… seemed deeply affected.
…s 4 o'clock their eyes were bandaged
… advanced to within 6 paces of the
… command Ready, aim fire was
… o'clock, their deaths were instan-
taneous. I hope their fate may be a warning
to all others, a man that would desert his country
at a time like this and particularly a substitute
deserves to be shot.
I wrote Josiah a long letter some time ago let me
know in your next letter he rec'd it
I must now close, your affectionate Son
James H Clossen

JAMES CLOSSEN TO HIS MOTHER: "ACCOMPANIED BY A CATHOLIC PRIEST, A JEWISH RABBI AND A METHODIST PREACHER," SEPTEMBER 3, 1863

Clossen, a soldier who witnessed the execution, described the scene with remarkable detail, which is echoed in the image by Edwin Forbes. He also described the interfaith service: "The men were brought out and marched through the whole corps, their coffins carried in front of them and their hands tied behind them, and a brass band playing the dead march, they were dressed in white shirts blue pants and caps, they were accompanied by a Catholic priest, a Jewish Rabbi and a Methodist preacher."

Shapell Manuscript Collection

LINCOLN AT GETTYSBURG, NOVEMBER 19, 1863

Photographer David Bachrach, a member of Baltimore's tightly knit German-Jewish community, was the only photographer to successfully set up the frame with the purpose of capturing Lincoln sitting on the dais just prior to or immediately after giving his famous remarks at the Gettysburg battlefield, November 19, 1863.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

CHAPTER SIX

ABOUT JEWS

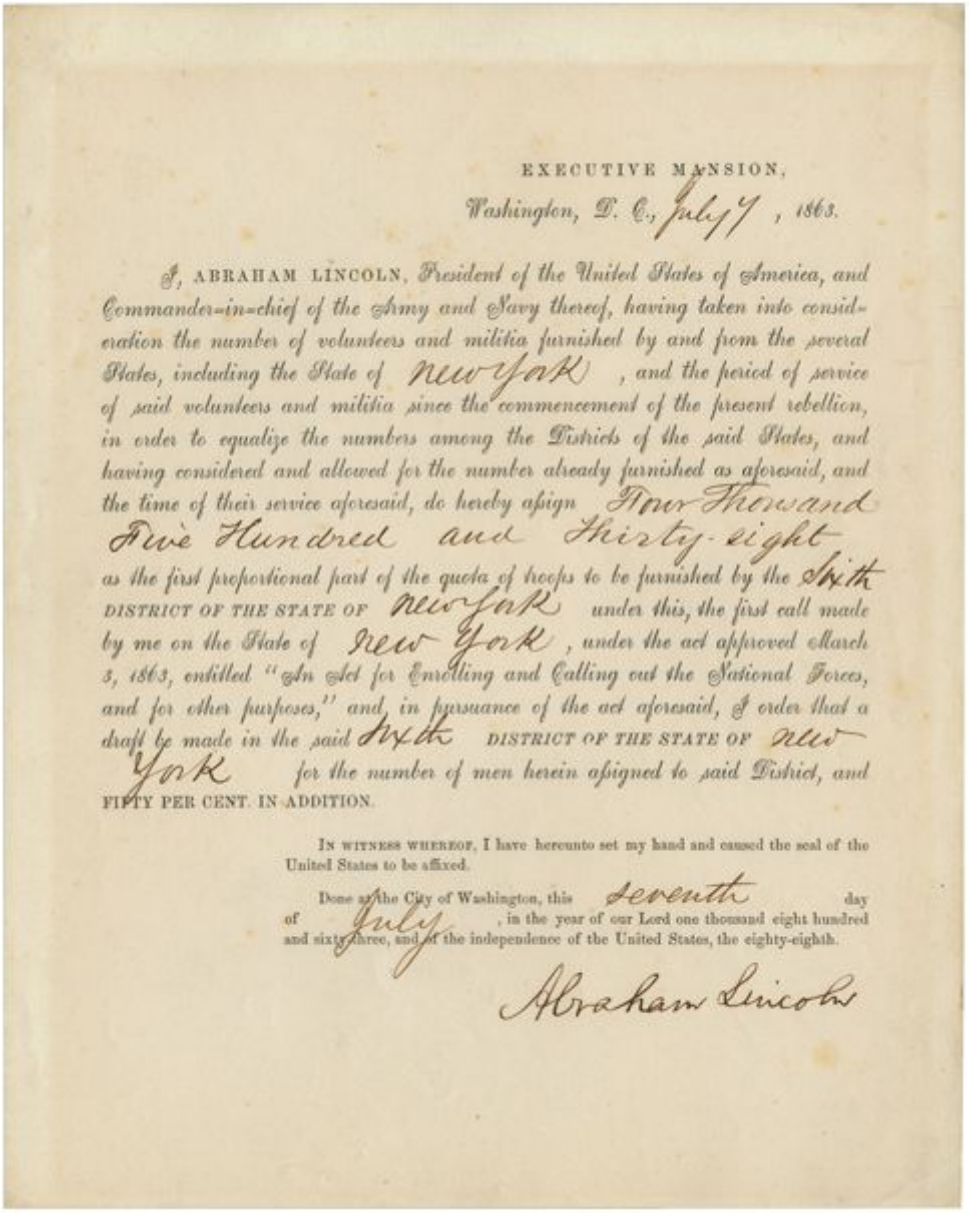
1863–1865

Abraham Lincoln provided the model for the public display of religious pluralism that General George Meade staged at Beverly Ford. Having stated his own "regard for the Jews," and having promised that no citizen would "be wronged on account of his place of birth or religious confession,"[1] he continued to interact with a wide variety of Jews during the final eighteen months of his presidential term—evidence of their widening role in national life. At a time when it was commonplace in America to identify Jews as such when describing them, and Jews in many parts of the country experienced prejudice,[2] Lincoln turned a blind eye to stereotypes. So it was in November 1863, when Lincoln submitted to the secretary of war and general-in-chief of the army a recommendation that William Mayer, a Jewish immigrant from Austria, be elevated to the rank of brigadier general. Mayer was reputedly the "most efficient officer" engaged in quelling the notorious July 1863 antidraft riots in New York City. Coming just ten days after the battle of Gettysburg, the riots injured 2,000 people and killed at least 120. Considered one of the worst civil insurrections in American history, the riots began as an expression of discontent against those able to afford to pay others to substitute for them in the military and rapidly escalated into horrific attacks against the city's black residents. Many white Northerners were willing to fight to preserve the Union, but being compelled to fight—and die—in order to end slavery drove some to violence.

Mayer, in a bid to restore order, reportedly went without sleep or rest while he directed troops and was "constantly on duty both night and day." He courageously faced down mobs and was credited with leading children from the Colored Orphan Asylum onto a police boat, thereby saving their lives when the orphanage was torched. Lincoln, in the months that followed, wrote two separate notes recommending Mayer for

promotion and another urging that he be permitted to raise troops and reenter the service after he was mustered out.

He made no mention of Mayer's religion in any of those letters.[3] Lincoln likewise refused to take religion into account when Jews were prosecuted by military authorities. On one notorious occasion, in 1864, a Jewish clothier in Washington, D.C., named Moses Waldauer was tried for "[s]elling citizens clothing to soldiers to enable them to desert." In trial, it transpired that Waldauer and his daughter had been tricked by the soldiers. Two of them falsely stated that they were awaiting discharge and needed the clothes, and a third fraudulently claimed to be a sergeant and vouched for the men. Waldauer eloquently defended himself before the court. He pointed to the "extraordinary precautions" he took to observe the law, listed a myriad of factual errors in the allegations made against him, and showed that his motive was not to assist desertion but rather to help soldiers who he thought required civilian clothes. Was he, he wondered, supposed to presume "every non-commissioned officer and soldier, however honorable his cause and profession, to be a liar and a scoundrel until he has proved himself otherwise?" Nevertheless, he was found guilty on September 15, 1864, and sentenced to six months in prison plus a fine of fifty dollars. Friends apparently appealed on his behalf, and Lincoln asked the judge advocate general for a report on the case. "This man is a Jew," Joseph Holt's reply began, as if intending to sway Lincoln against the defendant. However, even before Holt's reply was received, Waldauer had been released "by direction of the President."[4]



EXECUTIVE MANSION,

Washington, D. C., July 7, 1863.

I, ABRAHAM LINCOLN, President of the United States of America, and Commander-in-chief of the Army and Savy thereof, having taken into consideration the number of volunteers and militia furnished by and from the several States, including the State of New York, and the period of service of said volunteers and militia since the commencement of the present rebellion, in order to equalize the numbers among the Districts of the said States, and having considered and allowed for the number already furnished as aforesaid, and the time of their service aforesaid, do hereby asign Four Thousand Five Hundred and Thirty-eight as the first proportional part of the quota of troops to be furnished by the Sixth DISTRICT OF THE STATE OF New York under this, the first call made by me on the State of New York, under the act approved March 3, 1863, entitled "An Act for Enrolling and Calling out the National Forces, and for other purposes," and, in pursuance of the act aforesaid, I order that a draft be made in the said Sixth DISTRICT OF THE STATE OF New York for the number of men herein asigned to said District, and FIFTY PER CENT. IN ADDITION.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this Seventh day of July, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-three, and of the independence of the United States, the eighty-eighth.

Abraham Lincoln

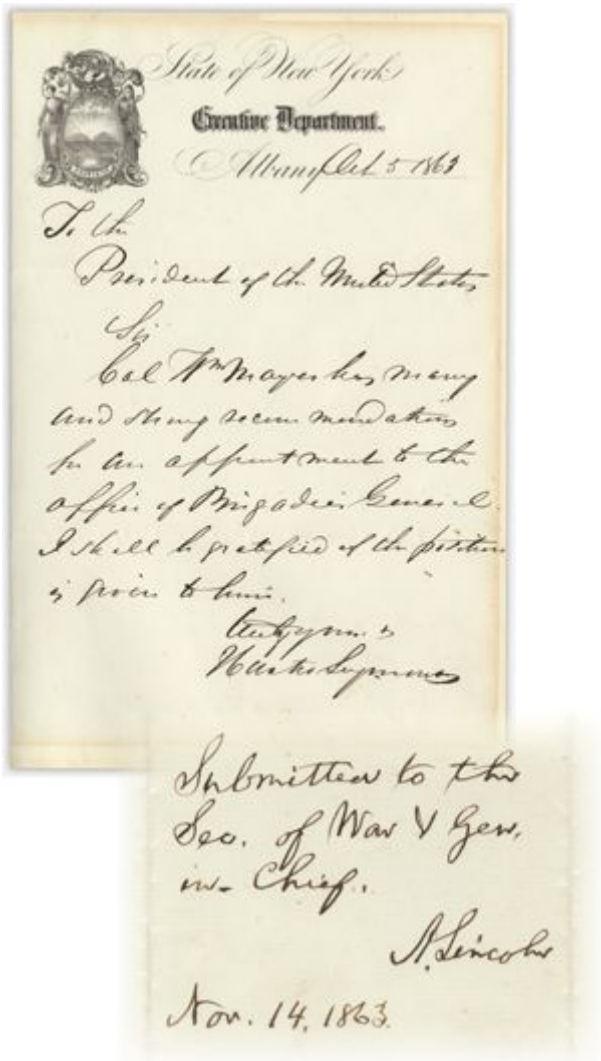
JULY 7, 1863

Lincoln's Order that sparked the New York City draft riots: it would, within a week, cause one of the largest civil insurrections in American history. The riots lasted three days, and calm was restored in large part by the intervention of troops bravely led by William Mayer.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

"MAYER'S COMPANY WAS FIRED ON FROM THE HOUSETOPS…"
AUGUST 1, 1863

Colonel William Mayer raised a regiment from New York during the Civil War. For heroic service in putting down the New York City draft riots in 1863, Mayer received praise from Lincoln: on August 28, 1863, Lincoln wrote that "Col. Wm. Mayer, named within, was the most efficient officer in suppressing the late New-York riots," and furthers his request to be made a brigadier general.
Harper's Weekly



State of New York
Executive Department.
Albany Feb 5 1863

To the
President of the United States

Sir

Col Wm Mayer has many and strong recommendations for an appointment to the office of Brigadier General. I shall be gratified if the position is given to him.

Yours truly
Horatio Seymour

Submitted to the Sec. of War & Gen. in-Chief.

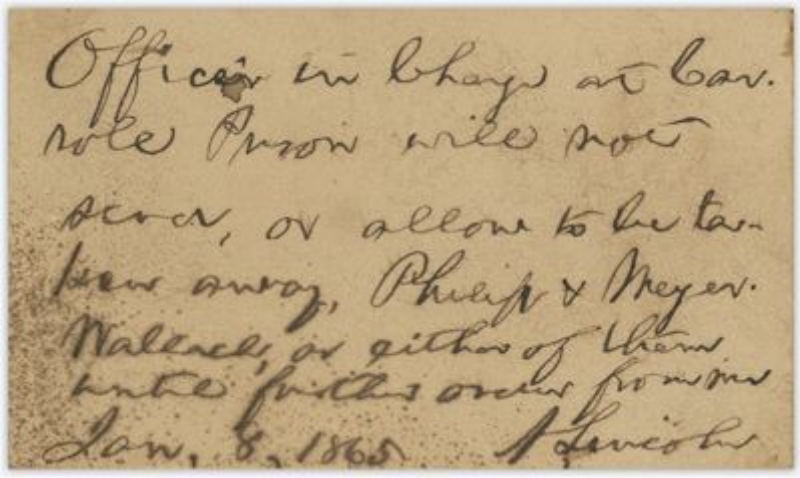
A. Lincoln

Nov. 14, 1863.

HORATIO SEYMOUR TO LINCOLN, OCTOBER 5, 1863, WITH LINCOLN'S ENDORSEMENT ON THE LETTER FIVE WEEKS LATER

Four days before traveling to Gettysburg, Lincoln considers the petition of New York Governor Horatio Seymour for the promotion of Austrian-born Jewish colonel William Mayer to brigadier general—even though Mayer, who immigrated in 1857, would become a U.S. citizen only in June 1864. Nevertheless, he received his commission to brigadier general. Lincoln also wrote a longer letter on Executive Mansion stationery to Stanton again that day about Mayer's desire to raise troops—a request that was granted.

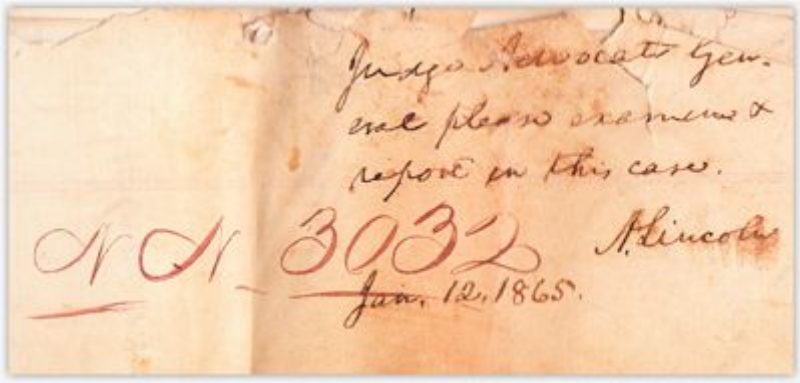
Shapell Manuscript Collection


Officer in charge at Car-
role Prison will not
sever, or allow to be ta-
ken away, Philip & Meyer
Wallach, or either of them
until further order from me
Jan. 8, 1865. A. Lincoln

LINCOLN PERSONALLY INTERVENES IN THE CASE OF TWO JEWISH MERCHANTS, JANUARY 8, 1865

Lincoln interjected himself into the case of Philip and Meyer Wallach, two Jewish merchants charged with selling goods to blockaders. First, on January 8, 1865, Lincoln, acting with concern and unusual caution, instructs that they were not to be sent for or be moved "until further order from me"; four days later, he directs that their case be reviewed, and finally, on February 17, he orders that they be given a "jubilee" and released.

Shapell Manuscript Collection


Judge Advocate Gen-
eral please examine &
report in this case.
N N 3032 A. Lincoln
Jan. 12, 1865.

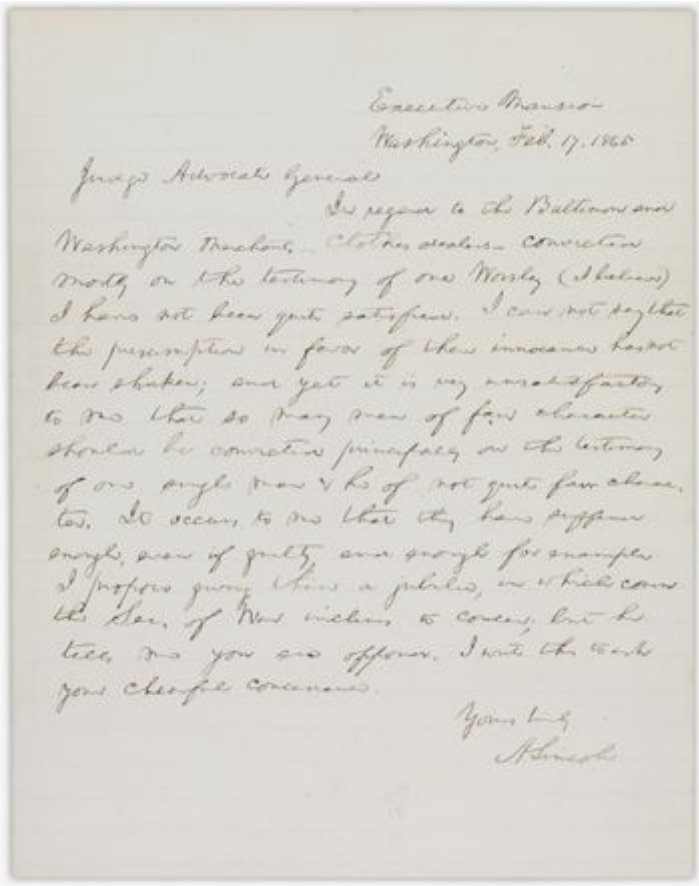
JANUARY 12, 1865

Lincoln endorses the Wallach brothers' court-martial transcript.

U.S. National Archives & Records Administration

In another case involving Jewish clothiers, Lincoln likewise proved sympathetic. On January 8, 1865, he ordered the officer in charge of the Old Capitol (Carroll) Prison not to "send or allow to be taken away Philip and Meyer Wallach, or either of them, until further orders from me." The two Jewish merchants had been convicted for selling contraband goods to the Confederacy and sentenced to a fine plus three years in jail in Albany. The case was one of several, following a sweep of clothing manufacturers in Baltimore and Washington, instigated by a blockade runner and double agent named Pardon Worsley, who claimed that the defendants, many of them Jews, knowingly sold him goods destined for the enemy. Petitions flooded into the Executive Mansion, attesting to the loyalty and patriotism of the men, including a request for clemency from the brothers' relative and mayor of Washington, D.C., Richard Wallach. Lincoln, after ordering an investigation, expressed doubt as to their guilt. "In regard to the Baltimore and Washington Merchants—clothes dealers—convicted mostly on the testimony of one Worsley (I believe) I have not been quite satisfied," he wrote. "It is very unsatisfactory to me that so many men of fair character should be convicted principally on the testimony of one single man & he of not quite fair character." Lincoln therefore proposed "giving them a jubilee," using a biblical term for their release, and that was accomplished on February 18, "by order of the President of the United States."[5]

"I propose giving them a jubilee."



Executive Mansion
Washington, Feb. 17. 1865

Judge Advocate General

In regard to the Baltimore and Washington Merchants — Clothes dealers — convicted mostly on the testimony of one Worsley (I believe) I have not been quite satisfied. I can not say that the presumption in favor of their innocence has not been shaken; and yet it is very unsatisfactory to me that so many men of fair character should be convicted principally on the testimony of one single man & he of not quite fair character. It occurs to me that they have suffered enough, even if guilty, and enough for example. I propose giving them a jubilee, in which comes the Sec. of War inclines to concur, but he tells me you are opposed. I write this to ask your cheerful concurrence.

Yours truly
A Lincoln

LINCOLN TO JOSEPH HOLT, FEBRUARY 17, 1865

Lincoln frees the Wallachs.
Huntington Museum

In still a third case, Lincoln admitted that an injustice had been done to a Jewish justice of the peace named Nehemiah H. Miller. Rather than covering up the mistake, he immediately moved to restore Miller's reputation and position. Born in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1832, Miller had arrived in the United States about 1857, studied law, and won appointment, on January 12, 1864, as justice of the peace for Washington, D.C.[6] Ten months later, he was removed from office for malfeasance in "exercising extra-judicial authority" and falsely stating that two Egyptian nationals had lived in the country for two years, entitling them to a passport, when in fact they had lived in the country for but two months.[7] Subsequent to Miller's removal, a witness provided an affidavit that, according to the same judges who had earlier removed him, went "very far to relieve Miller of any intentional misbehavior in the matter." The judges informed the president that "had that evidence been before us on the trial, and not contradicted, our decision would have been different." In the face of this evidence of injustice, Lincoln reacted unhesitatingly. "Let him be reappointed," he wrote, and he was.[8]

PARDONING JEWS: TWO INTERESTING CASES

"The parties are all Jews … knowing them as I do to be among the best of their faith … I hope you will grant their petition."

Washington 27 May 1862

To the President

I take pleasure in bearing written testimony to the general good standing of the two Bambergers (Brothers) whose petition for relief I herewith present— The parties are all Jews— I do not believe that the Bambergers have been or ever intended to be guilty of any offence— The facts as I learn them stand thus— They found Franks— a man of their own religious faith in prison— charged with treason— anxious to serve him they went upon his bond for his appearance to answer— believing that he would appear and that the offence did not amount to treason—

Any of us would have done as much for a friend knowing them as I do to be among the best of their faith, among us and believing them to be loyal men I hope you will grant their petition

Referring you to the papers & praying for them a favorable response I am

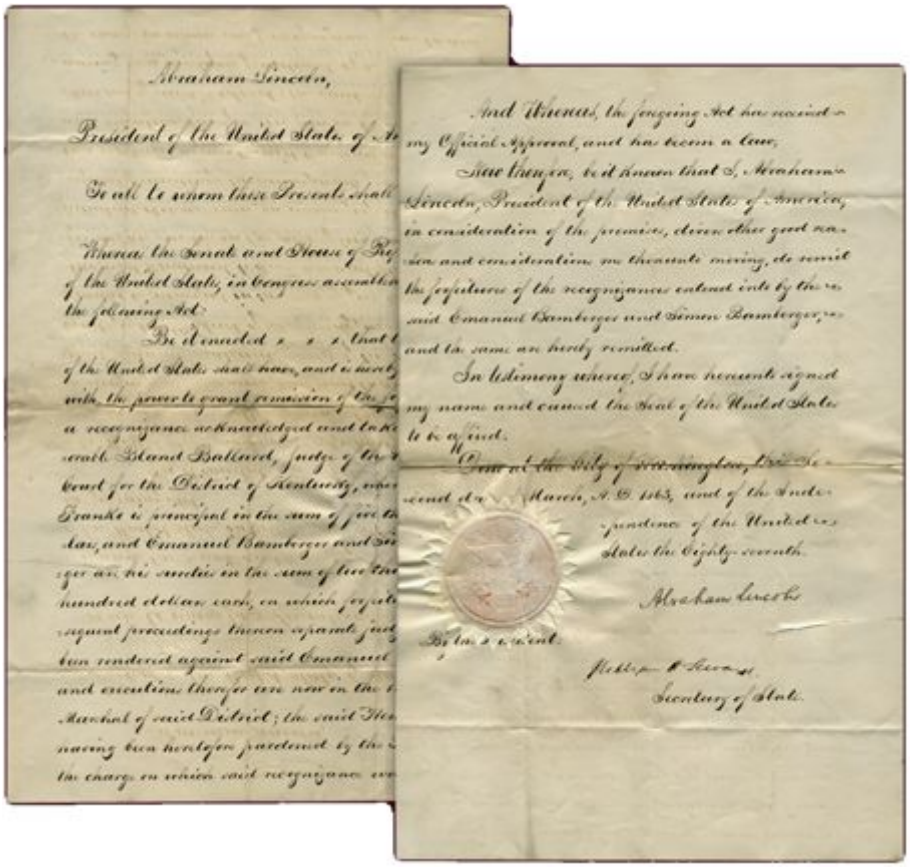
As ever

J. F. Speed

JOSHUA SPEED TO LINCOLN, MAY 27, 1862

Lincoln's close friend Joshua Speed successfully petitioned him to address an unfair judgment against Simon and Emanuel Bamberger; they had posted a $5,000 bond on a co-religionist from New Orleans, Herman Franks, and, when Franks failed to show up, what should have been a simple "case dismissed" resulted in their bond being forfeited. "The parties are all Jews," Speed wrote to Lincoln. "Knowing them as I do to be among the best of their faith … believing them to be loyal men I hope you will grant their petition." Lincoln supported Speed's petition, and the men were eventually pardoned in March 1863.

U.S. National Archives & Records Administration



Abraham Lincoln,

President of the United States of A

To all to whom these Presents shall

Whereas the Senate and House of Re
of the United States, in Congress assembl
the following Act:

Be it enacted . . . that t
of the United States shall have, and is hereby
with the power to grant remission of the fo
a recognizance acknowledged and take
orable Bland Ballard, judge of the
Court for the District of Kentucky, whe
Franke is principal in the sum of five th
lars, and Emanuel Bamberger and Si
ger are his sureties in the sum of two th
hundred dollars each, on which forfeit
sequent proceedings thereon separate jud
been rendered against said Emanuel
and executions therefor are now in the
Marshal of said District; the said He
having been heretofore pardoned by the
the charge on which said recognizance w

And Whereas, the foregoing Act has received
my Official Approval, and has become a law,

Now therefore, be it known that I, Abraham
Lincoln, President of the United States of America,
in consideration of the premises, divers other good rea-
sons and considerations me thereunto moving, do remit
the forfeitures of the recognizances entered into by the
said Emanuel Bamberger and Simon Bamberger,
and the same are hereby remitted.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto signed
my name and caused the Seal of the United States
to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this Se-
cond day March, A. D. 1863, and of the Inde-
pendence of the United
States the Eighty-seventh.

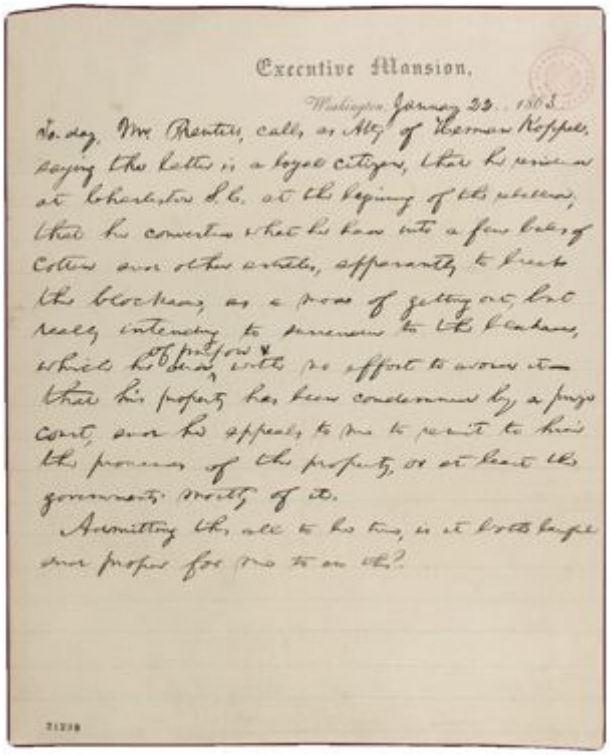
Abraham Lincoln

By the President.

Secretary of State.

LINCOLN SIGNS THE PARDON OF EMANUEL AND SIMON BAMBERGER

U.S. National Archives & Records Administration



Executive Mansion,

Washington, January 22, 1863.

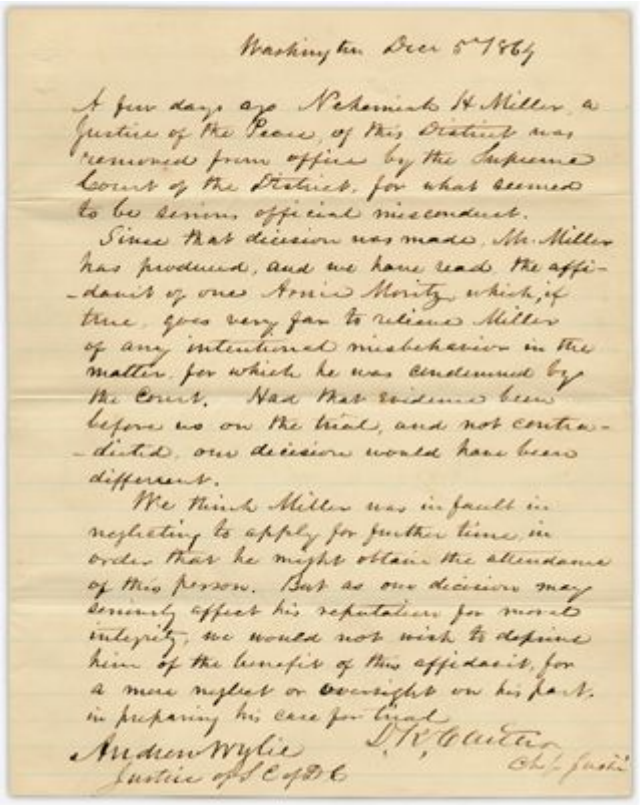
To-day, Mr. Renters, calls as Atty. of Herman Koppel,
saying the latter is a loyal citizen, that he resided
at Charleston S.C. at the beginning of the rebellion,
that he converted what he had into a few bales of
Cotton and other articles, apparently to break
the blockade, as a mode of getting out, but
really intending to surrender to the blockade,
which he did, of purpose with no effort to avoid it—
that his property has been condemned by a prize
court, and he appeals to me to remit to him
the proceeds of the property, or at least the
government's moiety of it.

Admitting this all to be true, is it both lawful
and proper for me to do this?

71238

ANOTHER PARDON, JANUARY 22, 1863

Herman Koppel, a tailor hailing from the heart of the Jewish community in Charleston, supplied "cheap, excellent and serviceable" fatigue uniforms to Confederate units. Lincoln wrote a memorandum concerning Koppel, who had appealed to the president to remit proceeds of property condemned by the court. Lincoln reviewed the facts, which included blockade running as a method of Koppel's escape, and asked, "Admitting this all to be true, is it both lawful and proper…?"
Courtesy of Library of Congress



Washington Dec 5th 1864

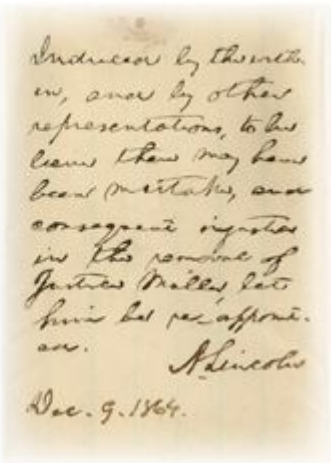
A few days ago Nehemiah H. Miller a Justice of the Peace, of this District was removed from office by the Supreme Court of the District, for what seemed to be serious official misconduct.

Since that decision was made, Mr. Miller has produced, and we have read the affidavit of one Annie Moritz, which, if true, goes very far to relieve Miller of any intentional misbehavior in the matter, for which he was condemned by the Court. Had that evidence been before us on the trial, and not contradicted, our decision would have been different.

We think Miller was in fault in neglecting to apply for further time, in order that he might obtain the attendance of this person. But as our decision may seriously affect his reputation for moral integrity, we would not wish to deprive him of the benefit of this affidavit, for a mere neglect or oversight on his part in preparing his case for trial.

Andrew Wylie
Justice of the Supreme Court

D. K. Cartter
Chief Justice



Induced by the circumstances, and by other representations, to believe there may have been a mistake, and consequent injustice in the removal of Justice Miller, let him be reappointed.

A. Lincoln

Dec. 9. 1864.

DAVID K. CARTTER AND ANDREW WYLIE TO LINCOLN, DECEMBER 5, 1864, WITH LINCOLN'S ENDORSEMENT OF DECEMBER 9, 1864

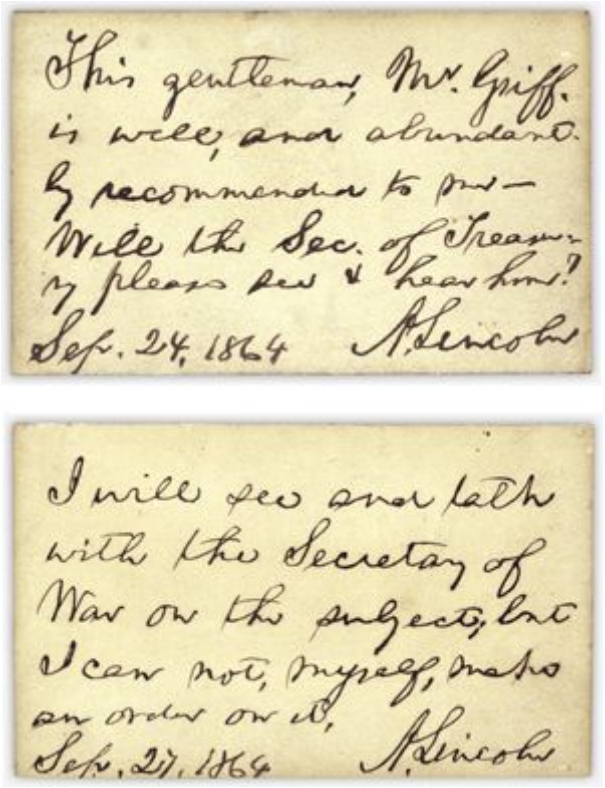
Lincoln, writing to Attorney General (and brother of Joshua) James Speed, endorses the reappointment of German-born Miller, whom Lincoln twice appointed a justice of the peace in Washington, D.C. Miller would, on the night of April 14, 1865, be the first justice of the peace to take sworn statements from witnesses to Lincoln's murder.
U.S. National Archives & Records Administration

Not all Jews, of course, proved so fortunate. A Jewish businessman named David Hirsch, for example, complained to Lincoln in late 1863 that General Stephen A. Hurlbut, the military governor of Memphis, had unjustly fined and expelled him from the city. While he had left the army of the Confederacy, Hirsch explained, he had nonetheless taken an oath to not take up arms against it, and he therefore felt compelled to refuse Hurlbut's demand that he enroll in the local Union militia. The punishment he

incurred for not violating his oath—a $500 fine (equivalent to over $7,000 in today's money) and expulsion from the city—seemed to him cruel and unjust. In fact, Hirsch was one of a series of Memphis Jews whom Hurlbut abused and persecuted; the general is remembered for being corrupt, arbitrary, and anti-Semitic. Hirsch hoped that Lincoln would restore both his money and his status. He had "not come to ask for favors," he wrote when he asked for an appointment with the president, "but merely for an act of justice, sincerely hoping to find it here." He left disappointed, however, for the secretary of war ultimately ruled against him.[9]

Other Jews who asked for personal favors fared better. A Republican Jewish businessman from Louisville, Kentucky, named Sigmund Griff came to see Lincoln in September 1864 "for the purpose of obtaining some trade facilities." Since he carried strong recommendations from people Lincoln trusted, he was rewarded with three different presidential notes, all written within two days of each other, one asking the secretary of the Treasury to "please see and hear him," one asking the same of the secretary of war, and a third promising to "see and talk with the Secretary of War on the subject." The records have not preserved what "trade facilities" came under discussion, but Griff clearly had the satisfaction of knowing that his proposal was taken seriously.[10]

That same month, Lincoln asked Gideon Welles, secretary of the navy, to accommodate a request made by Jewish congressman Leonard Myers, who represented Philadelphia during the war, to appoint one of his constituents to the "Naval School," then temporarily housed at Fort Adams, in Newport, Rhode Island. "I really wish this done," Lincoln reiterated.[11] Five months later, Lincoln again obliged Congressman Myers, this time in pardoning a bounty jumper, "because Mr. Myers requests it."[12] Myers was part of the first generation of American Jews to serve in Congress, being one of three Jews to serve during Lincoln's presidency, the others being Michael Hahn as a representative from Louisiana, and Myer Strouse, likewise of Pennsylvania. All three men were remembered as Jews but did not identify with the Jewish community. Myers, who possessed a profound sense of civic duty, was dedicated to protecting the rights of immigrants, laborers, inventors, soldiers, sailors, and former slaves and corresponded with Lincoln over at least three years, with Lincoln consistently supporting his appeals.



"PLEASE SEE & HEAR HIM"

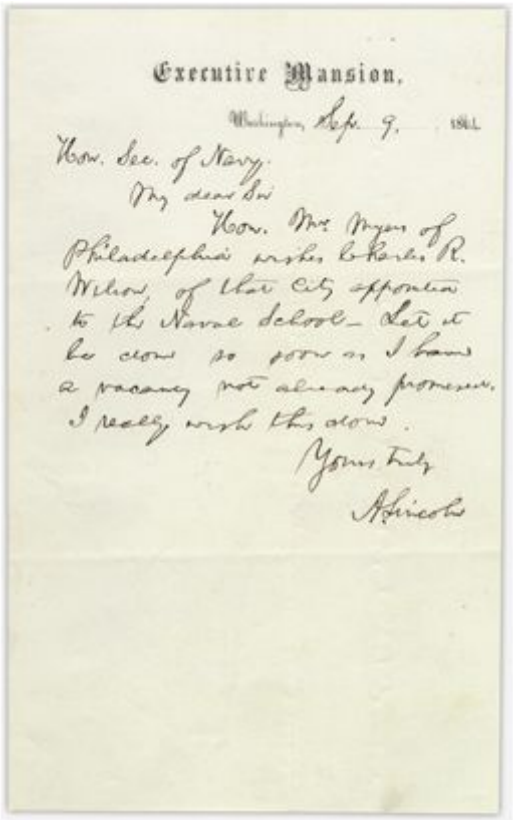
The German-born Jew Sigmund Griff left the Democratic Party because of Stephen A. Douglas's position on the extension of slavery. He became a staunch Lincoln supporter in 1860. As a clothing manufacturer in Louisville, Kentucky, he came so highly recommended to Lincoln that Lincoln wrote three notes, within two days in 1864, to secure him a favor.
Courtesy of David Benjamin Family Collection

In December, Lincoln presented a note to Joseph Stiner, then a captain in the Union army and later a lawyer, politician, judge, member of the Grand Army of the Republic, and a founder of the Hebrew Union Veterans Association, introducing him to Secretary of the Treasury William P. Fessenden. "Please see and hear this gentleman," the president wrote. What Stiner said to Fessenden has been lost, but Stiner did carefully preserve the card, writing on the reverse, "given to me personally by President A. Lincoln, December 2, 1864." The fact that the president of the United States personally took the time to handwrite a card recommending him to the Secretary of the Treasury clearly left a lasting impression. Stiner took pride in having been treated by Lincoln as an equal.[13]

LEONARD MYERS

Leonard Myers, the young congressman who represented Philadelphia during the Civil War and the early years of Reconstruction, was also a cousin of the American composer and virtuoso pianist Louis Moreau Gottschalk—who was a favorite of Lincoln's and performed for him many times.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Indeed, it was these small courtesies extended to Jews that helped to cement Lincoln's reputation among them. In another such case, Mary Lincoln wrote to General Marsena R. Patrick, provost marshal for the Army of the Potomac, seeking a favor for "Herman Grau, from whose family," she wrote, "I have received much politeness."[14] Herman, along with his brother Jacob, his nephew Maurice, and other members of the distinguished Grau family, pioneered musical theater and grand opera in the United States. They acted as agents, managers, promoters, theater directors, and troupe organizers for a wide array of celebrated performers and performances of opera and popular music that were presented throughout the country. In Washington, they often invited the Lincolns as their guests. Lincoln, under their tutelage, was said to have become "a devotee of Italian Opera."[15] Apparently, Herman Grau sought to open a stage at City Point (now Hopewell) in Central Virginia, where General Ulysses S. Grant had set up field headquarters during the long Petersburg Campaign and some 100,000 troops were encamped. This required General Patrick's permission, and Mary, who felt indebted to Grau and saw "no good reason to refuse this," asked for his "prompt consent."[16]



Executive Mansion,

Washington, Sept. 9, 1864

Hon. Sec. of Navy.

My dear Sir

Hon. Mr. Myers of Philadelphia wishes Edward R. Wilson, of that city appointed to the Naval school. Let it be done so soon as I have a vacancy not already promised. I really wish this done.

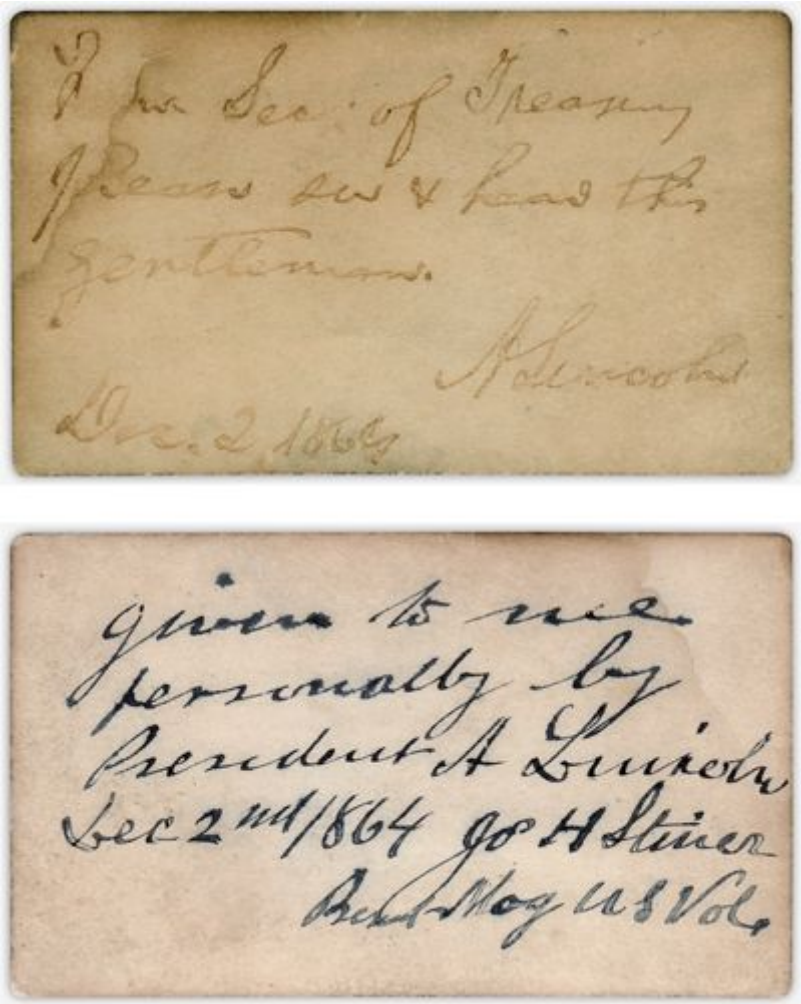
Yours truly

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO GIDEON WELLES: "I REALLY WISH THIS DONE," SEPTEMBER 9, 1864

Lincoln, writing on Executive Mansion stationery, seems to have consistently attended to Leonard Myers's requests with a marked interest; here, forwarding a routine appeal for a "Naval School" appointment, the president notes, "let it be done…. I really wish this done." Four months later, the warm relationship between the two men was again evident, "I will do it," Lincoln responds to an appeal, "because Mr. Myers requests it."

Shapell Manuscript Collection



"GIVEN TO ME PERSONALLY BY PRESIDENT A. LINCOLN"

On December 2, 1864, Lincoln writes an introduction for New York Jewish soldier Joseph Stiner.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

In another case of presidential courtesy directed at a Jew, on July 15, 1864, Lincoln personally thanked the Philadelphia Jewish leader Lazarus J. Lieberman for sending him an elegant made-to-measure suit. The suit had been prepared to Lincoln's large measurements by one of the city's top clothing contractors, Rockhill & Wilson, which flourished thanks to lucrative government contracts to make military uniforms, and the suit had then been donated as a benefit for the United States Sanitary Commission to aid sick and wounded soldiers. Funds were contributed at Philadelphia's Great Central Fair to purchase the suit for Lincoln, and the donors asked Lieberman, of Mikveh Israel and himself a significant wholesale and retail clothier, to forward the suit to the president. "I am happy, honored Sir, to be the medium of presentation," Lieberman wrote. Lincoln replied in his own hand, asking both Lieberman and "Messrs. Rockhill & Wilson" to "please accept my thanks."[17]

On May 4, 1864, Lincoln purchased a pair of eyeglasses from the shop of Jewish optician Isaac Heilprin, brother of the outspoken liberal Jewish opponent of slavery, Michael Heilprin. The Washington, D.C., shop, Franklin & Co., was located four blocks from the White House. "Lincoln was a regular customer and a warm friendship developed" between optometrist and president.[18]

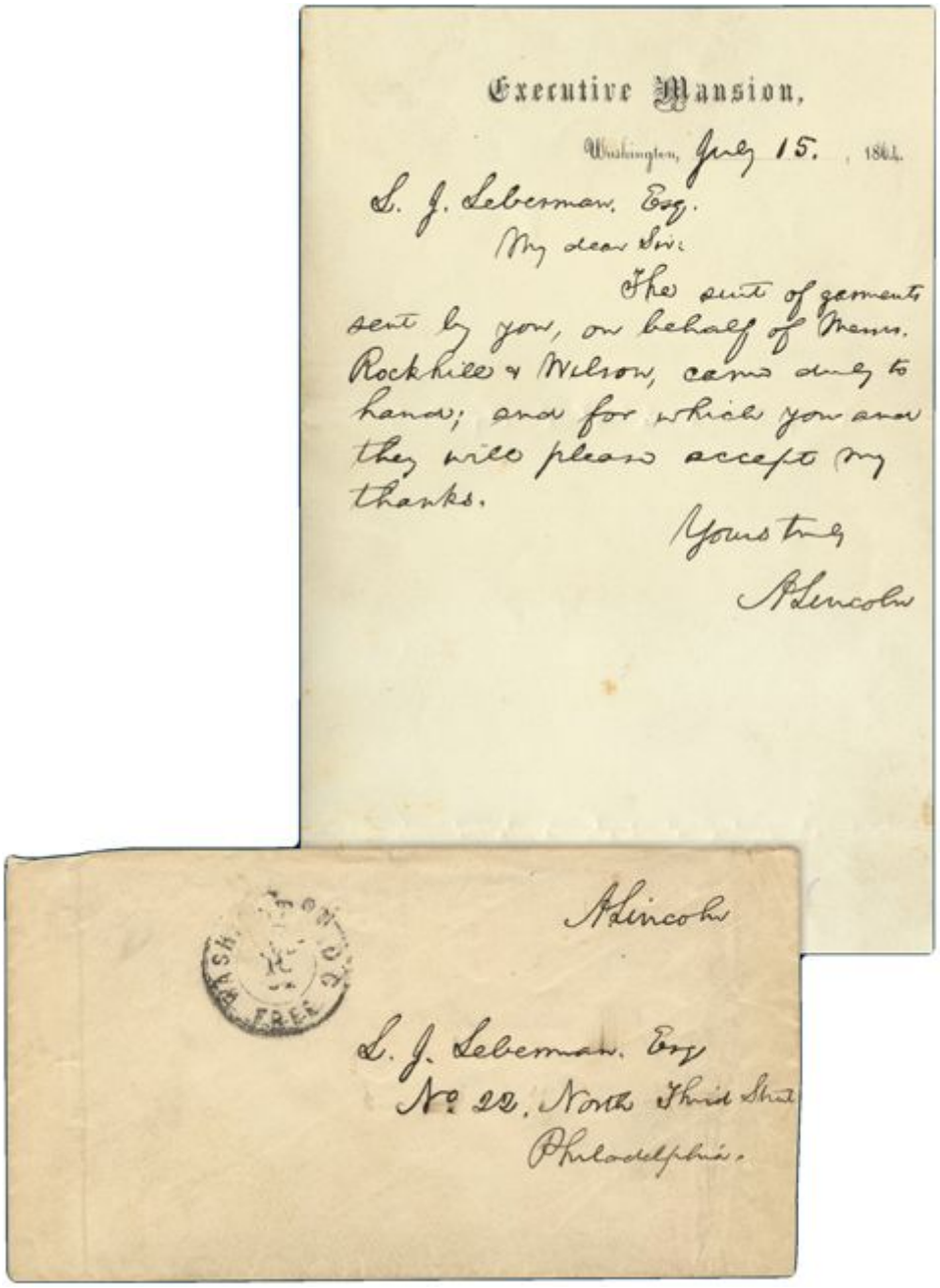
"I HAVE RECEIVED MUCH POLITENESS," SEPTEMBER 24, 1864

Mary Lincoln requests that Herman Grau, a Jewish theater director, be allowed to open a business at City Point, Virginia.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

These and similar interactions between Lincoln and Jews might, on their own, seem trivial. For the most part, they have escaped historians' notice. Aggregated, however, they form a pattern. The president of the United States, they show, insisted on treating Jews on the same basis as everybody else. For Lincoln, we have seen, this was nothing new. It continued the example he had set when he first encountered Jews back in New Salem, Illinois. The fact that his network of friends had, for years, been diverse and pluralistic helped to inoculate him against ethnic and religious hatred; "contact among

people of different but salient social groups," modern social psychologists know, "reduces prejudice."[19]

Lincoln's early friendship with Abraham Jonas was a particularly shaping influence. Jonas served for him as an enduring model of what it meant to be a Jew and was someone he knew he could now count upon. This explains why, as president, in December 1862, when testimonies were sent to the Executive Mansion on behalf of an attorney named Thomas Thoroughman of St. Joseph, Missouri, who had been arrested for disloyalty and shipped off to Quincy, Illinois, Lincoln placed the case in the hands of Jonas and his Quincy law partner, Henry Asbury, "both of whom I know to be loyal and sensible men." Upon their recommendation, Thoroughman was paroled and permitted to return home. He rose to become a colonel in the Confederacy.[20]



Executive Mansion,

Washington, July 15. 1864.

L. J. Leberman. Esq.

My dear Sir:

The suit of garments sent by you, on behalf of Messrs. Rockhill & Wilson, came duly to hand; and for which you and they will please accept my thanks.

Yours truly

A. Lincoln

A. Lincoln

L. J. Leberman. Esq

No. 22. North Third Street

Philadelphia.

LINCOLN TO LAZARUS J. LIEBERMAN: "PLEASE ACCEPT MY THANKS," JULY 15, 1864

Messrs. Rockhill & Wilson, clothiers, made the president a suit of clothes. To Jewish civic leader L. J. Lieberman went the honor of presenting the gift. Here Lincoln thanks him and all concerned and handwrites not only the letter but the envelope, replete with frank (free postage accomplished with the president's signature).

Shapell Manuscript Collection

ISAAC HEILPRIN AT FRANKLIN & CO.

This check, from May 4, 1864, is for a pair of eyeglasses that Lincoln purchased from Franklin & Co, the shop of Jewish optician Isaac Heilprin. The glasses cost $2.50 and were for farsightedness.
Christie's Images Limited

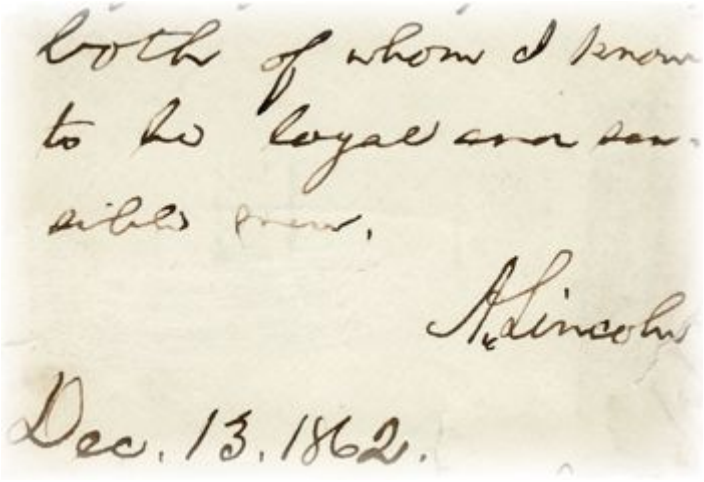
Jonas had children of his own fighting for the Confederacy. He and his daughter, Annie, nevertheless supported the Union—so strongly that in one speech he declared that there would be no peace until the rebels "give up their leaders to be hung."[21] Such family divisions as plagued the Jonases were common in the Civil War, especially in cases, familiar to many Jews and to Lincoln's own wife, where kinfolk lived on both sides of the sectional divide.[22] The emotional cost nevertheless remained high. When, early in the war, Quincy's Democratic newspaper questioned whether, as the father of rebel soldiers, Jonas should continue as the city's postmaster, his pained response spoke volumes:

> If it be true, as they say, that two of my sons are in the rebel army, however grieved I may be at the knowledge thereof, all true men who know me will sympathize with me and admit that I have no control in the matter. My five boys were in the South many years before the rebellion, and when last heard from were all loyal to the Union. That two of them, like hundreds of other loyal men, should have been compelled to join the rebel army I am not prepared to deny, since I have not received a line from any one of them since the commencement of this unhappy war.[23]

Adding to Jonas's pain was the fact that his teenage son, Edward, his "principal assistant" as postmaster, the young man whose ear Lincoln had tickled four years earlier, enlisted on the side of the Union, faced his own brothers on the battlefield, and was taken prisoner at the Battle of Shiloh on April 6, 1862. He was freed in a prisoner exchange and returned home to a celebration six months later.[24]

Nine months after that, on July 9, 1863, Jonas's eldest son, Charles, who lived in New Orleans and fought for the Confederacy, was captured at Fort Hudson, Louisiana. He would remain imprisoned, along with other Confederate officers, at the U.S. Military Prison on Johnson's Island near Sandusky, Ohio, for some twenty months, until exchanged on March 14, 1865.[25]

Meanwhile, perhaps affected by the stresses of war, Abraham Jonas's health suddenly took a turn for the worse. Orville Hickman Browning, on August 10, 1863, described his friend's condition as "perilous" ("entirely imbecile—knows nothing—is very feeble and nervous, and seems to be in danger of paralysis or congestion of the brain.")[26] Jonas recovered enough to pen a letter to Lincoln seeking, "in consideration of our old friendship," permission to visit his imprisoned son. "His mother and myself desire to see him," he wrote the president, "not only for the purpose of affording him necessary aid, but also hope to induce him, again to seek protection under the glorious flag of our country." On the same day, Browning wrote to Stanton recommending that the request be granted.[27] Nevertheless, a low-level bureaucrat in the office of the Commissary General of Prisoners rejected the request, and Lincoln may never even have seen it.[28]

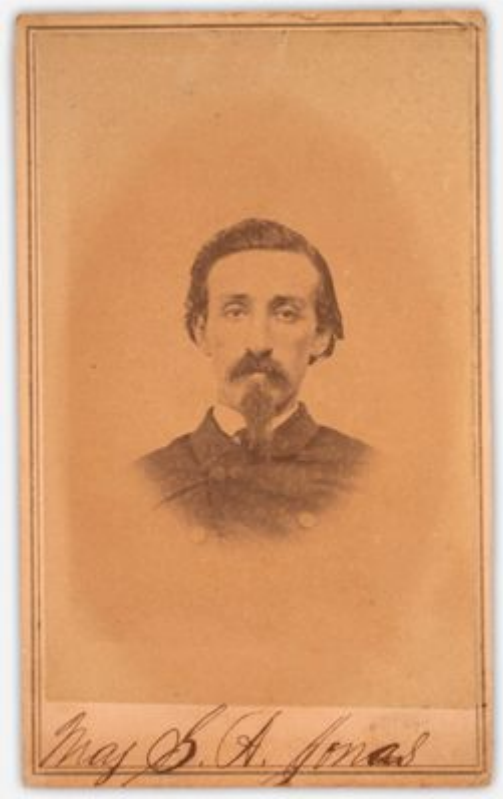

both of whom I know
to be loyal and sen-
sible men.
A. Lincoln
Dec. 13. 1862.

"BOTH OF WHOM I KNOW TO BE LOYAL AND SENSIBLE MEN."

On December 13, 1862, Lincoln asked that a case of disloyalty be adjudicated by and entrusted entirely to the judgment of Quincy law partners Abraham Jonas and Henry Asbury. Thomas Thoroughman, a lawyer, was wrongly accused of a crime, Jonas and Asbury determined, and so he was exonerated and duly paroled. The condition of the card is noteworthy in that the original, upper portion was unfortunately removed—and presumably lost—many years ago.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

By late May 1864, Jonas was unable to travel, for his condition had deteriorated and turned hopeless. His daughter Annie, knowing how much her father still wanted to see his eldest son before he died, wrote to Browning in Washington to see if he might intercede with Lincoln to have Charles released on a temporary furlough. Browning agreed and "went immediately to the President, the Secretary of War, and the Commissary General of Prisoners."[29] Lincoln's handwritten order, a testament to his long friendship with Jonas, followed at once: "Allow Charles H. Jonas, now a prisoner of war at Johnson's Island, a parol[e] of three weeks to visit his dying father."[30] After promising that he would "do no act or thing prejudicial to the Government of the United States," Charles hastened to Quincy. He arrived on June 8, 1864, just in time to be "recognized and welcomed" by his father, who died later that day.[31] Burial followed at the Jewish Sunset Cemetery in Quincy, with an impressive Masonic service. The long friendship between the two Abrahams, which began in the Illinois legislature over twenty years before, and was punctuated by Jonas's pivotal roles in the Quincy debates and—after the 1858 lost Senate bid—in Lincoln's successful climb to the presidency, had now come to a close.



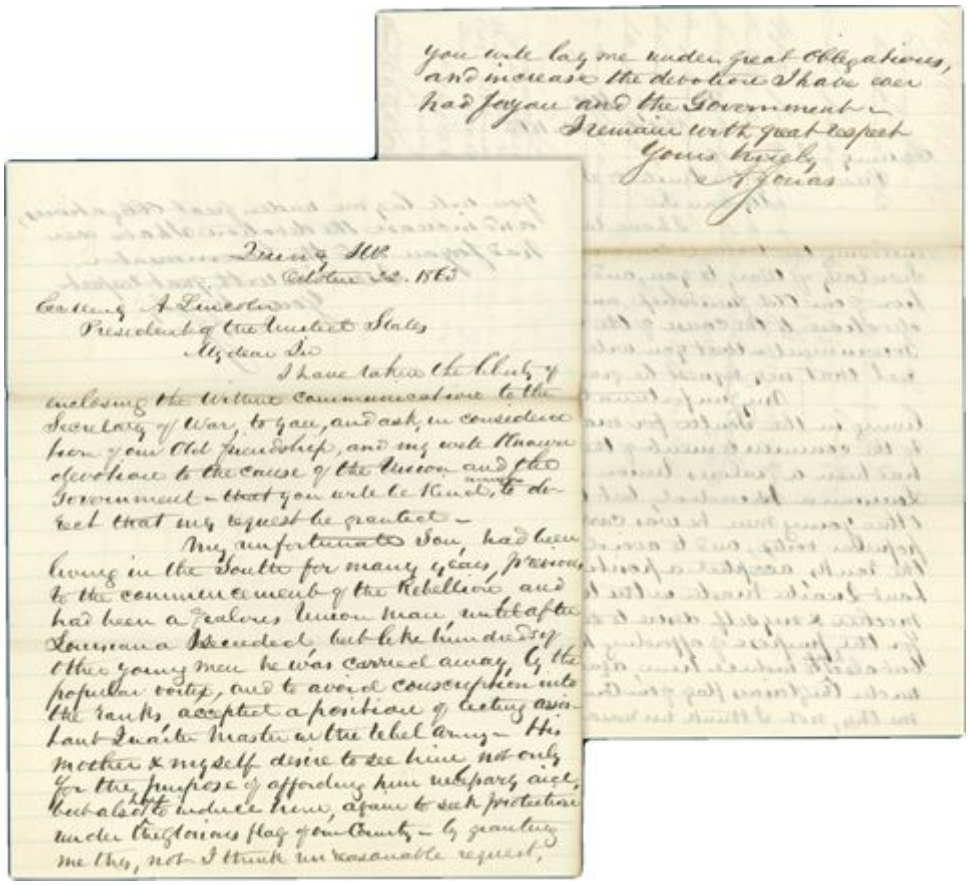
SIDNEY (SAMUEL) ALROY JONAS

Sidney Jonas, the middle son of Abraham and Louisa Jonas, fought for the Confederacy, though it "grieved" Abraham that two of his sons should fight for the rebel army. By the end of the war, five of the Jonas sons had at one time served in the Confederacy. One, Edward, remained entirely loyal to the Union.
Collection of Robert Marcus

On June 10, Browning went at night to the Executive Mansion, to tell Lincoln about the death of their mutual friend and to make a further request, which was granted: "I … got his promise to appoint Mrs. Jonas Post Mistress at Quincy in place of her deceased husband." Just two days later, the nomination, rare for its appointment of a woman, was already in motion in the Senate. Louisa Block Jonas held that position from June 28, 1864, to March 10, 1865.[32]

In August 1864, Lincoln received yet one more request from a member of the Jonas family, this one from George Jonas, who had served in the Confederate forces and then moved to New York. Recalling "the friend-ship existing between my Father and yourself, for so long a time," George appealed to Lincoln for a brief furlough prior to entering "regular active service" on behalf of the Union. Whether he received that furlough is not recorded, but that he expected a positive response "as a matter of personal friend-ship to my late Father" testifies both to the enduring memory of that friendship and to the hope that the obligations of friendship would carry over to the next generation.[33]

The death of Abraham Jonas deprived Lincoln of a "most valued friend" and one of his most ardent and able strategists and political campaigners—the man who had suggested, prior to the 1860 election, that the Republican Party focus on attracting political outsiders, such as "freethinking Germans" and "Israelites." Jonas's suggestion had partly been motivated, we have seen, by the widely publicized 1858 Mortara Affair, the heartbreaking story of a young Jewish lad, secretly baptized as an infant, who was forcibly removed from his parental home to be raised within the Catholic Church.[34] In early 1864, less than ten months prior to another presidential election, Lincoln revisited the Mortara Affair—this time through the medium of theater. Twice, on January 25 and 28, he and his wife, Mary, attended productions of *Gamea, The Jewish Mother,* an English adaptation of a French play, *La Tireuse de Cartes* (The Fortune-Teller), inspired by the Mortara controversy.[35]



Quincy Ill.
October 22. 1863

Excellency A. Lincoln
President of the United States
My dear Sir

I have taken the liberty of enclosing the within communication to the Secretary of War, to you, and ask, in consideration of our Old friendship, and my well known devotion to the cause of the Union and the Government — that you will be kind, to direct that my request be granted —

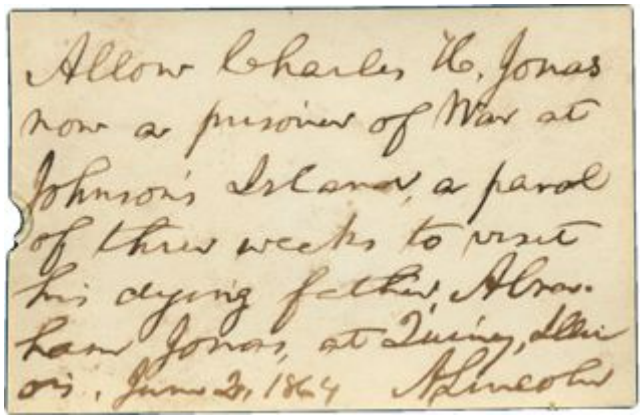
My unfortunate Son, had been living in the South for many years, previous to the commencement of the Rebellion, and had been a Zealous Union man, until after Louisiana Seceded, but like hundreds of other young men he was carried away, by the popular vortex, and to avoid conscription into the ranks, accepted a position of acting assistant Quarter Master in the Rebel Army — His mother & myself desire to see him, not only for the purpose of affording him necessary aid, but also to induce him, again to seek protection under the glorious flag of our Country — by granting me this, not I think unreasonable request,

you will lay me under great obligations, and increase the devotion I have ever had for you and the Government —
I remain with great respect
Yours truly,
A. Jonas

ABRAHAM JONAS TO LINCOLN, "…IN CONSIDERATION OF OUR OLD FRIENDSHIP," OCTOBER 22, 1863

Three months after Charles Jonas's capture by Union forces, his father, Abraham, appeals to his longtime friend, President Lincoln, to allow him passage to visit his son.

U.S. National Archives & Records Administration



Allow Charles H. Jonas now a prisoner of War at Johnson's Island, a parol of three weeks to visit his dying father, Abraham Jonas, at Quincy, Illinois. June 2, 1864 A. Lincoln

ORDER OF PAROLE OF CHARLES H. JONAS: A FAREWELL GESTURE TO AN OLD FRIEND, JUNE 2, 1864

After hearing of it from Orville Hickman Browning, Lincoln lost no time in accommodating the request from the Jonas family to allow Charles to travel home from a Union prison before his father's death. Had Lincoln not acted in haste to grant the request, Charles would not have made it back in time to see his father alive.

Shapell Manuscript Collection

The original text of the play that Lincoln saw was written by Victor Séjour (1817–74).[36] A Creole of New Orleans birth and superior education, he settled in Paris and is today best remembered for producing the earliest known work of fiction by an African American, a short story entitled "The Mulatto," concerning the rejected black son of a white father. In *Gamea,* Séjour returned to questions of identity, but instead of focusing upon blacks and whites, he focused upon Jews and Christians. His Mortara-inspired tale took place in the eighteenth century, and in his telling, the child torn from home and hearth and raised as a Christian was actually a girl. But the central elements of his drama drew upon the real Mortara story—such emotion-laden themes as child loss (a tragedy all too familiar to the Lincolns), maternal love, nature versus nurture, multiple allegiances, and conflicting loyalties. The "Jewish Mother" in his play, Gamea, was a sympathetic character—so much so, that one New York newspaper thought that she illustrated "the vital endurance of Judaism," and a French Catholic paper condemned the playwright for pleading "too eloquently the cause of Jews."[37] The kidnapped daughter—named Silvia in the American version—sought simultaneously to satisfy both sides of a divided house ("You would have me choose to reject my God or to betray my mother! How can I? How?") That theme, echoing Lincoln's famous "House Divided" speech, delivered the same year as the Mortara Affair, surely resonated with Civil War–era audiences.[38]

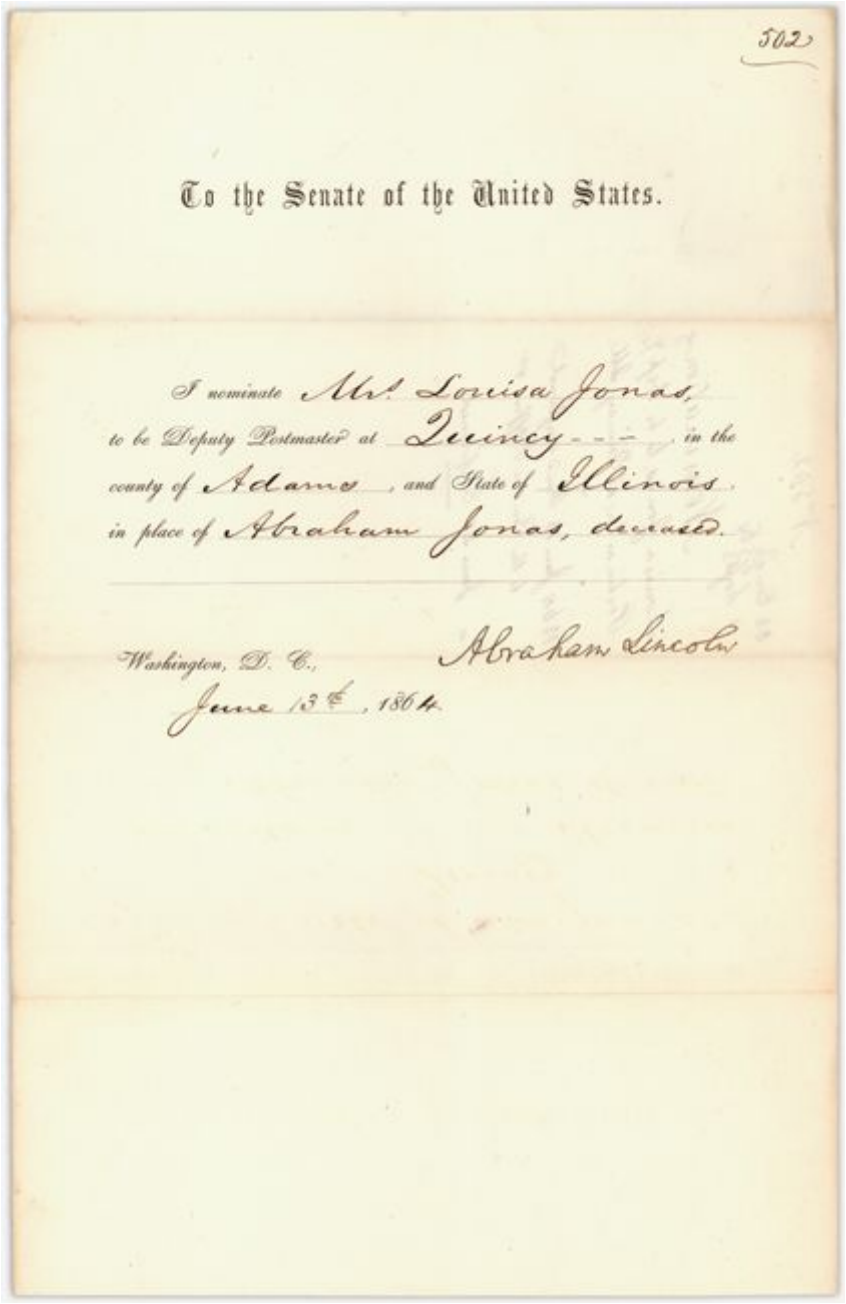
Johnsons Island
Nov 13th 1864
Dear Annie
I have been owing you a letter for some time but you know I cannot write often and will not wonder at my delay — do not fail on that account to write as often as you can — and do give me some good news — I think Mr Lincoln ought to be in a good humor now — so tell Mother if she will write him a good strong letter and get Mr Browning to deliver it and engineer the affair — that my exchange might be effected — Let her ask that I be sent south to effect my exchange for a Union officer of same grade — I have no late news from [illegible] the 9th Oct is my latest letter, but we should have a plenty of [illegible] mail this week — I have no news either from N Orleans later than a letter from [illegible] received last week — which contained nothing except that they had heard that Edwin Harris had secured a special Exchange — my health is pretty good — and I am still studying a little but [illegible] much heart for it In fact I am rather demoralized [illegible] Eddie returned to the Army?? Tell Uncle [illegible] that I have just rec'd his remittance and am much obliged good bye & God bless you all your loving brother
CH Jonas

CHARLES JONAS TO ANNIE JONAS: AGAIN CALLING UPON "MR. LINCOLN," NOVEMBER 13, 1864

Five months after Lincoln grants Charles Jonas passage to see his dying father in Quincy, Browning is again called upon to intercede on behalf of the prisoner, this time in order to expedite his release. Hoping Lincoln's reelection victory five days earlier might affect his chances, Charles writes to his sister Annie: "I think Mr. Lincoln ought to be in good humor now—so tell Mother if she will write him a good strong letter and get Mr. Browning to deliver it and engineer the affair…"

Wells Family

Séjour's skill as a dramatist and Mary Lincoln's "susceptibility to sentimentality"[39] may suffice to explain why the Lincolns returned to see *Gamea* just three days after they first saw it. The fact that the play was written by a black writer, drew upon a Jewish historical episode, and reflected on issues deeply relevant to the era suggests that they may have had other motivations for watching it a second time as well.[40]



502

To the Senate of the United States.

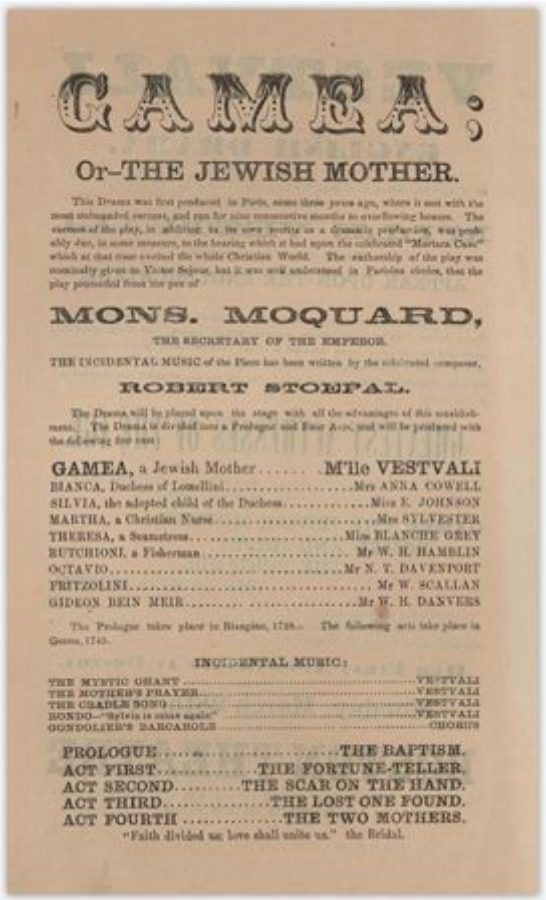
I nominate Mrs. Louisa Jonas,
to be Deputy Postmaster at Quincy - - - , in the
county of Adams , and State of Illinois ,
in place of Abraham Jonas, deceased.

Washington, D. C., Abraham Lincoln
June 13th, 1864.

JUNE 13, 1864: A FINAL HONOR

Less than a week after the death of Abraham Jonas, Lincoln again lost no time honoring yet another request from Browning, this time to appoint Jonas's widow, Louisa, postmistress at Quincy. This document, signed by Lincoln, also mentions the late Jonas, thus linking the three friends.

U.S. National Archives & Records Administration



GAMEA;

Or–THE JEWISH MOTHER.

This Drama was first produced in Paris, some three years ago, where it met with the most unbounded success, and ran for nine consecutive months to overflowing houses. The success of the play, in addition to its own merits as a dramatic production, was probably due, in some measure, to the bearing which it had upon the celebrated "Mortara Case" which at that time excited the whole Christian World. The authorship of the play was nominally given to Victor Sejour, but it was well understood in Parisian circles, that the play proceeded from the pen of

MONS. MOQUARD,

THE SECRETARY OF THE EMPEROR.

THE INCIDENTAL MUSIC of the Piece has been written by the celebrated composer,

ROBERT STOMPAL.

The Drama will be placed upon the stage with all the advantages of this establishment. The Drama is divided into a Prologue and Four Acts, and will be produced with the following fine cast:

GAMEA, a Jewish Mother ..... M'lle VESTVALI
BIANCA, Duchess of Lomellini ..... Mrs ANNA COWELL
SILVIA, the adopted child of the Duchess ..... Miss E. JOHNSON
MARTHA, a Christian Nurse ..... Mrs SYLVESTER
THERESA, a Seamstress ..... Miss BLANCHE GREY
BUTCHIONI, a Fisherman ..... Mr W. H. HAMBLIN
OCTAVIO ..... Mr N. T. DAVENPORT
FRITZOLINI ..... Mr W. SCALLAN
GIDEON BEIN MEIR ..... Mr W. H. DANVERS

The Prologue takes place in Bisagno, 1738.—The following acts take place in Genoa, 1743.

INCIDENTAL MUSIC:

THE MYSTIC CHANT ..... VESTVALI
THE MOTHER'S PRAYER ..... VESTVALI
THE CRADLE SONG ..... VESTVALI
RONDO—"Sylvia is mine again" ..... VESTVALI
GONDOLIER'S BARCAROLE ..... CHORUS

PROLOGUE ..... THE BAPTISM.
ACT FIRST ..... THE FORTUNE-TELLER.
ACT SECOND ..... THE SCAR ON THE HAND.
ACT THIRD ..... THE LOST ONE FOUND.
ACT FOURTH ..... THE TWO MOTHERS.

"Faith divided us; love shall unite us." the Bridal.

GAMEA, OR THE JEWISH MOTHER

"As the proud Jewess defending the faith of the Hebrews," a reviewer noted, the magnificent Felicia Vestvali embodied Gamea, or the Jewish Mother, a character inspired by the Jewish story at the heart of the Mortara Affair. The show was a huge hit—and Lincoln saw it twice within a period of three days.
NewsBank Inc. in association with the American Antiquarian Society

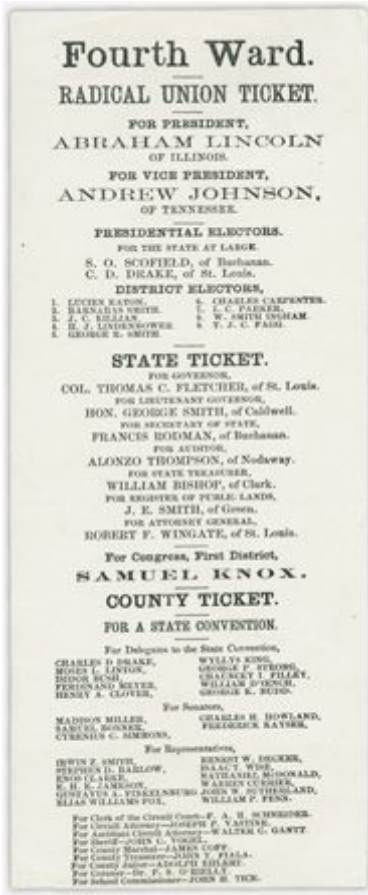
Although the Mortara Affair would not be an issue in the 1864 election and Abraham Jonas would no longer be offering political advice, Abraham Lincoln remained interested in the Jewish vote and eager to attract as many Jews as possible into the Republican Party's ranks. In August, just months before the election, the president's prospects seemed grim, and it was widely believed that he would be defeated. "This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this Administration will not be re-elected," he wrote in a famous memorandum on August 23. His chances of winning New York looked especially bleak.[41] This likely explains Lincoln's renewed association with Issachar Zacharie, who vigorously campaigned for the president's reelection in the summer and fall and worked especially hard to win Jews over to the president's ranks. Jewish stalwarts from Lincoln's 1860 campaign, such as Abram Dittenhoefer and Isidor Bush, likewise campaigned for his reelection.

Zacharie's renewed ardor for Lincoln was, in part, an expression of gratitude for the release of Goodman Mordecai and J. G. Cohen. Indeed, Samuel A. Lewis, the same Jewish communal leader who had worked with Zacharie to free Mordecai, now worked with him again, offering to help fund Jewish political activities on Lincoln's behalf.[42] General Banks, whom Zacharie had once clandestinely supported for president, was no longer a serious contender. The badly bungled Red River campaign, in the spring of 1864, put an end to his presidential hopes.

Zacharie began his efforts on the president's behalf in early August. "Allow me to introduce Dr. Zacharie of New York … who has been kind, and, in some instances, useful to me," Lincoln wrote to Treasury Secretary William P. Fessenden.[43] What the particular "kindness" was that Lincoln hoped Fessenden would show Zacharie is not clear, but by mid-September, the president was thanking his chiropodist "for the deep interest you have constantly taken in the Union [Republican] cause."[44] By then, Zacharie was busy electioneering on his behalf. "Work and keep on working," he exhorted, "untill [*sic*] he is Elected."[45] According to historian Bertram W. Korn, Zacharie "conferred with local party officials, took their demands and queries to the President, and obtained statements from him designed to quiet the more restless spirits among his following." He also visited key states on behalf of the campaign. For Lincoln to succeed, he knew, "We must carry Pennsylvania & Ohio."[46] In addition, he continued to use his ties to the president to secure favors for friends. "The personal matter on behalf of your friend, which you mention," Lincoln cryptically wrote to him on September 19, "shall be fully and fairly considered when presented."[47]

DETAIL FROM S. KAUFMANN AND A. DITTENHOEFER TO LINCOLN, MARCH 2, 1865

Two of Lincoln's Jewish presidential electors, one from each of his campaigns, requested an appointment of a colleague. Sigismund Kaufmann, who served as elector from New York in 1860—and Abram Dittenhoefer, also from New York, in 1864—here sign a recommendation to Lincoln of a fellow New Yorker for a consular appointment; Lincoln respectfully referred the request to the secretary of state.
U.S. National Archives & Records Administration



Fourth Ward.

RADICAL UNION TICKET.

FOR PRESIDENT,
ABRAHAM LINCOLN
OF ILLINOIS.

FOR VICE PRESIDENT,
ANDREW JOHNSON,
OF TENNESSEE.

PRESIDENTIAL ELECTORS.
FOR THE STATE AT LARGE.
S. O. SCOFIELD, of Buchanan.
C. D. DRAKE, of St. Louis.

DISTRICT ELECTORS,
1. LUCIEN EATON.
2. BARNABAS SMITH.
3. J. C. KILLIAN.
4. H. J. LINDENBOWER.
5. GEORGE E. SMITH.
6. CHARLES CARPENTER.
7. I. C. PARKER.
8. W. SMITH INGHAM.
9. T. J. C. FAGG.

STATE TICKET.
FOR GOVERNOR,
COL. THOMAS C. FLETCHER, of St. Louis.
FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR,
HON. GEORGE SMITH, of Caldwell.
FOR SECRETARY OF STATE,
FRANCIS RODMAN, of Buchanan.
FOR AUDITOR,
ALONZO THOMPSON, of Nodaway.
FOR STATE TREASURER,
WILLIAM BISHOP, of Clark.
FOR REGISTER OF PUBLIC LANDS,
J. E. SMITH, of Green.
FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL,
ROBERT F. WINGATE, of St. Louis.

For Congress, First District,
SAMUEL KNOX.

COUNTY TICKET.

FOR A STATE CONVENTION.

For Delegates to the State Convention,
CHARLES D DRAKE, MOSES L. LINTON, ISIDOR BUSH, FERDINAND MEYER, HENRY A. CLOVER, WYLLYS KING, GEORGE P. STRONG, CHAUNCEY I. FILLEY, WILLIAM BOSCH, GEORGE K. BUDD.

For Senators,
MADISON MILLER, SAMUEL ROSNER, CYRENIUS C. SIMMONS, CHARLES H. HOWLAND, FREDERICK KAYSER.

For Representatives,
IRWIN F. SMITH, STEPHEN D. BARLOW, ENOS CLARKE, E. H. E. JAMESON, GUSTAVUS A. FINKELNBURG, ELIAS WILLIAMS FOX, ERNEST W. DECKER, ISAAC T. WISE, NATHANIEL MCDONALD, WARREN CUSHIER, JOHN W. SUTHERLAND, WILLIAM P. PENN.

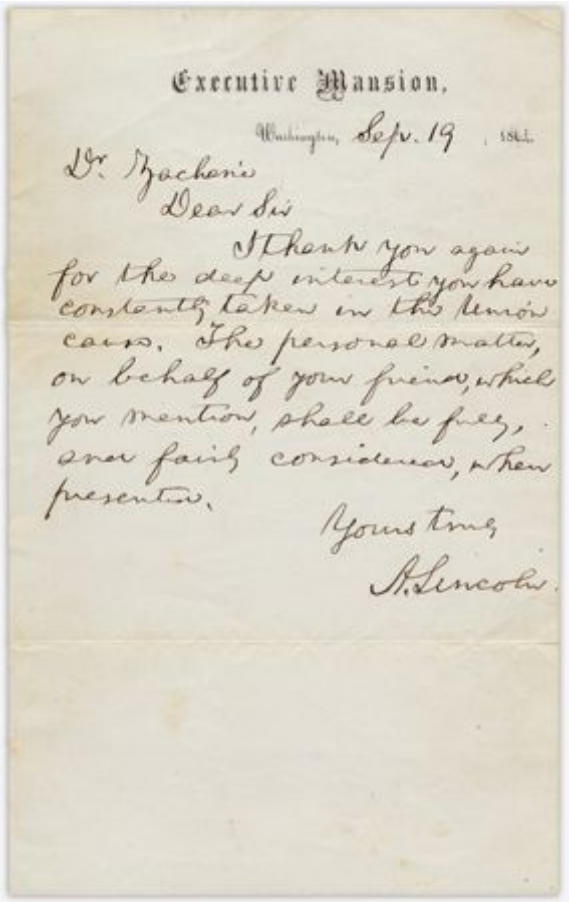
For Clerk of the Circuit Court—F. A. H. SCHNEIDER.
For Circuit Attorney—JOSEPH P. VASTINE.
For Assistant Circuit Attorney—WALTER C. GANTT.
For Sheriff—JOHN C. VOGEL.
For County Marshal—JAMES COFF.
For County Treasurer—JOHN T. FIALA.
For County Judge—ADOLPH EHLERT.
For Coroner—Dr. F. S. O'RIELLY.
For School Commissioner—JOHN H. TICK.

1864 MISSOURI BALLOT

Electors Abram Dittenhoefer and Isidor Bush helped carry their states for Lincoln in 1864. New York stayed in the Republican column, and Missouri, which had gone for Douglas in 1860, turned.
Rail Splitter Archives, New York City

Whether Zacharie ever did present the matter is unclear, but three days later, a young chiropodist and former business partner of Zacharie's named Samuel M. Barnett, whom he had once described to General Banks as "a student of mine," shot Zacharie in the face following an argument. "The matter is … much involved in mystery," the *New York Times* reported, adding yet another mysterious layer to a life that was plenty overlaid in mystery already. The wound was initially described as "serious and probably fatal," but

in fact Zacharie returned to the campaign trail within weeks. The titillating story of the "affray in Broadway" was quickly submerged.[48]



Executive Mansion,

Washington, Sept. 19, 1864.

Dr. Zacharie

Dear Sir

I thank you again for the deep interest you have constantly taken in the Union cause. The personal matter, on behalf of your friend, which you mention, shall be fully, and fairly considered, when presented.

Yours truly

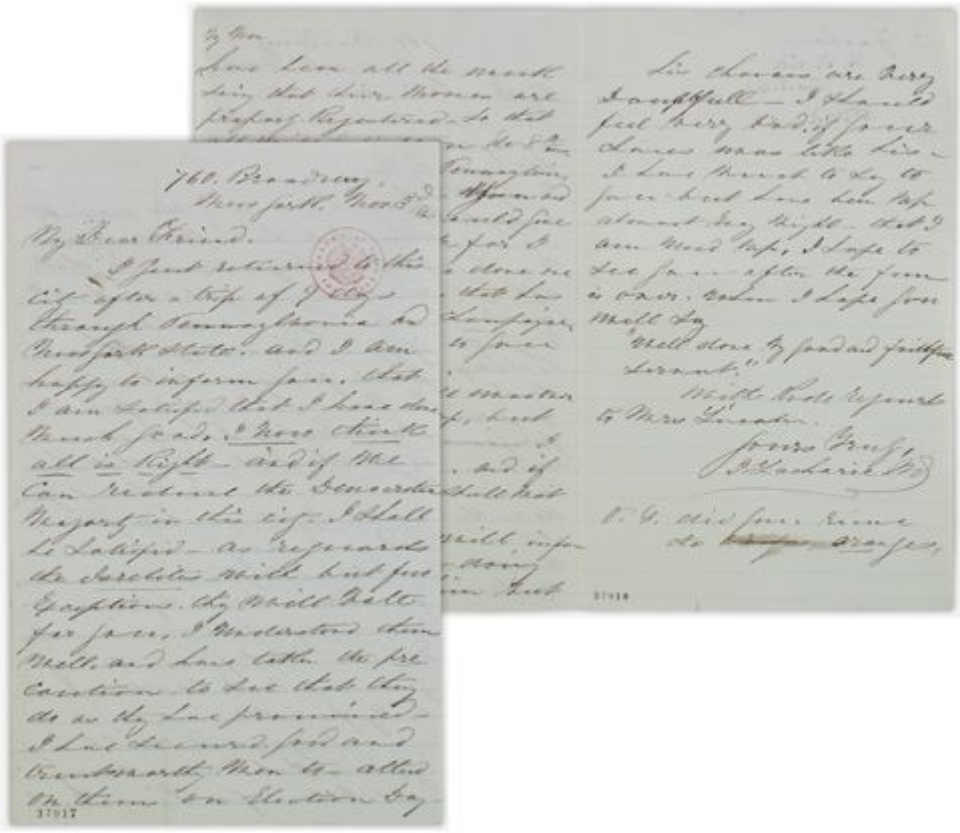
A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN TO ISSACHAR ZACHARIE, SEPTEMBER 19, 1864

"Thank you again for the deep interest you have constantly taken in the Union Cause," Lincoln writes to Zacharie, a message loaded with political innuendo in light of Zacharie's activism in Lincoln's reelection. Notably, Lincoln saved a handwritten draft of the letter for his own papers.
Brown University

In the meanwhile, Lincoln was reported to be "tired and downcast," for he expected to lose such critical states as New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Illinois to his Democratic opponent, George B. McClellan, on November 8. Anticipating a close election, he knew that every vote would count.[49] That probably explains why, on October 23, he met with "certain gentlemen of the Hebrew faith" to discuss the Jewish vote—possibly the first time that any president had ever formally discussed that subject in the Executive Mansion. Rumors circulated, abetted by the voluble Zacharie, that the "gentlemen" pledged to deliver New York's Jewish vote in return for suitable "contributions." John Hay, writing for the president, issued a categorical denial of that

claim: “No pledge of the Jewish vote was made by these gentlemen and no inducements or promises were extended to them by the President.” Behind the scenes, however, the wealthy Samuel A. Lewis advised Lincoln to direct any “Jewish committees” seeking political funds straight to him: “I will furnish them such amounts as we see can be used to advantage.” He promised that “nothing shall be wanting on the part of your friends here towards carrying the Union [Republican] Cause.”[50] Myer Isaacs, the editor of the *Jewish Messenger* and secretary of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, likewise wrote to the president concerning the Jewish vote. “The Israelites are not, as a body, distinctively Union or democratic in their politics,” he piously insisted; “the Jews, as a body, have no politics.” He nevertheless assured Lincoln that there were many Jews—himself included—who warmly supported the Republican Party. What he and other Jewish leaders of the day really feared was public discussion of the Jewish vote, lest that foment suspicion and hatred. So long as discussions were conducted discreetly, behind closed doors, they were fine.[51]



ISSACHAR ZACHARIE TO LINCOLN, NOVEMBER 3, 1864: ZACHARIE ROUNDS UP HIS FELLOW ISRAELITES

Five days before the election, Zacharie promises Lincoln good news.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Zacharie, as an ex-spy, had lots of experience working behind closed doors. On November 3, just five days before the election, he felt confident enough to reassure the president that the Jewish vote would swing his way: "As regards the Isr[a]elites—with but few Exceptions, they will vote for you. I understand them well, and have taken the precaution to see that they do as they have promised. I have secured good and trustworthy men to attend on them on Election Day. My men have been all the week seeing that their masses are properly Registered so that all will go right on the 8."[52] Whether the Israelites actually voted en masse for Lincoln on November 8 cannot be known, but a string of much-needed Union victories on the battlefield, divisions within the Democratic Party, and an effective Republican slogan ("Don't change horses in the middle of a stream") turned the tide decisively in Lincoln's favor. He won by more than 400,000 votes and carried all but three states.[53]

Zacharie had anticipated Lincoln's victory and even told the president how to thank him—by saying "Well done my good and faithfull [*sic*] servant."[54] But as Lincoln knew, he also wanted a favor that the president had promised to grant: a pass to visit his father and family in Savannah as soon as that city was recaptured. No sooner had General Sherman presented Savannah to Lincoln as a "Christmas present" than Zacharie reminded him of that promise in a cleverly worded telegram: "Allow me to congratulate you on the fall of Savannah my family are crazy with joy."[55] Lincoln responded within twenty-four hours, precisely as Zacharie had hoped: with a travel pass and a note addressed to Sherman, introducing "Dr. I. Zacharie, of New York who visits his Father and friends at Savannah, where the Dr. is well acquainted, and where very likely he could be of aid to you in some matters. He is entirely loyal and devoted to the Union cause."[56] On the same day, Lincoln also provided a pass for Zacharie's nephew, Jacob G. Cohen, whom he had freed from prison nine months earlier but who had not previously been able to return home to his wife and four-year-old son in Savannah.[57] Zacharie, overjoyed that the two could travel together, sent Lincoln a gift of bananas and a fervent "God Bless You." He then booked passage to Savannah.[58]

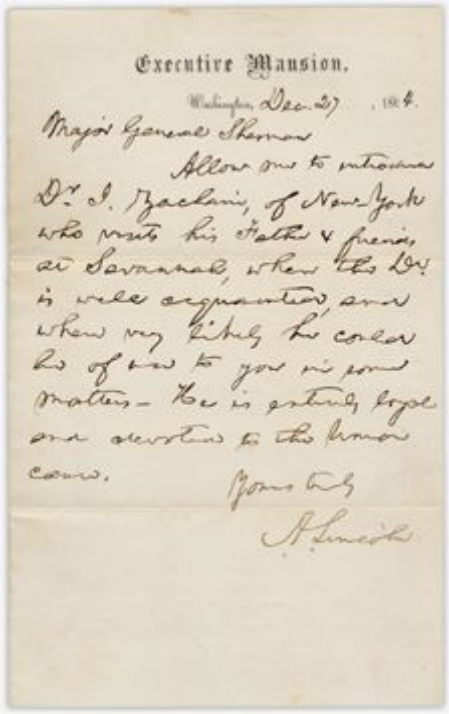
But Zacharie only got as far as Hilton Head, South Carolina, before he was detained. According to an eyewitness, Major John Chipman Gray, judge advocate for the Department of the South, Zacharie, when he arrived in Hilton Head, noticed the boat of Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, who was himself on his way to Savannah to meet with General Sherman. He "very foolishly went on Stanton's boat and spoke to him;

whereupon the Secretary ordered him into close confinement where he still is."[59] Zacharie had known Stanton in Washington and, we have seen, had won his support back when he sought to head up a "chiropody corps" for the army. Why the secretary of war now turned and placed him under house arrest, notwithstanding the pass he had received from Lincoln and the introduction he held to General Sherman, is yet another Zacharie-related mystery. Gray, who would later serve as professor of law at Harvard, described the confinement as "rather an arbitrary proceeding," and explained it on the basis of Zacharie's religion, which he personally disdained ("this man … is in appearance the lowest and vulgarest of Jew pedlars … an odious creature"). He also confided that Stanton, who was ill, had been "very bearish and boorish, as his nature."[60] Did the imperious secretary of war, known for making arbitrary arrests, consider Zacharie's friendship with Lincoln a threat to his authority and mission?[61] Did he worry, based on earlier reports from New Orleans, that Zacharie was dishonest and corrupt?[62] Whatever the case, it required renewed intervention from the president to get Zacharie to Savannah.

So, on January 25, Lincoln sent Stanton a message that began with the eye-catching words, "About Jews."[63] Concerning Zacharie, Lincoln delivered a one sentence order crafted in precise legal language that left no doubt as to his intentions: "I wish you would give Dr. Zacharie a pass to go to Savannah, remain a week and return, bringing with him, if he wishes, his father and sisters or any of them." Then, as if to mollify Stanton, he appended two sentences in highly personal terms, justifying his order: "This will spare me trouble and oblige me. I promised him long ago that he should be allowed this whenever Savannah should fall into our hands."[64] That very day, Stanton delivered a pass made out in Zacharie's name to Lincoln's secretary, John G. Nicolay ("presuming that you know where to send it").[65] Zacharie traveled to Savannah with that pass and returned to New York, accompanied by his nephew, on February 22.[66] Lincoln would not hear from him again.

Continuing his memo "about Jews," Lincoln proceeded to the case of Leopold Blumenberg, whom the War Department had dismissed as provost marshal for the 3rd District of Maryland.[67] A native of Frankfurt-on-the-Oder, Blumenberg fought and was decorated in the Danish-Prussian War of 1848 and immigrated to the United States in 1854. Settling in Baltimore, he opposed slavery, came under the influence of Rabbi David Einhorn, and joined the Republican Party. Curiously, his brother, Rudolph

Blumenberg, served as a bondsman for illegal slave traders, and was imprisoned for perjury. Lincoln would pardon him, in 1863, after he provided valuable information concerning the slave trade to federal officials.[68] Following the attack on Fort Sumter, Leopold Blumenberg helped to organize a regiment of volunteers, was appointed major, and served as a commanding officer. He distinguished himself for heroism in the 1862 Battle of Antietam, the bloodiest single-day battle in American history, and sustained a severe wound. In recognition of what he had done, Lincoln, in May 1863, appointed him provost marshal (head of the military police) in Maryland's 3rd District, headquartered in Baltimore. There, according to one biographer, "the stringency with which he executed the conscription laws … incurred him the animosity of many citizens."[69] That explains his dismissal on January 17, 1865. Among other things, he was charged with torture: "gag[g]ing men to make them confess they were deserters."[70] Lincoln, in his memo, nevertheless proved sympathetic. "I think he should have a hearing," he wrote. "He has suffered for us & served us well.… He should not be dismissed in a way that disgraces and ruins him without a hearing."[71] Though Stanton demurred ("he was removed for cause of which a statement will be furnished you"[72]), Lincoln appointed Blumenberg to a new patronage position, superintendent of the warehouses at the Baltimore customhouse.[73]


Executive Mansion.

Washington, Dec. 27, 1864.

Major General Sherman

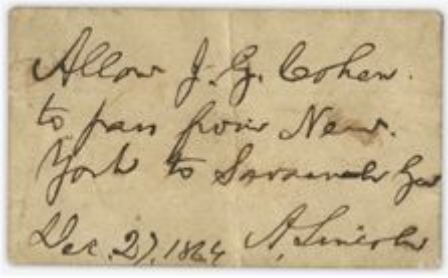
Allow me to introduce Dr. I. Zacharie, of New-York who visits his Father & friends at Savannah, when the Dr. is well acquainted, and when very likely he could be of use to you in some matters — He is entirely loyal and devoted to the Union cause.

Yours truly

A. Lincoln

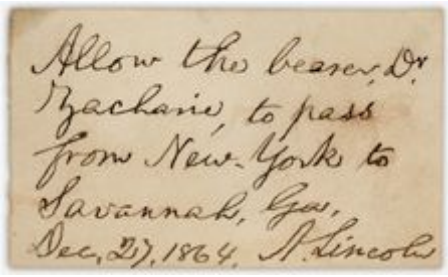
LINCOLN TO WILLIAM T. SHERMAN: ZACHARIE IS "ENTIRELY LOYAL AND DEVOTED TO THE CAUSE," DECEMBER 27, 1864

Whether Lincoln knew of Zacharie's true intentions in his travel to Savannah with nephew J. G. Cohen is not known. We know, however, that Zacharie was not just visiting his father; in fact, he was mysteriously arrested after trespassing onto Stanton's boat, for reasons unclear.
John Hay Library, Brown University Library



DECEMBER 27, 1864, PASS FOR J. G. COHEN

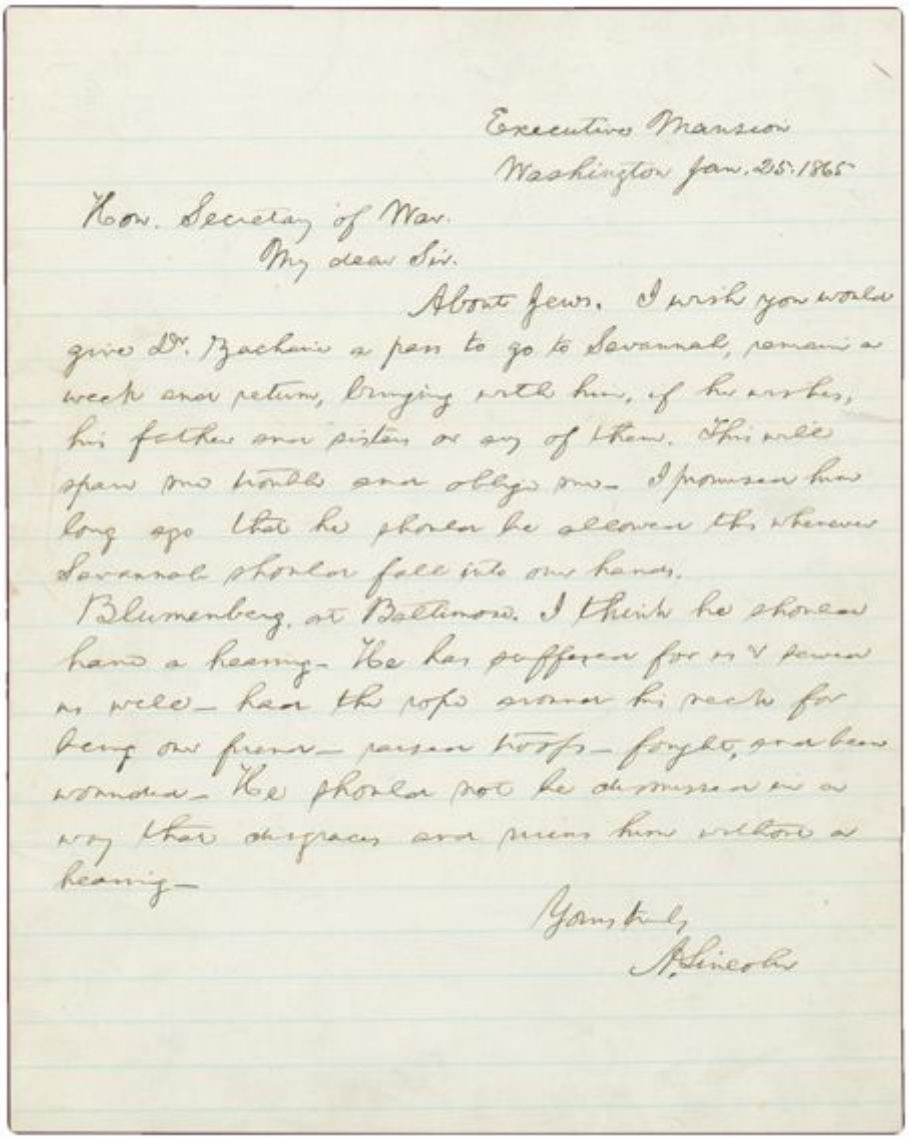
This pass to Savannah, Georgia was written by Lincoln on behalf of Zacharie's nephew, who would accompany his uncle on a mysterious trip to the South.
Shapell Manuscript Collection



DECEMBER 27, 1864, PASS FOR ISSACHAR ZACHARIE

Lincoln's pass for Zacharie to travel to Savannah, dated the same day as that for his nephew.
John Hay Library, Brown University Library

"About Jews. I wish you would give Dr. Zacharie a pass to go to Savannah…"



Executive Mansion
Washington Jan. 25. 1865

Hon. Secretary of War.
My dear Sir.

About Jews. I wish you would give Dr. Zacharie a pass to go to Savannah, remain a week and return, bringing with him, if he wishes, his father and sister or any of them. This will spare me trouble and oblige me. I promised him long ago that he should be allowed this whenever Savannah should fall into our hands.

Blumenberg, at Baltimore. I think he should have a hearing. He has suffered for us & served us well. Has the rope around his neck for being our friend. passed through fought, and been wounded. He should not be dismissed in any way that disgraces and ruins him without a hearing.

Yours truly,
A. Lincoln

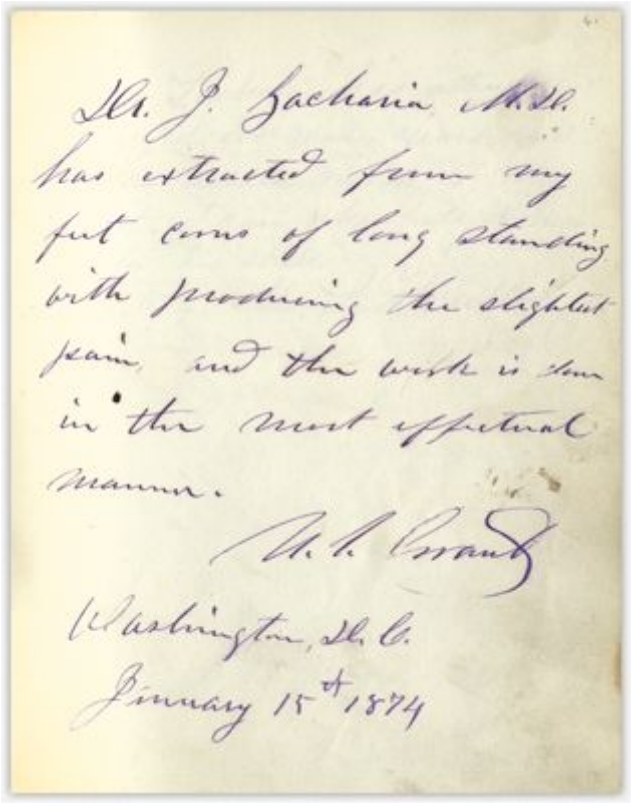
ABOUT JEWS

Sounding, uncharacteristically, as brusque as the man whom he addresses, Lincoln writes to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton on January 25, 1865: "About Jews." For Zacharie, whom Stanton recently had arrested in Hilton Head, Lincoln wishes that he receive what had been promised him "long ago" and orders that Zacharie —and anyone in his family—be given a pass to Savannah. The other Jew whom Lincoln references is Leopold Blumenberg, who had been removed as a provost marshal, and Lincoln requests for him the justice of an immediate hearing. "He has suffered for us," Lincoln says, "& served us well."
The New-York Historical Society

Why Lincoln titled his memo concerning Zacharie and Blumenberg "About Jews" remains a riddle. Maybe, as some suggest, Lincoln was responding to a document, now lost, that was similarly titled. Maybe, as others insist, this was his shorthand way of dismissing the anti-Jewish prejudice that he knew to exist even at high levels of government. Or maybe, with his exquisite sense of language and irony, he marveled at the fact that on a single day and in a single memo, he was dealing with two personnel

matters involving Jews, though Jews formed but a tiny minority at that time (perhaps one-half of one percent of the entire U.S. population). Whatever the case, the significance of the memo lies less in the phrase "About Jews" than in Lincoln's double display of generosity toward Jews. In an era when anti-Semitism was commonplace, he openly sided with Zacharie and Blumenberg, against the advice of his secretary of war.[74]

As Lincoln's first term wound down, three Jews found themselves guests at a reception held on Saturday afternoon, February 11, 1865, in the drawing room of the Executive Mansion, hosted by the first lady, with the president assisting.[75] One guest was the Washington printer and bookstore owner Adolphus S. Solomons, who had served as one of the "managers" of Lincoln's inaugural ball four years earlier and had business dealings with the government. Mrs. Lincoln made occasional purchases from him. The second guest was Solomons' young daughter, Zillah. The president, who loved children, held a brief conversation with her. The third guest was Myer S. Isaacs, editor of the *Jewish Messenger* and secretary of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, who just a few weeks earlier had written to Lincoln concerning the Jewish vote. The fact that these three committed and strongly identifying Jews were "presented and cordially greeted" by the Lincolns was no small matter. Just a few weeks earlier, the wife of General John G. Foster, who commanded the Department of the South, had "absolutely refused to sit at the same table" as Issachar Zacharie, because he was a Jew.[76] By contrast, Mrs. Lincoln was "kindly and gracious in her welcome, having a pleasant word and a pleasant smile," according to Isaacs. Given the president's "regard for the Jews," his family had long treated them as equals.


M. J. Zacharie M.D.
has extracted from my
feet corns of long standing
with producing the slightest
pain, and the work is done
in the most effectual
manner.
U. S. Grant
Washington, D. C.
January 15th 1874

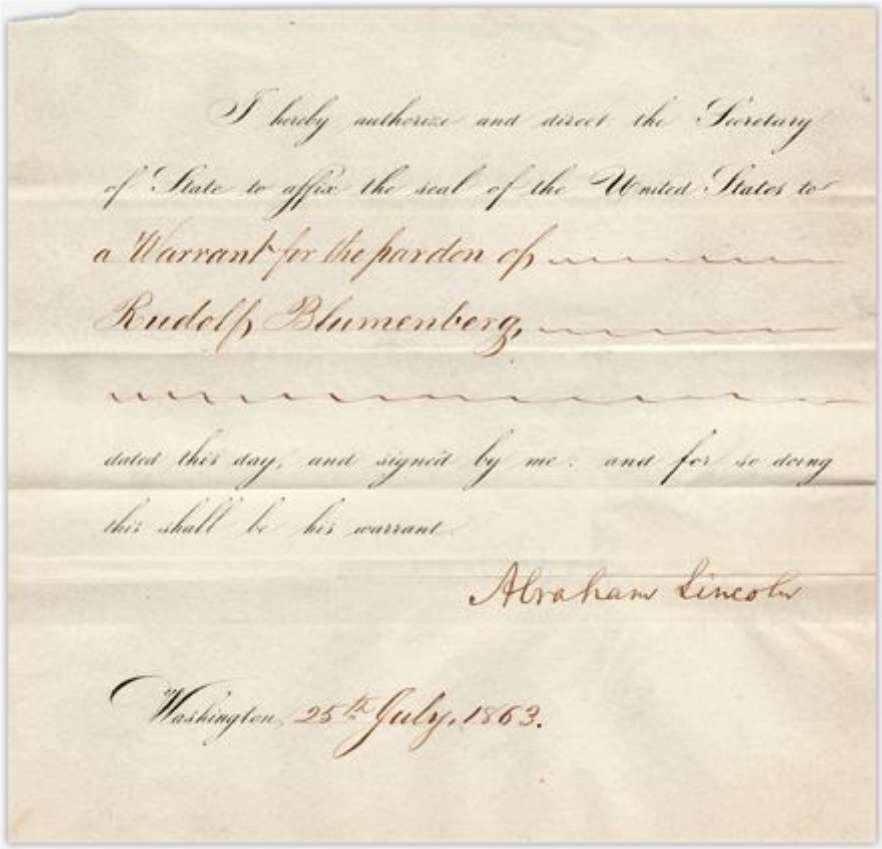
ULYSSES S. GRANT TESTIFIES TO THE SKILLS OF ISSACHAR ZACHARIE, JANUARY 15, 1874

Zacharie's acquaintance with the political elite continued after Lincoln's death. Eventually Zacharie even received support from the man who expelled the Jews from the area of his military control, Ulysses S. Grant. Here Grant, as president of the United States, writes that Zacharie treated him "with[out] producing the slightest pain and the work is done in the most effectual manner."
Shapell Manuscript Collection

LEOPOLD BLUMENBERG

Born in Prussia, Leopold immigrated to the United States in 1854. At the outbreak of the Civil War, he enlisted in the Union army and rose to lead a regiment as a colonel at Antietam. Though ruling with stringency,

Leopold continued to rise in the ranks and, following Lincoln's involvement in his case, was later brevetted brigadier general by President Andrew Johnson.
The Jewish Museum of Maryland


I hereby authorize and direct the Secretary of State to affix the seal of the United States to a Warrant for the pardon of Rudolph Blumenberg, dated this day, and signed by me: and for so doing this shall be his warrant.

Abraham Lincoln

Washington, 25th July, 1863.

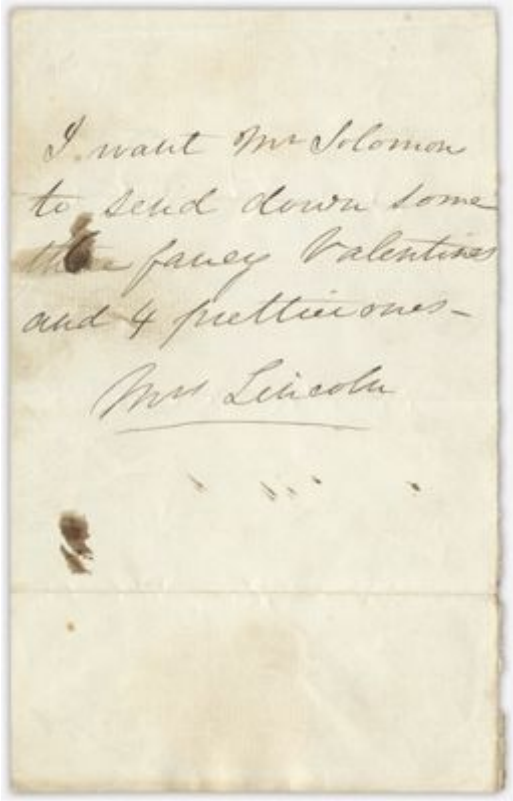
THE PARDON OF RUDOLPH BLUMENBERG, JULY 25, 1863

Rudolph Blumenberg, in contrast to his brother Leopold, was an unsavory bondsman involved in the slave trade. However, after he provided valuable information concerning the slave trade to federal officials, the district attorney petitioned for Blumenberg's pardon, which Lincoln granted on July 24, 1863: "Make out and send a pardon in this case."
Shapell Manuscript Collection

At the reception, Isaacs, like Edward Rosewater at the Lincolns' New Year's gathering back in 1863, paid particular attention to how the president looked. The war's progress, he and others believed, could be tracked upon the countenance of Lincoln's face. "His countenance [is] strongly expressive of good nature as well as of resolution," Isaacs wrote, "an index of his heart." In fact, Lincoln knew by then that the war was approaching its end. Charleston, South Carolina, surrendered to Union forces on the very day that the reception took place.

What concerned Isaacs as he looked at the president's face was the place of Jews in post–Civil War America. Indeed, he had traveled to Washington expressly to oppose

"the submission to Congress of proposed amendments to the Constitution of the United States recognizing Christianity as the religion of the land." He believed that Jews needed to "watch with extreme jealousy and anxiety any attempt to abridge their liberties." Evangelical attempts to write Christianity into the Constitution evoked his darkest fears.[77]



MARY'S JEWISH VALENTINE

On her way to amassing a personal debt of, in today's money, a quarter of a million dollars—spent on carpets, upholstery, drapes, furniture, wallpaper, china, silver, glassware, gowns, hats, shawls, jewelry, and books—Mary Lincoln paused to order some valentines from the local Jewish-owned stationery, printing, and publishing firm of Philp & Solomons.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Lincoln had so far proved a steadfast defender of Jewish rights, befriending some Jews, appointing others to significant posts, and tailoring his vocabulary ("this nation, under God") so as to exclude none of them. Standing with Adolphus S. Solomons and Zillah in the presidential drawing room must have given Isaacs hope that the president's second term would see more of the same.

A CALCULATED SHOT

Halfway into the third act and timing his actions with the play's punch line so that the audience's laughter would mute the sound of the shot, John Wilkes Booth stepped out from behind a peephole, with gun drawn.
George Eastman House

CHAPTER SEVEN

TO SEE JERUSALEM BEFORE HE DIED

1865

Two months prior to the start of his second term, on January 7, 1865, Lincoln, Mary, and their son, Tad, went to the theater. The Lincolns were frequent theatergoers. This was the seventeenth time in two years that they were attending a performance at Grover's Theater, also known as the New National Theater. Most often, they attended performances of Shakespeare, and on at least three occasions the performances were of Jewish-themed plays. For example, one month following their multiple viewings of *Gamea, or The Jewish Mother,* the Lincolns, on February 26, 1864, watched *The Merchant of Venice,* starring Edwin Booth as Shylock. This time, however, they attended a new play featuring the tall, black-eyed actress Avonia Jones.[1] Entitled *Leah, the Forsaken,* the play was an adaptation by a young American playwright named Augustin Daly of the German-Jewish writer Salomon Hermann Mosenthal's play *Deborah.* Its subject was the persecution of Jews in an eighteenth-century Austrian village.

As the Lincolns watched, the play's protagonist, Leah, the daughter of a rabbi, fell in love with Rudolf, the son of the village's old Christian magistrate. Peasants, their passions whipped up by a Jewish apostate named Nathan, shouted vile accusations at the Jews: they "poison our wells and fountains"; they "devour little children as a sacrifice" on Passover; they haunt Austria's villages "to beg, to steal, or to wheedle money from the unsuspecting—it is part of their faith"; they are a "soulless and a grasping race, who value more the chink of gold than all the virtues of humanity strung together."[2] Notwithstanding these prejudices, Leah and Rudolf pledged themselves to one another and made plans "to leave this old Mizriam [Egypt] and wander through the desert into the promised land" of America, "to plough the soil and on it rear the altar of a new religion that shall teach love and brotherhood to all men."[3] Through a cruel ruse,

Nathan thwarted these happy plans, misleading Rudolf into believing that Leah valued money more than his love. So, breaking off with Leah, Rudolf married a Christian named Madalena. But on the very eve of that marriage he realized his error and begged forgiveness. Leah refused and cursed him, but Rudolf, in contrition, became an advocate for the Jews and named his own daughter Leah. He even visited the emperor to plead for the right of Jews to remain in the village. The emperor in the play must have seemed familiar to Lincoln: he was "a plainly-dressed mild-looking man" whose doors were "wide open, everybody goes to him, and everybody finds place in his turn."[4] The fanciful emperor, indeed, smilingly hearkened to Rudolf's plea, declaring, "Let them stay; the laws of exile are of ancient date; I will make a new law, I myself am anxious that all my subjects should be equal, for, Jew or Christian, they all belong to me."[5] So, in the end, Rudolf and Leah reconciled, Nathan was unmasked as a scheming apostate, and Leah resolved to leave with her people for America, "the far-off—the promised land."[6]

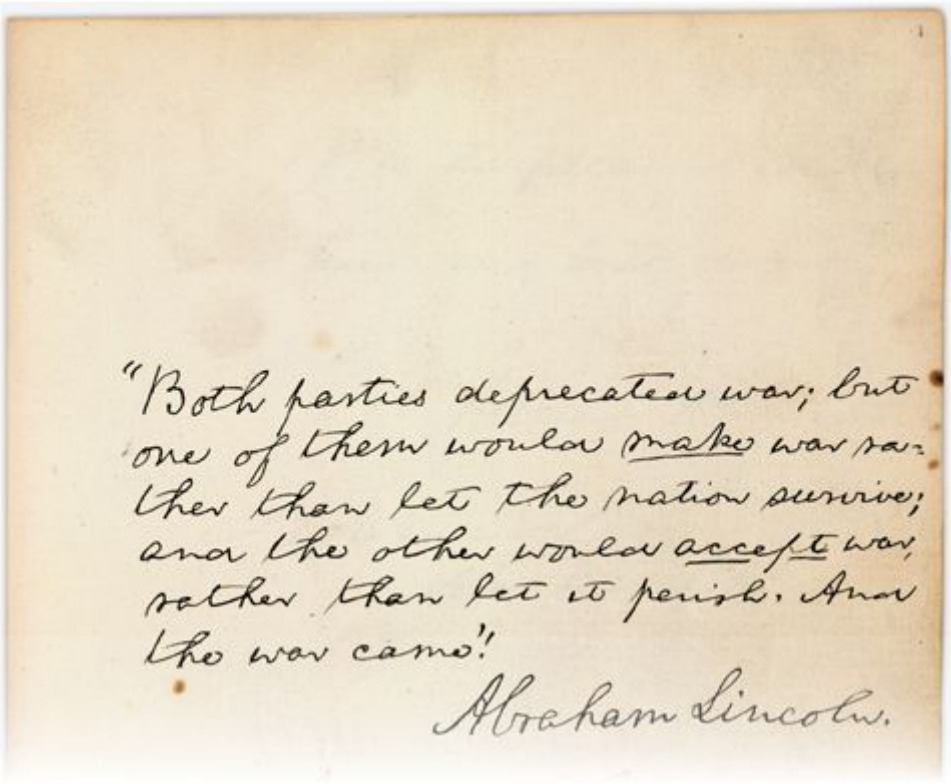
LEAH, THE FORSAKEN

Containing many offensive lines of dialogue, Leah, The Forsaken *may have reminded Lincoln of the anti-Semitic remarks of Benjamin Butler and other Civil War generals.*
National Portrait Gallery, London

Leah, the Forsaken, like Harriet Beecher Stowe's great novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* appealed to emotion and sentiment to combat prejudice. It depicted raw anti-Semitism and hatred in the hope that viewers would sympathize with Leah and recoil from her oppressors. "It is a true picture—every line and point of it limned to the life," the

Jewish Messenger's theater critic cheered. He hoped that the play would help to dispel "unfounded prejudice" and lead theatergoers "to cherish kindlier sentiments towards a people who, for no fault of theirs, have been driven about from post to pillar, scarcely anywhere befriended, only recently permitted to enjoy an equal footing with other men."[7]

George William Curtis, the antislavery editor of *Harper's Weekly,* insisted that *Leah* also carried a more universal message, applicable to the Civil War. This, indeed, may have been what inspired the Lincolns to see the play with Tad. To Curtis, who was the son-in-law of abolitionist Francis Shaw, the anti-Jewish rabble-rousers of Austria had their counterparts in the Union and the Confederacy: those who "appeal to the popular prejudice against an outcast race." If in Europe the question was whether a Jew might be equal to a Christian, in America it was "is a negro equal to a white man?" Leah thus served as an object lesson for Americans: "Upon this hatred of race," according to Curtis, reactionaries sought to gain power "in order to abase, divide, and destroy this nation." "Go and see Leah," he charged his readers, "and have the lesson [it teaches] burned in upon your mind, which may help to save the national life and honor."[8]



"AND THE WAR CAME," MARCH 1865

In this exceedingly rare handwritten quotation from Lincoln's second inaugural, Lincoln declares: "Both parties deprecated war but one of them would make war, rather than let the nation survive, and the other would accept war rather than let it perish. And the war came."
Shapell Legacy Partnership

1865.
Inauguration Day,
MARCH 4.
Admit family of Hon. Mr. Wright
Serg't-at-arms, U. S. S.

ADMISSION TICKET TO LINCOLN'S SECOND INAUGURAL

With this card, the family of Joseph A. Wright, then the American ambassador to Prussia, is invited to Lincoln's second inaugural. There he would hear one of the greatest addresses in presidential history.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

BOOTH STALKS LINCOLN

Gazing down on Lincoln during the second inaugural, unmoved, was the actor John Wilkes Booth. Six weeks later, he would kill the president.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

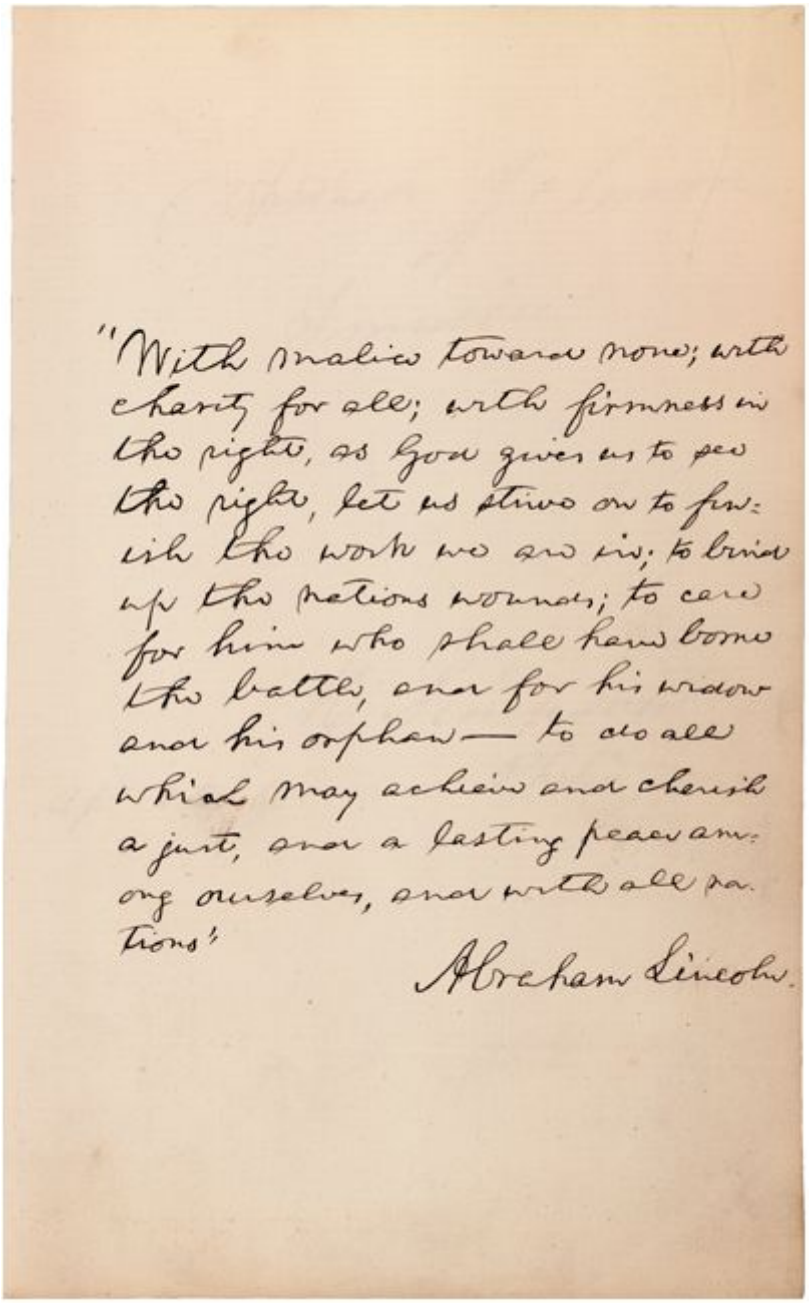
"With malice toward none and charity towards all"
Fred'k Douglass

FREDERICK DOUGLASS ON LINCOLN'S FAMOUS INAUGURAL CONCLUSION

Also listening in the crowd at Lincoln's second inaugural was Frederick Douglass, born into slavery but now the most famous free black man in America. Later, at the White House inaugural reception, policemen refused to admit a person of color. Lincoln got word of the outrage and not only ordered Douglass admitted but greeted him warmly and asked in a loud voice about his inaugural address. "There is no man in the country," Lincoln added, "whose opinion I value more."

Shapell Manuscript Collection

On March 4, at his second inaugural, Lincoln offered his own lesson concerning the Civil War and its meaning. The date that year happened to coincide with the sixth of the Hebrew month of Adar, the day, according to ancient Jewish tradition, when Moses completed his farewell address to the Jewish people and learned that his own death was imminent.[9] The weather in Washington on Inauguration Day was awful: it had, seemingly, been raining for weeks. Riding down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol, Lincoln's carriage churned through some ten inches of mud and standing water. A crowd, waiting for hours at the Capitol, now stood sodden, deep in sludge.[10] Above the inaugural platform, dark clouds scudded across the horizon. At noontime, Andrew Johnson, visibly intoxicated, was sworn in as vice president of the United States, ranting somewhat incoherently about his plebian origins. But as President Lincoln stood to take the oath of office, the sun suddenly burst through the clouds and flooded the scene. Lincoln considered the sunshine at his second inaugural a "happy omen," recalling the words on the eve of the 1860 election: "Just now, the skies look bright." Sadly, the "clouds" would rise again and plunge the nation into mourning the following month.


"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nations wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just, and a lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations'

Abraham Lincoln.

LINCOLN'S HISTORIC UTTERANCE FROM THE CONCLUSION OF HIS SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS, MARCH 4, 1865

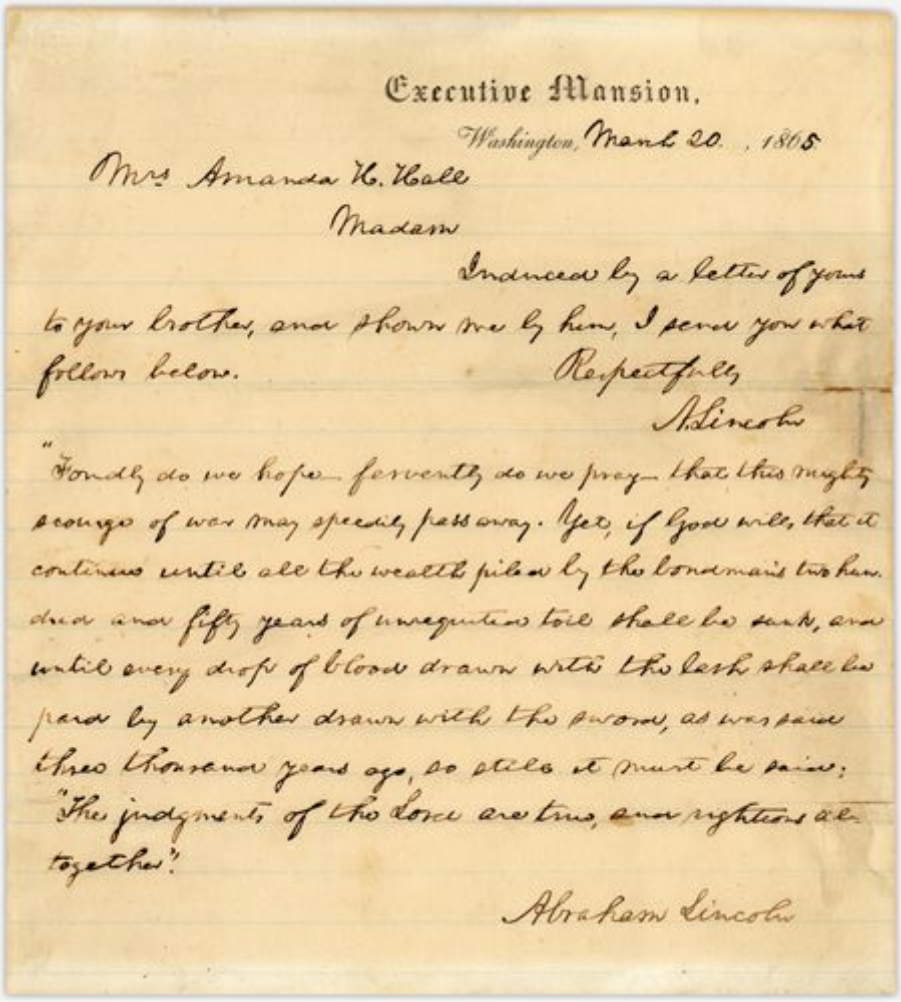
These seventy-five words from the famous conclusion of Lincoln's second inaugural address, written out by Lincoln in an album for a friend, are, in American memory, indelible, and clearly have their roots in the Old Testament's espousal of charity and compassion for the suffering of those swept up in the plague of war.
Shapell Legacy Partnership

Lincoln's second inaugural address, delivered from a makeshift platform at the east front of the Capitol, was, as Frederick Douglass understood at the time, "a sacred effort." According to one scholar's calculations, it "mentioned God fourteen times, quoted the Bible four times, and invoked prayer three times"—this in a mere 700

words.[11] No previous inaugural address had ever been so overtly religious. Nevertheless, the second inaugural, unlike Lincoln's first, made no direct reference to Christianity. Instead, Lincoln posed timeless religious questions concerning God's actions and ultimate purposes. He explored the meaning of war, the wages of sin, the mystery of fraternal hatred ("both read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other"), and, invoking Psalm 19 ("the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether"), the inscrutability of Divine judgment. His peroration—"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in" and, borrowing from Exodus 22, from Deuteronomy 14 and 16, from Jeremiah 7, and from Isaiah 1, calling for the nation "to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan"—set the stage for postwar reconstruction and appealed to values cherished by Jews and Christians alike: hope, charity, reconciliation, and peace.[12]

Lincoln emphasized in his second inaugural that slavery, and not secession, was the principal cause of the Civil War. To his mind, the war's terrible toll represented divine punishment upon both sides for the crime of slavery. Much as he prayed for the war to end, he was prepared for it to continue "until all the wealth piled by the bond-man's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword."[13] This sharp focus upon slavery as the cause of the war distinguished Lincoln from members of the National Reform Association and other Christians who blamed the war on the omission of God and of Christianity from the text of the Constitution. Their goal was "to secure such an amendment of the Constitution of the United States as will declare the nation's allegiance to Jesus Christ and its acceptance of the moral laws of the Christian religion, and to indicate that this is a Christian nation, and place all the Christian laws, institutions and usages of our government on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land." Lincoln was polite to the National Reform Association's leaders when he met with them, but much to the relief of Jews like Myer Isaacs, he did nothing to advance their goals.[14] Instead, as his inaugural address made clear, he focused on slavery and reconstruction, and looked ahead to "a just and a lasting peace."

"The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether" Psalm 19



Executive Mansion,

Washington, March 20, 1865

Mrs Amanda H. Hall

Madam

Induced by a letter of yours to your brother, and shown me by him, I send you what follows below.

Respectfully,

A. Lincoln

"Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continues until all the wealth piled by the bondman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said: 'The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether'."

Abraham Lincoln

LINCOLN TO AMANDA H. HALL: "FONDLY DO WE HOPE, FERVENTLY DO WE PRAY…," MARCH 20, 1865

In the most overtly religious portion of the second inaugural address, here from a letter written at the request of a supporter, Lincoln ruminates upon the divine will—and concludes, in an attempt to come to grips with four years of the terrible slaughter with a verse from Psalm 19: "The judgments of the Lord are true, and righteous altogether." In evidence of his wide grasp of the Bible, Lincoln here takes an obscure half verse from Psalms and makes it the lead-in to one of his greatest utterances: "With malice toward none, with charity for all…"
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

THE PURPOSES OF THE ALMIGHTY

LINCOLN'S OWN COMMENTARY on his second inaugural was contained in a letter to Thurlow Weed of New York, a journalist and political advisor. Weed had been critical of the Emancipation Proclamation. Still, he supported Lincoln's reelection and had written to compliment him on his address.

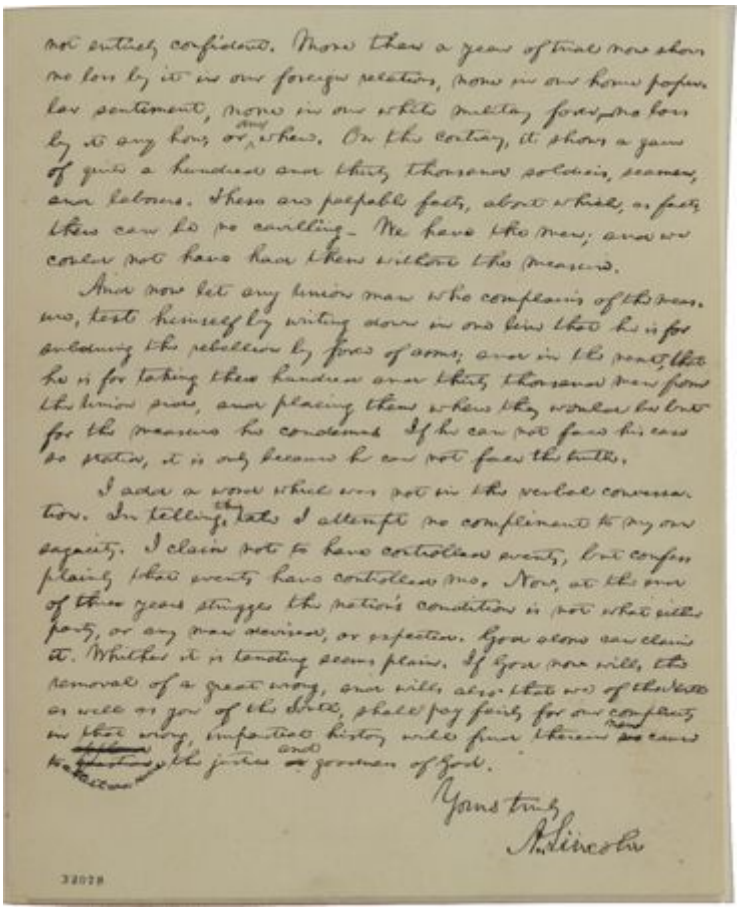
“Every one likes a compliment,” Lincoln wrote in his response, dated March 15, 1865, ten days after his inauguration. “Thank you for yours … on the recent Inaugural Address.… Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world. It is a truth which I thought needed to be told.”

Lincoln, who had hoped for a quick and victorious end to the war that the South had started, and who consistently believed that the South was morally wrong to have so long sustained an economy supported by the enslavement of human beings, nonetheless struggled with the question of why God was hesitating for years in bringing victory to the Union.

By 1864, the answer began to dawn on him. Writing to publisher Albert Hodges on April 4, he declared: “I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me.” God now willed, he wrote, the removal of a great wrong—slavery—“and wills also that we of the North as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong…”

With the North fighting the battle against slavery and secession so fervently, how, the question arises, could Lincoln have dared to suggest its complicity? Both sides, he believed, were accountable to God for their actions and guilty of the cruel offense that caused the war—slavery. But what “difference of purpose” could there possibly be between the Almighty and the North? Had not the North chosen to ignore the slave markets in Washington in the years prior to the war? Or Congress’s 1854 endorsement of the extension of slavery with the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act? The North was further implicated in its role in the Dred Scott decision of 1857, when the Supreme Court ruled that blacks were so inferior that they had no rights that the white man was bound to respect (before the Civil War, killing a slave was not considered murder but rather destruction of property). The Fugitive Slave Law, the New York draft riots, and the Constitution itself, in which slavery was legally protected and untouchable until Lincoln alone changed its essence, were all evidence to him of the North’s undeniable collusion in the sins against humanity.

Toward the end of the war, both the North and the South, each praying to God to invoke his wrath upon the other, were not able to understand what Lincoln had come to believe: That the purpose of the war was, in essence, retribution. “The Almighty has his own purposes,” Lincoln wrote toward the end of his speech. Mentioning God no fewer than fourteen times, he goes on to say: “If God wills that it [the war] continue, until all the wealth piled by the bondman’s two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash, shall be paid by another drawn with the sword.…” Lincoln then goes on to declare that God has his own reasons—and the final word—for allowing the slaughter of more than 600,000, summarized in ten simple, and perhaps cleansing, words, taken from an obscure half verse in Psalms: “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.”



not entirely confident. More than a year of trial now shows no loss by it in our foreign relations, none in our home popular sentiment, none in our white military force, no loss by it any how, or any where. On the contrary, it shows a gain of quite a hundred and thirty thousand soldiers, seamen, and labourers. These are palpable facts, about which, as facts, there can be no cavilling. We have the men; and we could not have had them without the measure.

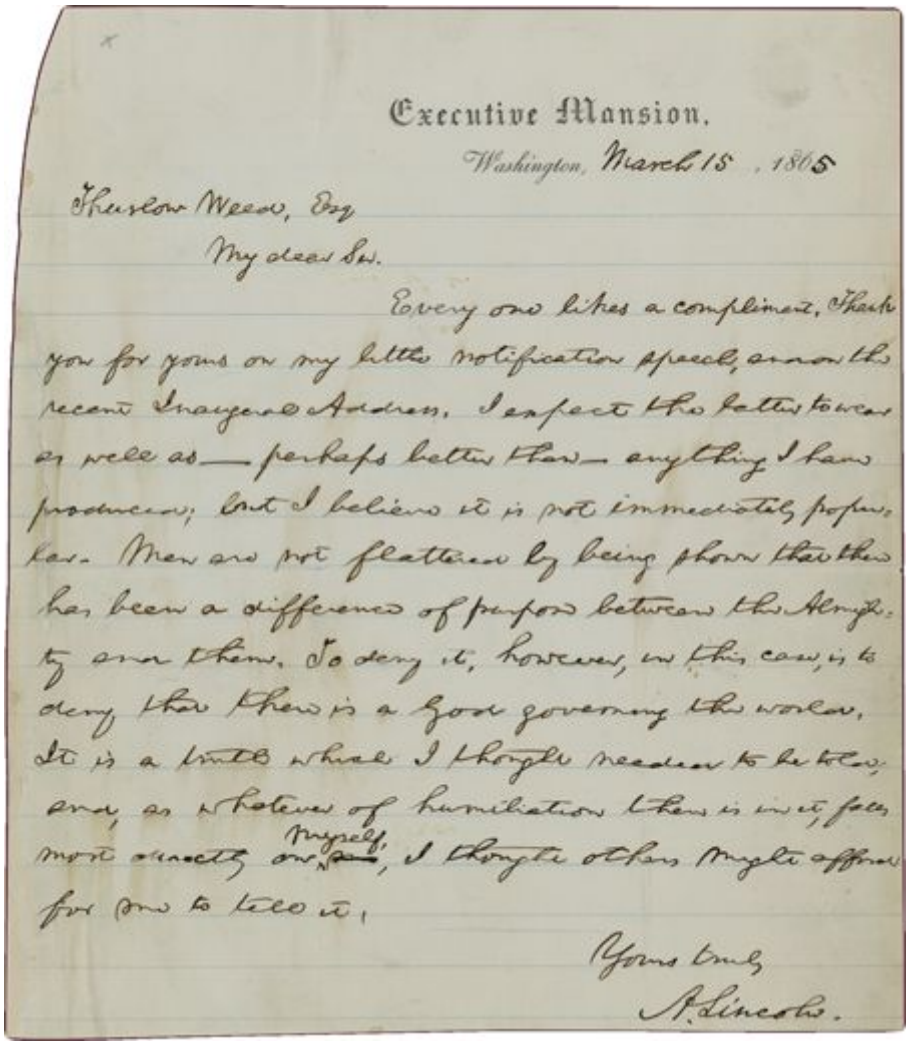
And now let any Union man who complains of the measure, test himself by writing down in one line that he is for subduing the rebellion by force of arms; and in the next, that he is for taking these hundred and thirty thousand men from the Union side, and placing them where they would be but for the measure he condemns. If he can not face his case so stated, it is only because he can not face the truth.

I add a word which was not in the verbal conversation. In telling the tale I attempt no compliment to my own sagacity. I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me. Now, at the end of three years struggle the nation's condition is not what either party, or any man devised, or expected. God alone can claim it. Whether it is tending seems plain. If God now wills the removal of a great wrong, and wills also that we of the North as well as you of the South, shall pay fairly for our complicity in that wrong, impartial history will find therein new cause to ~~[illegible]~~ the justice and goodness of God.

Yours truly,
A. Lincoln

THE LAST PAGE OF LINCOLN'S LETTER TO ALBERT HODGES, APRIL 4, 1864

Courtesy of the Library of Congress



Executive Mansion.

Washington, March 15, 1865

Thurlow Weed, Esq

My dear Sir.

Every one likes a compliment. Thank you for yours on my little notification speech, and on the recent Inaugural Address. I expect the latter to wear as well as — perhaps better than — anything I have produced; but I believe it is not immediately popular. Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world. It is a truth which I thought needed to be told; and as whatever of humiliation there is in it, falls most directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it.

Yours truly

A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN TO THURLOW WEED, MARCH 15, 1865

Shapell Legacy Partnership

The Jewish lawyer and B'nai B'rith leader Simon Wolf thought that Lincoln's inaugural address "evinced more of the priest than the statesman."[15] Overall, responses to the second inaugural were decidedly mixed. Lincoln himself, however, was pleased with his performance. He correctly foretold that the address would "wear as well as—perhaps better than—anything I have produced." While he recognized that his words were "not immediately popular," he attributed this to the fact that "men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them." "It is a truth," he explained, "which I thought needed to be told."[16]

THE FALL OF RICHMOND

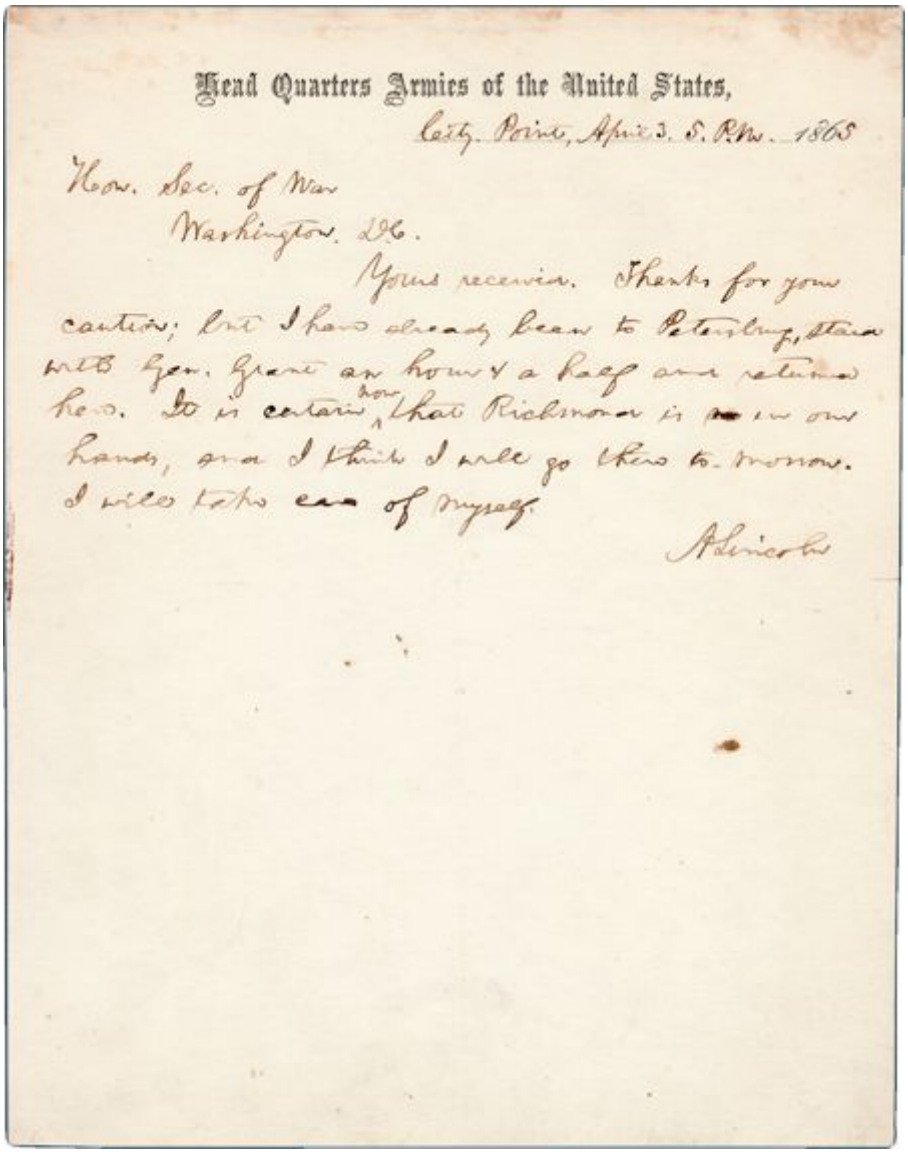
On April 2, 1865, Richmond was on fire, falling into Union hands. On the very next day, Lincoln would tell Stanton of his intention to visit the fallen city.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Lincoln visited the front soon after his inauguration and reassured General Grant that "never for a moment" had he doubted the final success of the Union's cause. On April 3, at Grant's invitation and over the objections of Secretary of War Stanton ("Consider whether you ought to expose the nation to the Consequence of any disaster to yourself"), he came to inspect the just-fallen city of Petersburg, Virginia. He urged, as he had several times before, that vanquished rebels be treated leniently. On his return, he thanked Stanton for worrying about him." I will take care of myself," he promised.[17]

The very next day, Union troops entered Richmond. "Thank God that I have lived to see this!" Lincoln declared upon hearing the exciting news.[18] Along with his son, Tad, a bodyguard, and some military men, he set sail for Richmond that morning. Crowds of newly freed blacks and poor whites surrounded Lincoln, shouting, singing, dancing; some even knelt before him. "Don't kneel to me," he gently upbraided them. "That is not right. You must kneel to God only, and thank him for the liberty you will hereafter enjoy." When "an old negro" blessed Lincoln with a paraphrase of the priestly blessing "May the good Lord bless and keep you safe," (Numbers 6:24), the president raised his hat in gratitude and bowed. In so doing, one observer recounted, he "upset the forms, laws, customs and ceremonies of centuries."[19] Many old-time white residents, of course, were heartbroken at what they saw going on around them. Emma Mordecai,

scion of a large slave-holding Jewish family, saw black Union troops guarding the roads and declared that they were "all as ill-bred as old Lincoln himself."[20]

"It is certain now that Richmond is in our hands … I will take care of myself."



Head Quarters Armies of the United States,
City Point, April 3. 5 PM. 1865

Hon. Sec. of War
Washington. D.C.

Yours received. Thanks for your caution; but I have already been to Petersburg, staid with Gen. Grant an hour & a half and returned here. It is certain now, that Richmond is in our hands, and I think I will go there to-morrow. I will take care of myself.

A. Lincoln

LINCOLN TO EDWIN STANTON: "… NOW THAT RICHMOND IS IN OUR HANDS," APRIL 3, 1865

By April 3, 1865, the carnage was almost over, and Lincoln, barely able to contain himself, hurried to the front, waiting for Richmond, the Confederate capital, to fall. Stanton, appalled at the danger, warned Lincoln not to "expose the nation to the Consequence of any disaster" that could easily befall him. Lincoln replied here, reassuringly, with what in little more than a week would become sad irony: "I will take care of myself."
Shapell Legacy Partnership

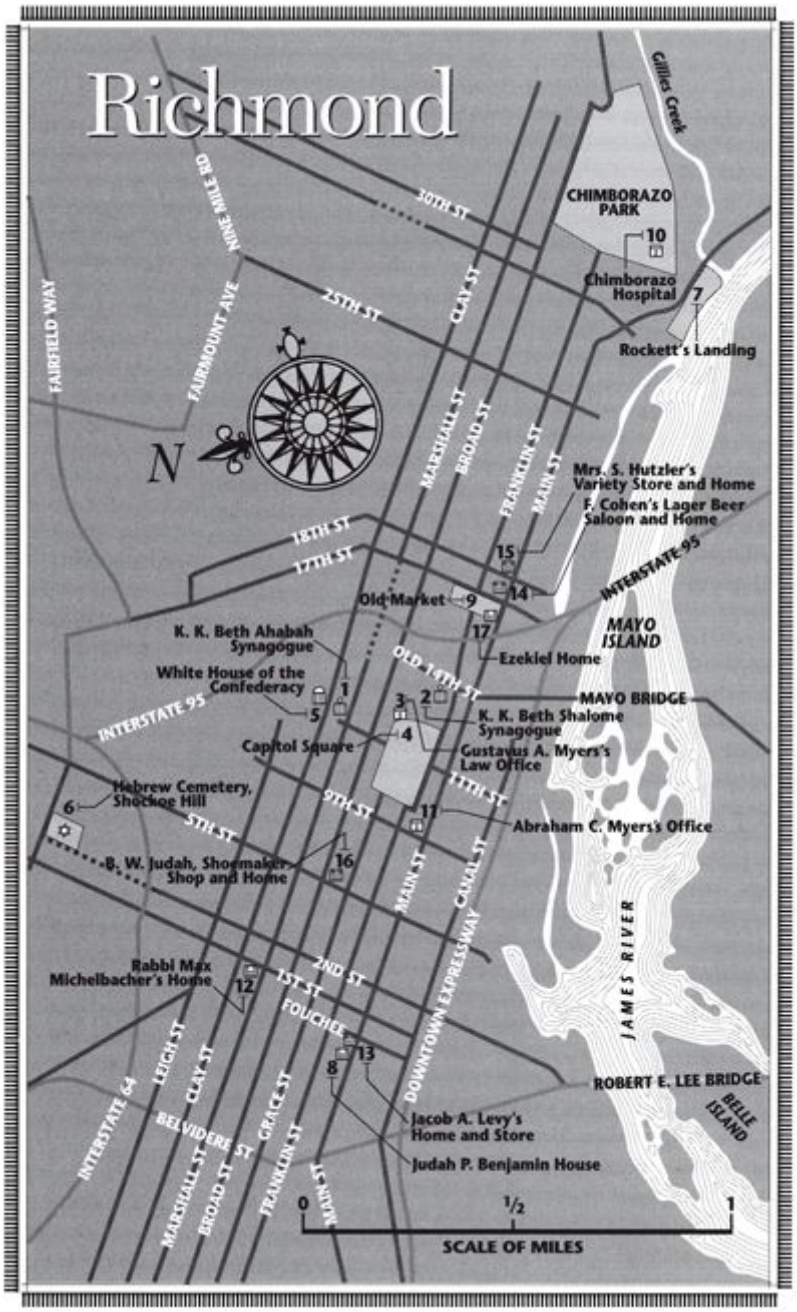
The general in charge of those black troops and now of all of Richmond, Godfrey Weitzel, soon dispatched cavalry to accompany Lincoln to the executive residence of Jefferson Davis. Along the way, he passed the city's first synagogue, Kahal Kadosh Beth Shalome, established in 1790. Arriving at the "Confederate White House," the president sat in Jefferson Davis's chair and asked for a glass of water. Later, he toured the city, reassuring blacks that they were free. That evening, on the USS *Malvern,* Lincoln met with the only high-ranking Confederate to remain in the capital: John A. Campbell, assistant secretary of war for the Confederacy and a former U.S. Supreme Court associate justice. Lincoln's goal was to pacify the city and return Virginia to the Union. He therefore proposed to Campbell that the two of them sit down with other moderate state leaders the next morning to consider how best to proceed.

LINCOLN AND SON AT THE FALL OF RICHMOND

Lincoln arrives in Richmond and tours the fallen city.
Gilder Lehrman Institute

Only one Southern leader joined Campbell for that meeting: Gustavus Adolphus Myers (1801–69), the city's most prominent Jew and a noted attorney and businessman. A third-generation American and a descendant of one of the city's oldest and wealthiest Jewish families, Myers was a close friend of the Jewish Confederate statesman and secretary of state, Judah P. Benjamin; a former president of the city council; a founder of the Virginia Historical Society; a prominent Mason; a leader in his synagogue; and the proud husband of Anne, the Episcopalian daughter of Virginia's former governor

William Branch Giles.[21] Although he did not know it, Myers had also played a symbolic role in the entry of Union troops into Richmond. His mulatto grandson, William Gill Forrester, scion of Myers's youthful relationship with a free woman of color named Nelly Forrester, had raised the American flag at the Virginia capitol when Union soldiers recaptured it; Forrester had secretly saved and hidden that flag four years earlier when Virginia seceded.[22]



WALKING PAST THE SYNAGOGUE

From the Richmond harbor, Lincoln left the USS Malvern *and walked through the center of the city, passing the the 14th Street Kahal Kadosh Beth Shalome synagogue, the center of Richmond's prominent Jewish community,*

as well as other Jewish sites, on his way to Davis's wartime residence—the Confederate White House—a short distance away.
Courtesy of Tim Belshaw

Myers, Campbell, and General Weitzel met with Lincoln on the *Malvern,* docked in the Richmond harbor, on the morning of April 5. "Our interview with the President commenced," Myers reported in a memorandum of the conversation, "by his stating that he understood we came in no official capacity and that we were unauthorized to act on any matter that might be the subject of our conversation, which we of course confirmed. He then told us that he had written a paper which he would read to us, accompanied by a verbal running commentary of his own when he considered explanation was necessary." Lincoln, according to Myers, called for the restoration of national authority, made clear that "he could not retract from anything" that he had announced concerning the emancipation of slaves, promised to exercise "sincere liberality" when it came to confiscating property (though in his written paper Lincoln added the threat that "if the war be now further persisted in" he would insist on confiscating property "to bear the additional cost"), and, finally, "professed himself really desirous to see an end of the struggle," trusting "in the Providence of God that there never would be another." In subsequent conversation—conducted in a spirit of "entire civility and good humor"—he talked about convening the Virginia legislature in hopes of restoring Virginia to the Union and discussed the question of loyalty oaths. (Myers believed that they would "be productive of irritation and conducive to no good result.")

GUSTAVUS MYERS

On April 5, Lincoln met with Confederate assistant secretary of war John A. Campbell, and was joined by Gustavus Adolphus Myers, one of Richmond's most prominent Jewish citizens and a well-respected attorney.
Virginia Historical Society

USS *MALVERN*

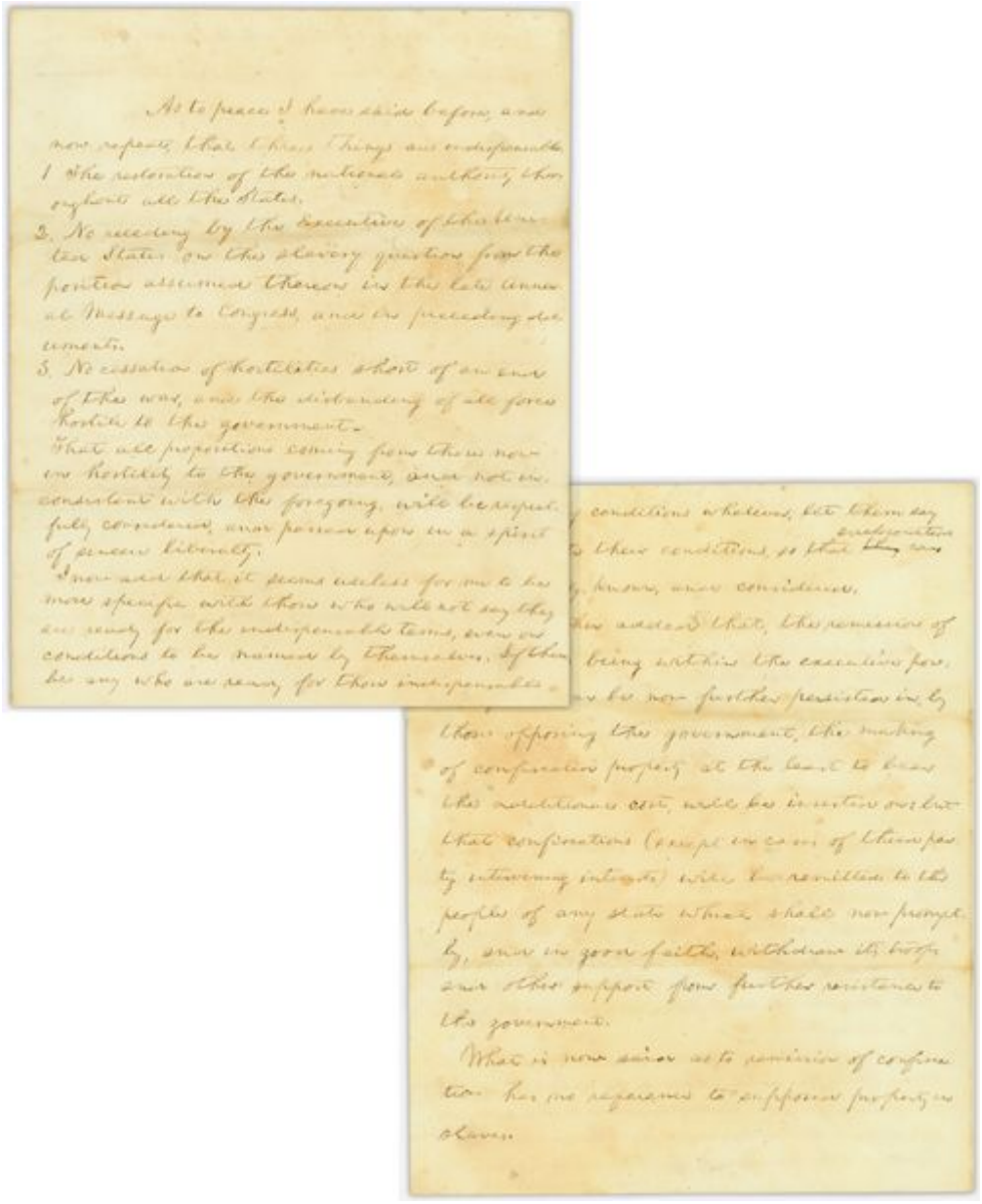
Lincoln met with Campbell, Myers, and Union General Weitzel aboard the gunboat USS Malvern, *lying on the James River in the Richmond harbor, where he had also spent the previous night.*
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Most significantly, the president set forth the philosophy that he expected to guide his postwar reconstruction policies: a "disposition to be lenient towards all persons, however prominent, who had taken part in the struggle" without "any feeling of vindictiveness or of exultation."[23] Ten years earlier, incensed at the repeal of the

Missouri Compromise, he had expressed the contrary view, that "like Haman," those responsible "should hang upon the gallows of their own building."[24] Many advocated applying just such a policy to the leaders of the Confederacy. Yet Lincoln refused. Instead, in a private conversation with General Weitzel, he expressed in the homespun language that he preferred the conciliatory philosophy that he had now come to champion: "If I were in your place," he said, "I'd let 'em up easy, let 'em up easy."[25]

Just four days after this meeting, on April 9, Lincoln's philosophy was placed on public display when Robert E. Lee surrendered his army to Ulysses S. Grant at the brick home of Wilmer McLean in the village of Appomattox Court House, Virginia. Grant, in keeping with Lincoln's orders, was magnanimous. Confederate officers and men would be allowed to return home, "not to be disturbed by U.S. authority so long as they observe their paroles and the laws in force where they may reside." They were thus immune from prosecution for treason. Grant let the defeated soldiers take their horses along with them, so that they could plant crops; he provided them with three days of rations; and he muted Union celebrations. "The war is over," he told his troops; "the rebels are our countrymen again, and the best sign of rejoicing after the victory will be to abstain from all demonstrations."[26]

"As to peace ... these things are indispensable."



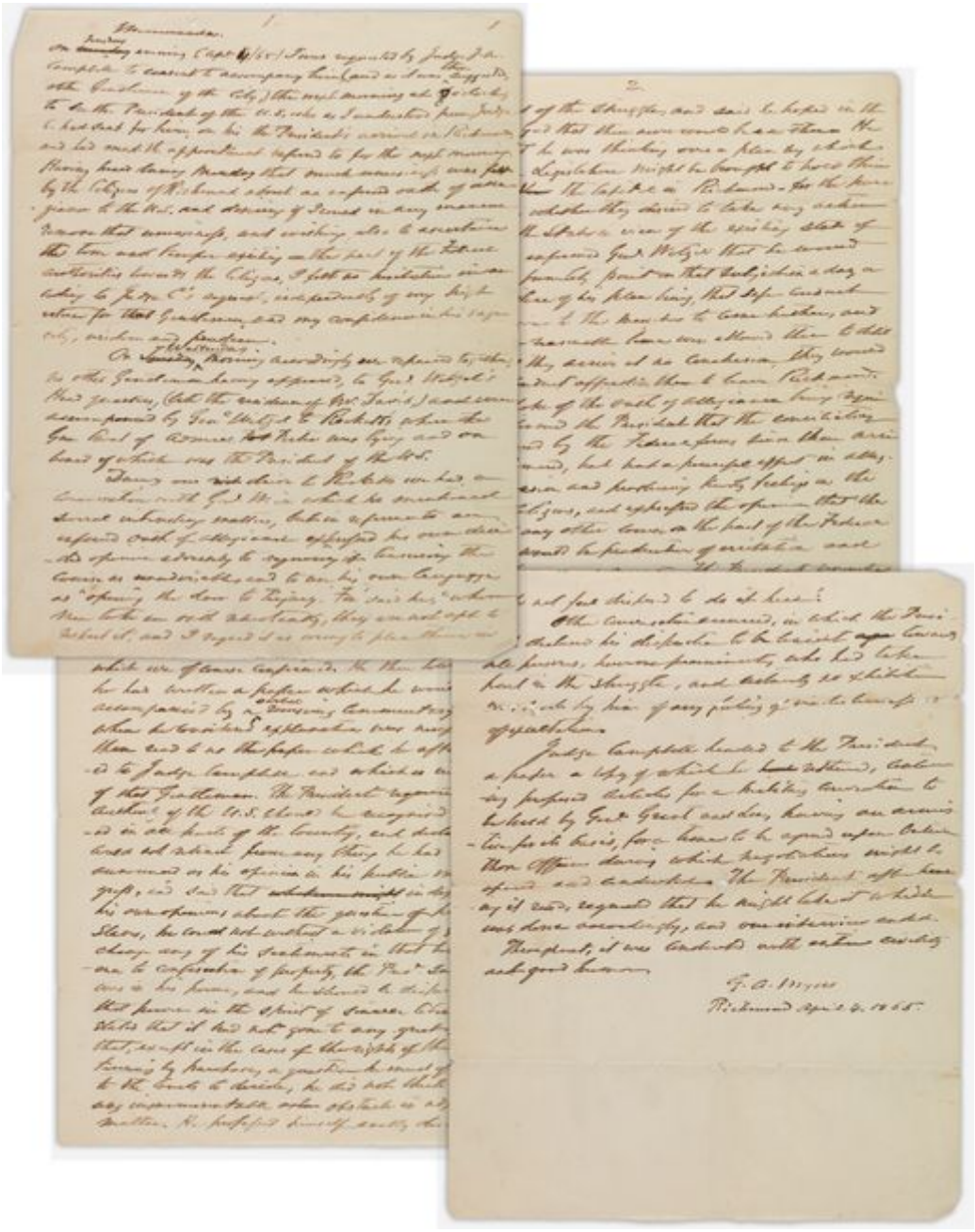
As to peace I have said before, and now repeat, that three things are indispensable.
1 The restoration of the national authority throughout all the States.
2. No receding by the Executive of the United States on the slavery question from the position assumed thereon in the late Annual Message to Congress, and in preceding documents.
3. No cessation of hostilities short of an end of the war, and the disbanding of all force hostile to the government.
That all propositions coming from there now in hostility to the government, and not inconsistent with the foregoing, will be respectfully considered, and passed upon in a spirit of sincere liberality.
I now add that it seems useless for me to be more specific with those who will not say they are ready for the indispensable terms, even on conditions to be named by themselves. If there be any who are ready for those indispensable

conditions whatever, let them say
their conditions, so that ~~they~~ our
known, and considered.
added that, the remission of
being within the executive pow-
be now further persisted in, by
those opposing the government, the making
of confiscation property at the least to bear
the additional cost, will be insisted on; but
that confiscations (except in cases of third party intervening interests) will be remitted to the
people of any state which shall now promptly, and in good faith, withdraw its troops
and other support from further resistance to
the government.
What is now said as to remission of confiscation has no reference to supposed property in slaves.

LINCOLN'S NOTES REGARDING CONDITIONS FOR PEACE, APRIL 5, 1865

In a handwritten memorandum that he read at the meeting aboard the Malvern *with Judge Campbell and Gustavus Myer, Lincoln laid out his conditions for peace with the South, demanding the surrender of all Confederate armies, the restoration of the Union, and the end of slavery. "The President was prepared for the visit and spoke with freedom," Campbell recalled. Lincoln addressed inquiries to Myers relative to the composition of the legislature, the character of its members, and the advisability of the oath of allegiance. The meeting, however, led nowhere: four days later Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox Court House.*

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library & Museum

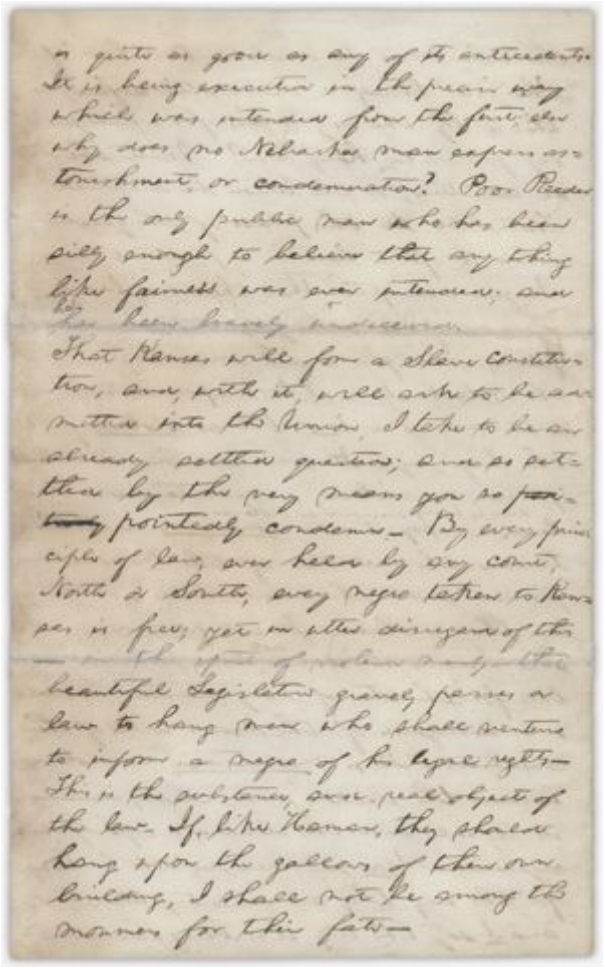


GUSTAVUS MYERS REPORTS ON HIS MEETING WITH LINCOLN

Though misdated for a day earlier, Myers's report details the meeting with Lincoln, which took several hours and ended "with mutual goodwill," but with no results.
Virginia Historical Society

The surrender at Appomattox occurred fortuitously just one day before Jews across the country sat down to observe the Passover seder, commemorating their own ancestors' passage from slavery to freedom, the exodus of the ancient Israelites from Egyptian bondage. The coincidence won notice from contemporaries. "As the forefathers of the Jews passed over the Red Sea at the time of which this festival is the anniversary," the *New York Herald* reported, "so also the American people seemed to

have passed over and beyond the red sea of blood which has been spilt so freely during the last four years." The *Boston Daily Advertiser* explicitly pointed to the "coincidence that the modern people of bondage [Southern slaves] have seen their deliverance confirmed and nearly consummated, about the same season of the year [as Passover]; and from what we have seen of their bearing and understanding of the event they are not unlikely to regard its anniversary with equal reverence."[27]



LINCOLN TO JOSHUA SPEED, "IF LIKE HAMAN THEY SHOULD HANG UPON THE GALLOWS…"

Where once, ten years before, Lincoln had declared his satisfaction at the thought that those who wished to protect slavery might, like Haman, "hang upon the gallows of their own building," now, in Richmond, he urged that Confederate leaders instead be, he said, "let up easy." Having for four terrible years presided over a conflict that had already taken the lives of 600,000 of his countrymen, he would, it seems, do anything to prevent one more drop of blood being shed.
Courtesy of the Massachusetts Historical Society

The events of April 11 continued that same pattern. Just as many Jews were sitting down to a second seder, Lincoln delivered what would be his last public address, on

reconstruction, including his most explicit statement yet on black suffrage. After acknowledging "He, from Whom all blessings flow"—an epithet for the divine that once again bespoke his sensitivity to non-Christians—he turned to the long-simmering problem of how to readmit Louisiana into the Union. More than a year earlier, Lincoln had thrown his support to the state's governor—the Jewish-born but not Jewish identifying Michael Hahn—who was elected by a minority of voters that excluded both former rebels and all blacks. After congratulating Hahn for "having fixed your name in history as the first free-state Governor of Louisiana," the president had quietly suggested that he consider widening the franchise to include "some of the colored people … as, for instance, the very intelligent, and especially those who have fought gallantly in our ranks." Enfranchising those men, he argued in a striking metaphor, "would probably help, in some trying time to come, to keep the jewel of liberty within the family of freedom."[28]

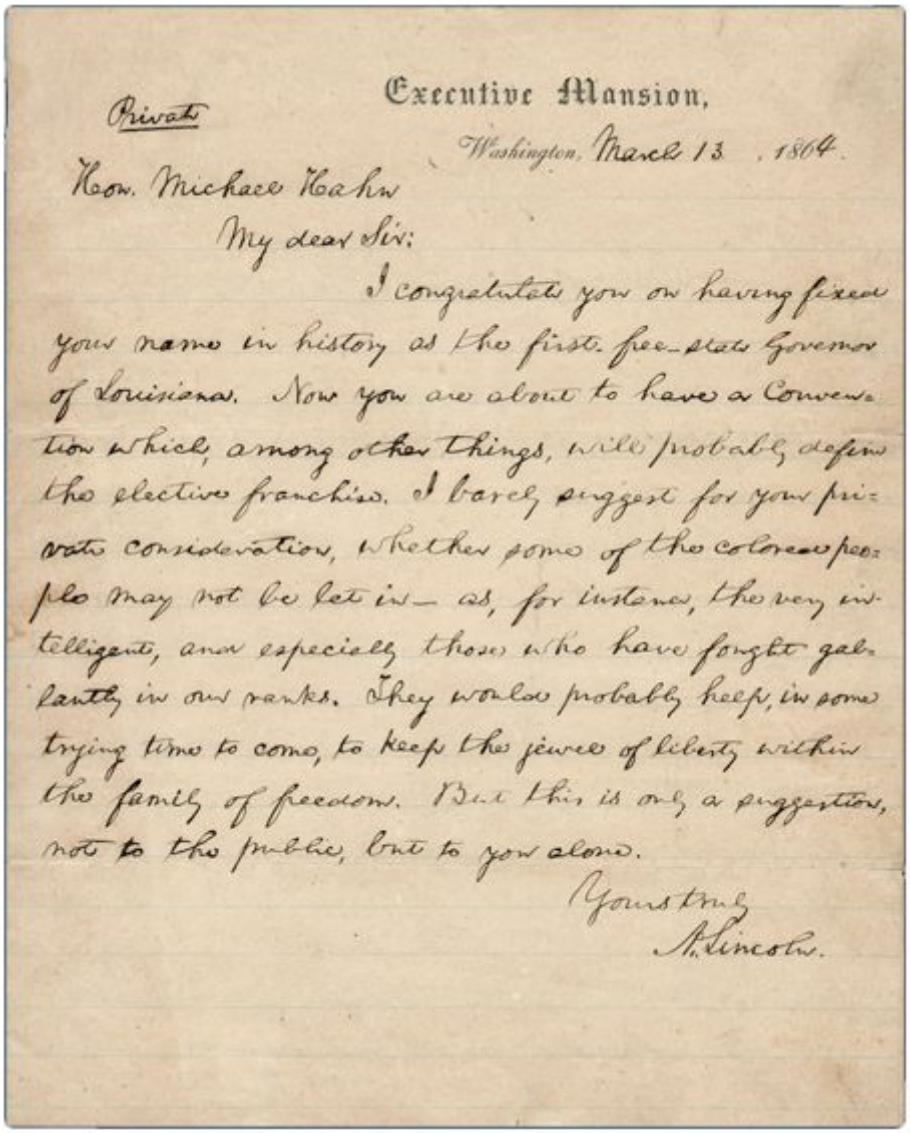
While Louisiana's new state constitution did not go as far in preserving that "jewel" as Lincoln had hoped, it did provide for the education of all children without regard to race, guaranteed equal rights to all in court, and permitted blacks to serve in the militia.[29] Lincoln, in his public address on April 11, declared for the first time that those concessions might not suffice: "It is also unsatisfactory to some that the elective franchise is not given to the colored man. I would myself prefer that it were now conferred on the very intelligent, and on those who serve our cause as soldiers." Still, he advocated that Louisiana be welcomed back into the Union "as it is, and help to improve it." He disagreed with those who sought to reject and disperse the state's new government. His approach to reconstruction, he indicated, would be to remain flexible and build up gradually and incrementally, until the early buds of freedom "ripened to a complete success."[30]

The popular but deranged young actor John Wilkes Booth, who heard Lincoln's address on that second night of Passover, understood exactly what the president meant by his timely discussion of freedom. "That means nigger citizenship," he exclaimed to a friend. Forgoing his previous plot to kidnap Lincoln in order to end the war, he now resolved upon another course of action: "Now by God, I'll put him through. That is the last speech he will ever make."[31]

Booth belonged to a celebrated family of actors frequently described as being of Jewish "extraction" or "descent."[32] They traced their ancestors back to Spain. Booth's

father, the tragic actor and unstable alcoholic Junius Brutus Booth, was characterized by his daughter as a man who "worshipped at many shrines." "In the synagogue," she recalled, "he was known as a Jew, because he conversed with rabbis and learned doctors, and joined their worship in the Hebraic tongue. He read the Talmud, also, and strictly adhered to many of its laws."[33] Booth's brother, the eminent actor Edwin Booth, was a favorite of the Jewish community and, according to Isaac Mayer Wise, personally confessed to him "that he was the son of a Jew."[34] As for John Wilkes Booth, he is not known ever to have identified as Jewish or have been so identified. In the 1850s, he had played on the amateur stage in Cleveland with various Jews, including Simon Wolf, whom some said resembled him. He also, as we have seen, played the part of Shylock at Grover's Theater. On the Friday morning of April 14, 1865, according to Wolf, remarkably, he and Booth met in front of the Metropolitan Hotel in Washington and shared a drink.[35]

"... to keep the jewel of liberty within the family of freedom."



Executive Mansion,

Washington, March 13, 1864.

Private

Hon. Michael Hahn

My dear Sir:

I congratulate you on having fixed your name in history as the first free-state Governor of Louisiana. Now you are about to have a Convention which, among other things, will probably define the elective franchise. I barely suggest for your private consideration, whether some of the colored people may not be let in — as, for instance, the very intelligent, and especially those who have fought gallantly in our ranks. They would probably help, in some trying time to come, to keep the jewel of liberty within the family of freedom. But this is only a suggestion, not to the public, but to you alone.

Yours truly

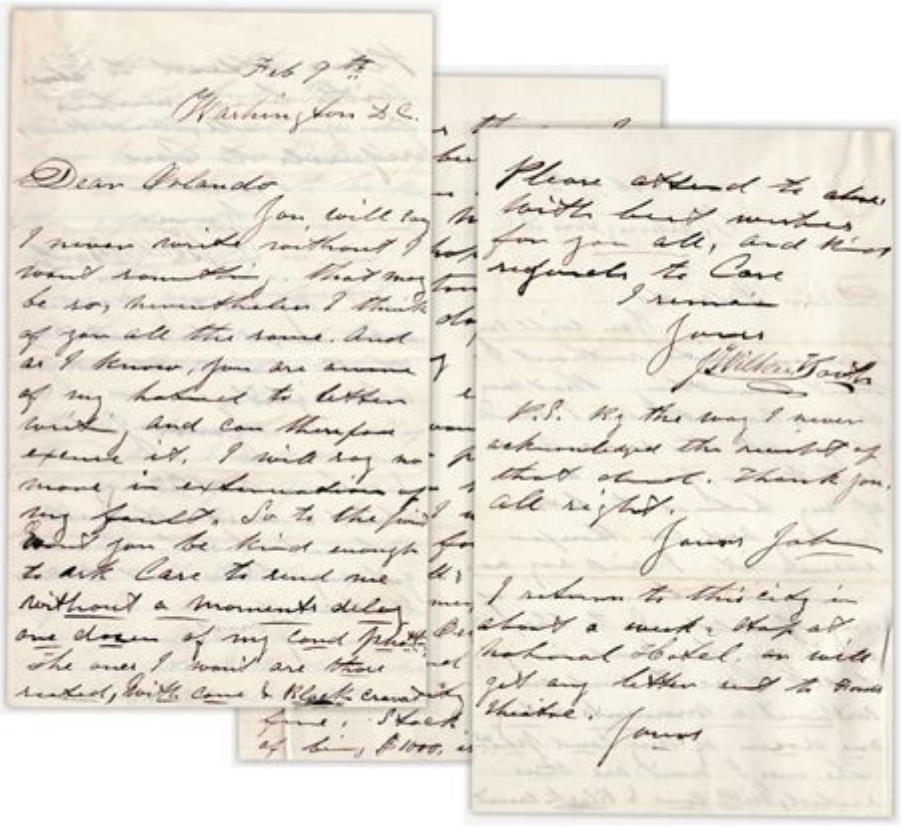
A. Lincoln.

LINCOLN TO MICHAEL HAHN: "THE JEWEL OF LIBERTY," MARCH 13, 1864

Lincoln asks how might full citizenship be extended to African Americans in a postbellum state. Putting the question to Michael Hahn, the Jewish-born governor of Louisiana, Lincoln tactfully answers his own query, suggesting that he consider widening the franchise to include "some of the colored people ... as, for instance, the very intelligent, and especially those who have fought gallantly in our ranks ... to keep the jewel of liberty within the family of freedom." Lincoln would repeat his desire for black suffrage in a speech on April 11. John Wilkes Booth, listening in the crowd, was so enraged by the concept that he vowed then to kill Lincoln.

Shapell Legacy Partnership

"I return to this city in about a week, stop at National Hotel, and will get any letter sent to Fords Theatre."



JOHN WILKES BOOTH, FEBRUARY 9, 1865

Whether, when John Wilkes Booth wrote this long and intriguing letter, he was just planning to abduct President Lincoln or to kill him instead, is impossible to determine. Writing to a longtime friend, he makes an urgent request: "Would you be kind enough to ask Case to send me without a moments delay one dozen of my card photghs…" It is thought that Booth wanted the photos for identification purposes connected to the Lincoln conspiracy, adding "I return to this city in about a week, stop at National Hotel, and will get any letter sent to Fords Theatre." On April 14, 1865, picking up his mail at Ford's, Booth heard that Lincoln would be attending Our American Cousin *there that evening and decided to use that opportunity to kill Lincoln. His favorite photograph, "seated, with cane & black cravat," would soon adorn the wanted poster for the assassination of the president.*

Shapell Manuscript Collection

ACTOR AND ASSASSIN JOHN WILKES BOOTH, 1865

Courtesy of the Library of Congress

FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 1865.

Murder of Abraham Lincoln President of the U.S. by John Wilkes Booth, at Fords Theatre 10 P.M.

Secretary and Ass't Sec. Seward mortally wounded by parties unknown. The City one scene of Excitement. Tumult and Consternation – Bells Tolling, people hurrying, the Winds in Concert moaning among the Trees, & this is the Anniversary of the Fall of Sumter, the fourth year of this Unholy Rebellion, ending in Assassination & Death & Eternal Infamy to Traitors.

SATURDAY, APRIL 15, 1865.

At twenty two minutes past seven A.M. at the House of Mr Petersen a German Tailor the President, surrounded by the Cabinet, his distracted family, breathed his last, and the soul of the great and good man was before its Maker. Such gloom & universal sorrow was never seen, the Heavens are shrouded, the Rain pours down and Nature sympathizes with our great Loss.

Treason has done its worst, the Madmen fiends have slain their best friend and have now launched their Lives upon the tempestuous Ocean of Johnson's Hate & Mercy. At 12 M. to day V.P. Johnson was sworn in

REPRODUCTION OF PAGES FROM MY DIARY OF 1865

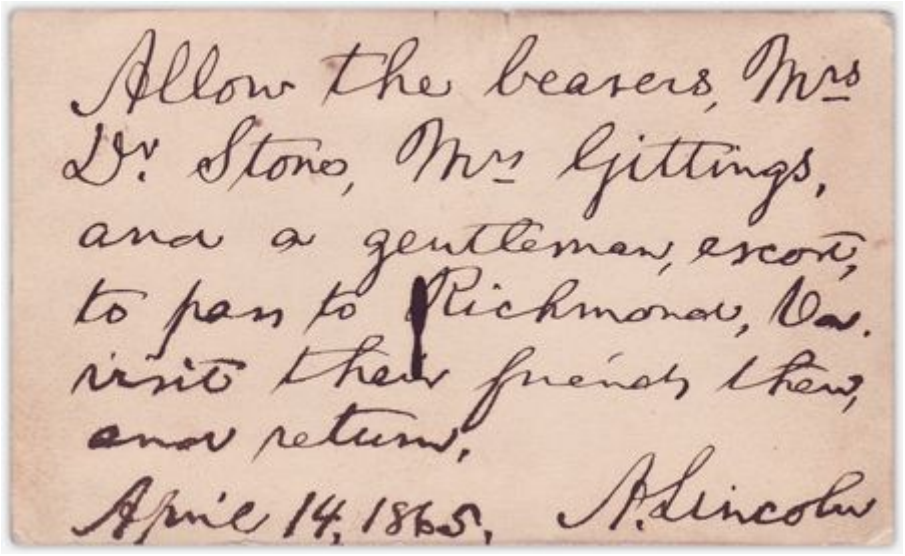
A PAGE FROM THE DIARY OF SIMON WOLF, APRIL 14–15, 1865

In this page from Simon Wolf's diary, he describes the "tumult ... and consternation" in the immediate aftermath of Lincoln's assassination, the conspiracy, and Lincoln's last hours. Wolf was one of the few people who had personal relationships over a number of years with both Lincoln and Booth.

Simon Wolf, *Presidents I Have Known*

While Wolf and Booth were drinking, Lincoln was meeting with his cabinet. The discussion that Friday covered numerous issues: regulations concerning trade, the reassertion of federal authority, plans for reconstruction, and more. Everybody's mind, however, was on North Carolina, for Confederate forces there were holding out in Raleigh, and word was awaited imminently from General Sherman, whose job it was to subdue those holdouts and bring the war formally to an end. Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles recorded in his diary that Lincoln was optimistic, "for he had last night the usual dream which he had preceding nearly every great and important event of the War." In the dream, Lincoln recounted, "he seemed to be in some singular, indescribable vessel, and that he was moving with great rapidity towards an indefinite shore." "Generally the news had been favorable which succeeded this dream," he declared hopefully, "and the dream itself was always the same.… We shall, judging from the past, have great news very soon." As Welles noted gloomily when he recorded this remarkable scene, "Great events did, indeed, follow."[36]

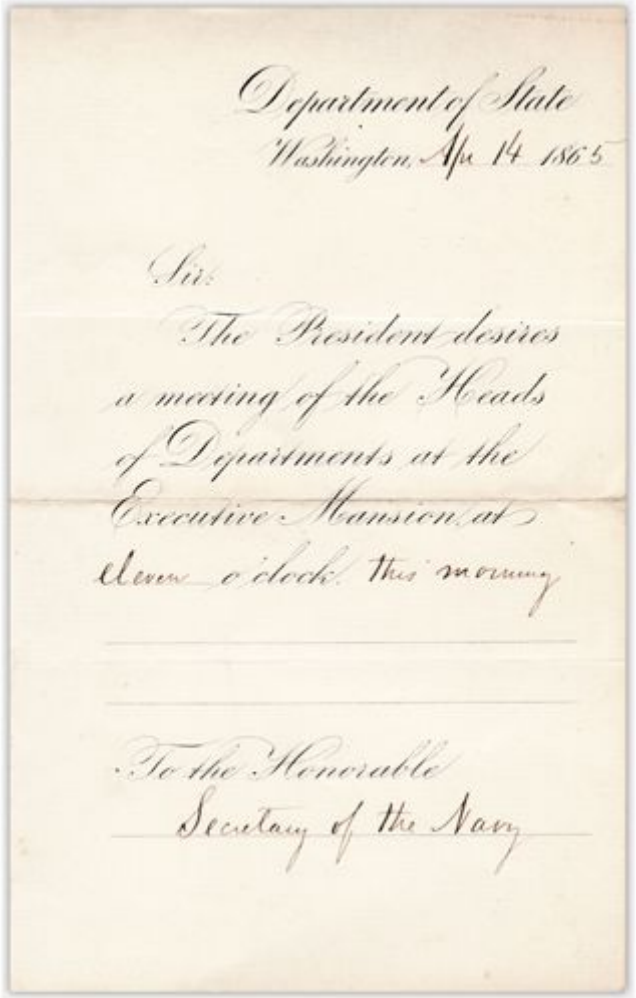
Meanwhile, in Cincinnati, Rabbi Max Lilienthal was already celebrating the "national victory." In a public lecture delivered at his synagogue on April 14, he spoke of how far he and his congregants had advanced "intellectually, morally and politically" during the course of the war. "Four years ago," he confessed, "how many of us were Abolitionists? How many of us dreamt of the possibility that this sacred soil of liberty should be cleansed from the scourge of slavery? How many of us had the moral courage enough to think that this great stain could be or should be removed from the brilliant escutcheon of the American people?" He recalled the contempt shown toward Abraham Lincoln ("the scorned railsplitter") upon his election and first inauguration. He doubtless remembered that he had himself opposed Lincoln at that time and that his friend Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise had mocked Lincoln repeatedly. Now, four years later, it was time to repent, for "the same man, re-elected to the same office" was "respected and revered … as a man of manifest destiny and heroic immortality." "May the Lord forgive those who slandered our good President," Lilienthal exclaimed, as if seeking absolution for himself and his friends. "We had rather complain of the goodness and mercy of his heart than the severity of his administration." Echoing Lincoln, he then called for "no hatred, no vengeance to the South" and urged his listeners to show "that we can be as magnanimous in peace as terrible in war."[37]


Allow the bearers, Mrs
Dr. Stone, Mrs Gittings,
and a gentleman escort,
to pass to Richmond, Va.
visit their friends there,
and return.
April 14, 1865. A. Lincoln

ONE OF LINCOLN'S LAST NOTES, APRIL 14, 1865

In a subtle twist of irony, Lincoln interacts with both Dr. and Mrs. Stone on the last day of his life. Here the president issues a pass for "Mrs. Dr. Stone" to travel to Richmond; by that night, her husband, the Lincoln family physician, would be attending at Lincoln's deathbed.

Shapell Manuscript Collection


Department of State
Washington Apl 14 1865

Sir

The President desires
a meeting of the Heads
of Departments at the
Executive Mansion at
eleven o'clock this morning

To the Honorable
Secretary of the Navy

TOWARD AN INDEFINITE SHORE

On this, one of the happiest days of his life, and his last, Lincoln called a cabinet meeting with this summons. "Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles is desired to attend at the Executive Mansion, at eleven o'clock in the morning, April 14th, 1865." Welles's diary entry for that day recorded that Lincoln related to the cabinet a curious dream he had the night before. "It related to your element, the water," he told Welles. "I seemed to be in some singular, indescribable vessel," he said, "moving with great rapidity toward an indefinite shore." It presaged, he was sure, that they should have "important news" very soon, as he had had that dream previously. And they did: within hours, Lincoln was dead, assassinated.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

That night, the evening of Good Friday on the Christian calendar, was, for Jews, the commencement of the Sabbath and the start of the fifth day of Passover. While many Jews settled down to a special holiday dinner, Abraham Lincoln and his wife, accompanied by their guests, Clara Harris and Major Henry R. Rathbone, traveled to Ford's Theatre, arriving late at a performance of *Our American Cousin,* by Tom Taylor. Jacob H. Rosewald, a Jewish musical prodigy who normally played with the orchestra, was away from the theater that evening, probably on account of the holiday.[38] The orchestra struck up "Hail to the Chief" as the Lincoln party entered the presidential box, and the audience greeted them with a standing ovation.

John Wilkes Booth lurked in the anteroom of the presidential box. Peering through the tiny peephole he had prepared earlier, he watched Lincoln and with his knowledge of the script waited for the perfect moment when one actor stood alone on the stage and an enormous laugh would muffle sounds from the box. When that moment came, he opened the inner door, stepped toward the back of the president's rocking chair, and fired a shot that went into the back of Lincoln's head. He then struggled briefly with Major Rathbone, leaped down upon the almost empty stage, screamed, "Sic semper tyrannis" (Thus always to tyrants), and made his escape out the back door.[39]

FORD'S THEATRE.

FRIDAY.

ORCHESTRA

Section.....

No.....

Ford's Theatre.....Washington.

Reserved Chair--Friday,

IN ORCHESTRA!

GOOD THIS NIGHT ONLY.

☞ Give this portion of the Ticket for entrance to the Door-keeper.

Jas. R. Ford,

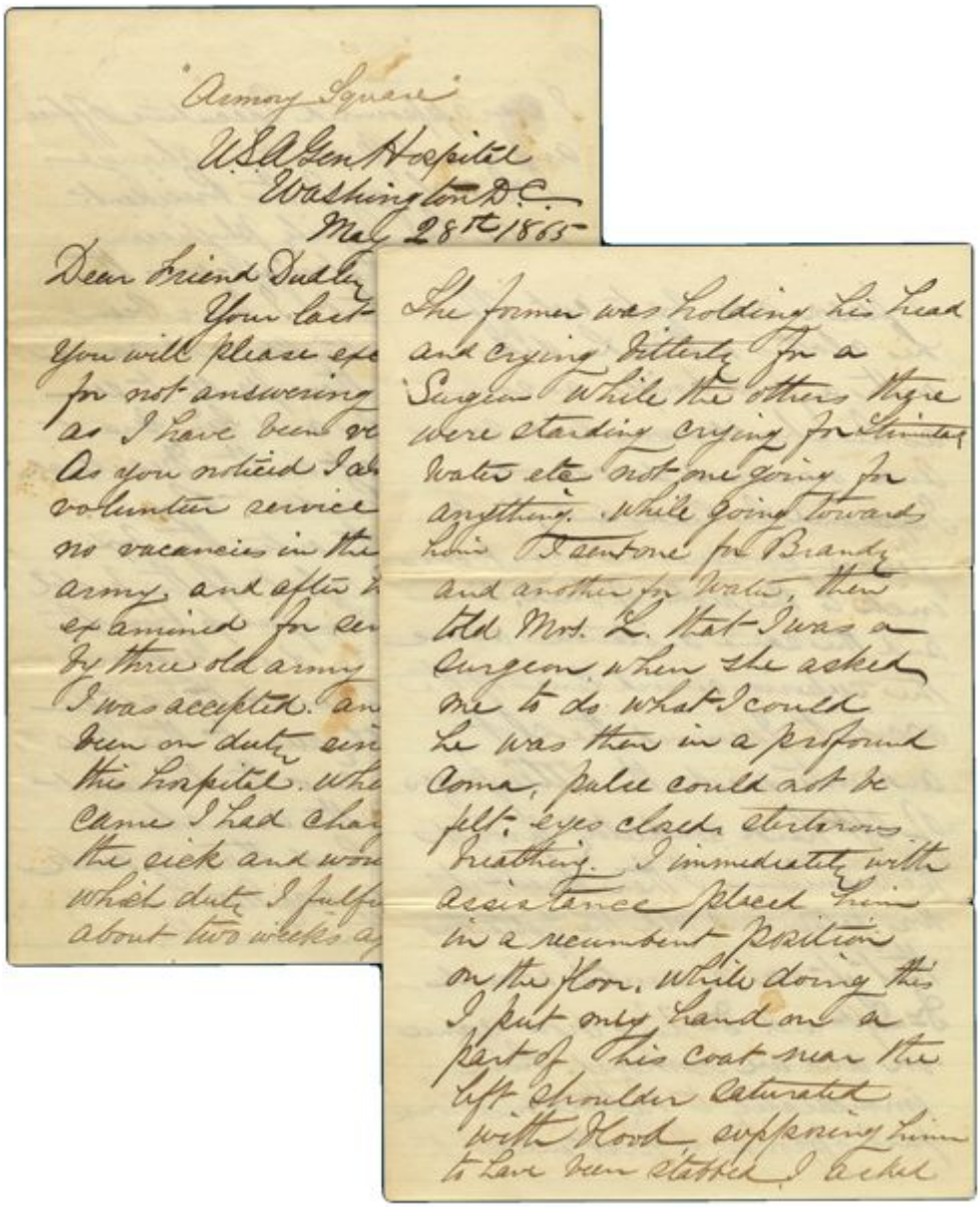
BUSINESS MANAGER.

A TICKET TO TRAGEDY, FORD'S THEATRE, STAMPED APRIL 14, 1865

On the evening of April 14, 1865, Lincoln attended a play at Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. Sometime around ten, John Wilkes Booth slipped unnoticed into the presidential box and, standing four feet away from the president, discharged a single bullet from a derringer into the back of Lincoln's head. "There will never be anything like it on earth," one witness said of the pandemonium following the shot. Lincoln never regained consciousness, and when he died the next morning, he became the first president to be assassinated.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Lincoln, unconscious and bleeding, was soon carried across the street to a boardinghouse and laid diagonally across a bed. Around him gathered family, friends, cabinet members, generals, and, of course, doctors. One of the latter was Charles H. [Carl Heinrich] Liebermann (1813–86), a Russian-born Jewish surgeon who was "for over twenty years the leading oculist in Washington," and also, in 1865, president of the Medical Society of the District of Columbia. Liebermann had been imprisoned in Siberia for promoting Polish independence, trained in Germany, and subsequently immigrated to the United States, bringing with him a superior European medical training. He was a pioneer of strabismus surgery to cure misalignment of the eyes, helped to create Georgetown University's medical school, and, in the face of prejudice, had come to be esteemed by his colleagues, who knew him as a Jew even though he did not otherwise identify with the Jewish community. Upon arriving at Lincoln's bedside, Liebermann poured brandy down the president's throat, removed hair from the area surrounding his wound, and diagnosed the gunshot as fatal.[40] Alonzo Chappel's famous painting, *The Last Hours of Lincoln,* depicts Liebermann as one of the bearded, bald, grave-looking physicians staring down intensely to the left of Lincoln's bed. He remained at that bedside until the president was pronounced dead at 7:22 on the morning of April 15. "It is all over," he and the other physicians gravely reported to the first lady, who was in the front room. "The President is no more!"[41] In his death vigil, Lincoln's family doctor, Robert K. Stone, counting the president's final breaths, recorded: "Death closed the scene."[42]

"... in a profound Coma, pulse could not be felt, eyes closed. ... It is impossible for him to recover."



Army Square
U.S.A. Gen Hospital
Washington D.C.
May 28th 1865

Dear Friend Dudley

You will please ex
for not answering
as I have been
As you noticed I ab
volunteer service
no vacancies in the
army, and after
examined for
by three old army
I was accepted. an
been on duty
this Hospital. Whe
came I had char
the sick and wou
which duty I fulfi
about two weeks a

The former was holding his head and crying bitterly for a Surgeon while the others there were standing crying for Stimulants Water etc not one going for anything. While going towards him I sent one for Brandy and another for Water, then told Mrs. L. that I was a Surgeon, when she asked me to do what I could. He was then in a profound Coma, pulse could not be felt: eyes closed, stertorous breathing. I immediately with assistance placed him in a recumbent position on the floor. While doing this I put my hand on a part of his coat near the left Shoulder saturated with blood supposing him to have been stabbed. I asked

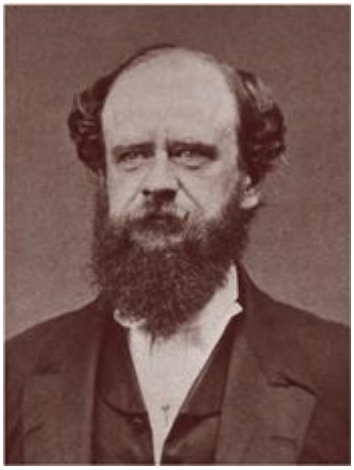
CHARLES AUGUSTUS LEALE TO DWIGHT DUDLEY, MAY 28, 1865

Charles Augustus Leale—age twenty-three and six weeks out of medical school—went to Ford's Theatre especially to see Lincoln on April 14, sat as close as he could to the presidential box, and witnessed Booth enter the box and then jump to the stage with his dagger drawn. Leale immediately hurried to Lincoln and was the first doctor to attend the stricken president. Recalling the event in graphic detail six weeks later, Leale writes that he found Lincoln "in a profound Coma, pulse could not be felt, eyes closed.... It is impossible for him to recover."

Shapell Manuscript Collection

THE LAST HOURS

Alonzo Chappel's famous 1867 painting, The Last Hours of Lincoln, *depicts the ten-by-fifteen-foot room in which Lincoln lay dying as large enough to be filled with almost as many doctors who later claimed to be there. Of the nine actually in attendance, Dr. Liebermann is prominently featured here, gazing intently at the president. Liebermann was misidentified in the key that accompanies the painting; research has now correctly determined the likeness of the Jewish doctor.*
Chicago History Museum



CHARLES H. LIEBERMANN

The Russian-born Jewish ophthalmologist Dr. Charles H. Liebermann was a leading Washington physician, and while attending Lincoln's deathbed vigil cut a lock of hair away from the president's wound and, in a desperate attempt at resuscitation, poured brandy down his throat.
Georgetown University Archives

News of the president's death spread quickly that Saturday morning. In Washington, Simon Wolf recalled, "the bells of the churches tolled the death knell of the Great Martyr"[43] very soon after he was pronounced dead. In New York, the news hit just as

Jews were "proceeding to their places of worship for the services of the Sabbath of Passover."[44] In Philadelphia, Isaac Leeser heard the news from his synagogue president, "during the pause in the morning service, when the Sepher [Torah scroll] was taken out."[45] In San Francisco, Elkan Cohn of Congregation Emanu-El was handed a note with the news just as he was "ascending his pulpit, on Saturday, to deliver the usual sermon … he was so overcome that, bursting in tears, he sank almost senseless."[46] Fittingly, the prophetic portion read in synagogues on the Sabbath when Lincoln was pronounced dead was Ezekiel's vision of the Valley of Dry Bones, a chapter that Lincoln himself had quoted in one of his earliest known addresses.[47] "Behold.… Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost.… Thus saith the Lord God; Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel."[48] The prophet's message of comfort and hope, uttered against the background of death and destruction, was appropriate to the national mood in the wake of the war's end, and even more so in the face of the assassination. For Jews, the prophecy also reinforced the age-old yearning proclaimed at the conclusion of the seder just days before, "Next Year in Jerusalem!"

Lincoln, Mary Todd Lincoln later recalled, shared a similar yearning. Writing from Chicago on December 17, 1866, she described a carriage ride they had taken that last afternoon on April 14. With the war over, she said, Lincoln had told her that they needed to make an effort to be happier—they had both been so miserable. "At the expiration of his second term, we would visit Europe, and," she wrote, "he appeared to anticipate much pleasure, from a visit to Palestine."[49] In fact, she told her friends, he wanted to see Jerusalem before he died.

"Death closed the Scene"

Peter Smith

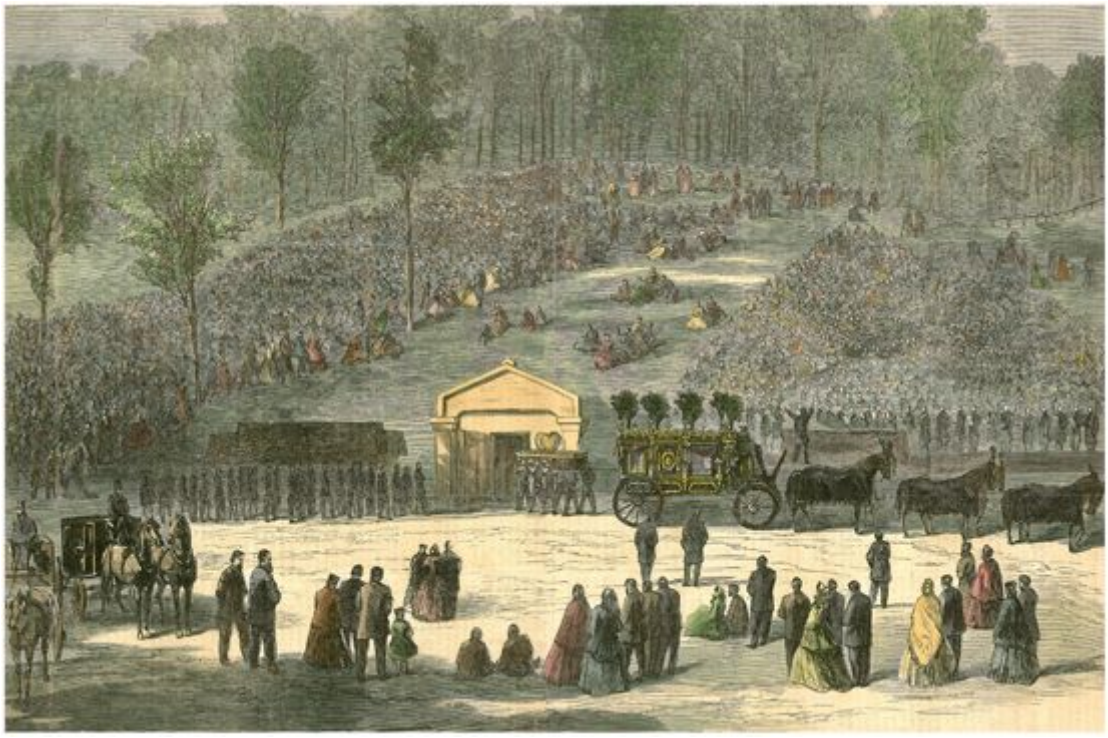
On the evening of Friday April 14th 1865, I was summoned in haste to the late Presdt of the U.S. to whom I had the honor to be family physician. I was called for, at, or very near, a quarter past ten o'clock P.M. the carriage which was sent for me, having been driven at top speed, in coming for me & returning to the scene of blood. [illegible]

[illegible]

DEATH CLOSED THE SCENE, APRIL 15, 1865

Considered the dean of the mid-nineteenth-century Washington medical establishment, Dr. Robert K. Stone was the Lincoln family physician and attended, along with Dr. Liebermann, whom he calls in the report "my old friend," the president's deathbed and autopsy. His seven-page narrative details his dramatic rush to the stricken president's side, and, some eight hours later, Lincoln's final minutes, decline, death, and autopsy. This page, notably, is stained with human blood; it is, very likely, Lincoln's.

Shapell Manuscript Collection



PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S FUNERAL

After a journey of 1,600 miles from Washington, D.C., Lincoln was buried at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois on May 4, 1865.

Sketched by W. Waud for *Harper's Weekly*

EPILOGUE

As a result of the fact that so many Jews happened to be in synagogue or on their way there when word of Lincoln's death became known, many of the first prayers memorializing the slain president were Jewish ones. Adolphus S. Solomons noted this at the time: "It is a singular fact," he wrote, "that it was the Israelites' privilege here, as well as elsewhere, to be the first to offer in their places of worship, prayers for the repose of the soul of Mr. Lincoln."[1] Newspapers preserved accounts of those prayers. At Temple Emanu-El, according to *The New York Times,* the congregation rose and "as if by a simultaneous impulse, repeated the Kadisch, a prayer for the nearest deceased relative. After which they were dismissed."[2] Elsewhere, the prayer for the government and the nation was recited, and also prayers for peace. At Shearith Israel, "a highly impressive prayer was … offered up to the throne of Grace by the minister for the repose of the soul of the late President." This was followed, according to the *Jewish Messenger,* by the Sephardic prayer for the dead, "being the first time in the history of Judaism in America that these prayers have been said in a Jewish house of worship for other than one professing the Jewish religion."[3]

Jewish leaders had the opportunity to deliver polished eulogies for Lincoln during the ensuing days, when funeral services were held across the country and Lincoln's coffin made its more than 1,600-mile trip from Washington, D.C. to New York to Springfield, Illinois. Practically every Jewish religious leader in America eulogized Lincoln, many of them at noon on April 19, when the president's official memorial service took place in the East Room of the Executive Mansion in Washington, and "the various religious denominations throughout the country [were] invited to meet in their respective places of worship at that hour for the purpose of solemnizing the occasion with appropriate ceremonies."[4] Rabbis spoke of Lincoln's character, his values, his leadership abilities, and his faith. They compared him to the greatest of human heroes, particularly to Abraham, his biblical namesake ("Mr. Lincoln had not only the name of

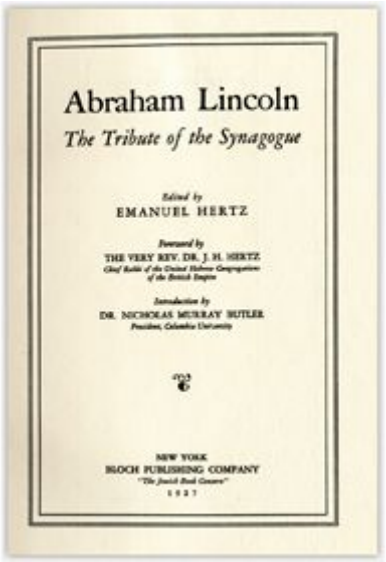
our glorious patriarch Abraham, but like him he was a self-made man. Like him he had a high mission from God."[5]); to Moses ("like our own law-giver, Moses, brought a nation to the verge of the haven of peace, and, like him, not allowed to participate in its consummation"[6]); and to George Washington ("Washington's name is identified with our liberty and independence. The name of Lincoln will be identified with our nationality and greatness"[7]). Lewis Dembitz, who, as a delegate from Kentucky, had voted for Lincoln at the Republican convention of 1860, claimed that Lincoln was sometimes known as "Rabbi Abraham, as if he was one of our nation—of the seed of Israel."[8] Isaac Mayer Wise, who had criticized Lincoln repeatedly while he lived and then characterized him in death as "the greatest man that ever sprung from mortal loins," insisted that Lincoln was fully a Jew, "bone from our bone and flesh from our flesh. He supposed himself to be a descendant of Hebrew parentage. He said so in my presence."[9]

EAST.

Admit the Bearer to the
EXECUTIVE MANSION,
On WEDNESDAY, the
19th of April, 1865.

PASS TO LINCOLN'S FUNERAL IN THE EXECUTIVE MANSION, APRIL 19, 1865

Lincoln's official memorial service took place in the East Room of the Executive Mansion. Many Jewish congregations around the country also conducted memorial services at that date and hour.
Shapell Manuscript Collection



ABRAHAM LINCOLN, THE TRIBUTE OF THE SYNAGOGUE, EDITED BY EMANUEL HERTZ

This collection of Jewish eulogies of Abraham Lincoln was published in 1927.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

What distinguished these Jewish eulogies from their Christian counterparts was, of course, the absence of Jesus. Pious Christians, noting that Lincoln was shot on Good Friday, inevitably drew parallels between his death and that of "the son of God," implying that Lincoln died to expiate the nation's sins. The *Chicago Tribune,* for example, characterized the assassination as "the most horrid crime ever committed on this globe, since the wicked Jews crucified the Savior."[10] Jews, eager to participate as equals in the national rites of mourning, found such allusions insensitive and disturbing. Their neighbors, they feared, viewed them through a New Testament prism, rather than as fellow citizens the way Lincoln had.[11]

In New York, at least, Jews did participate as equals when Lincoln's remains were accompanied through the streets. More than twenty different synagogues and Jewish organizations joined in the solemn procession. The *Jewish Messenger* calculated that "there were Jewish members sufficient to bring the aggregate of Israelites in the procession to about seven thousand."[12]

In the eleven other major cities where the funeral train paused, Jews participated to a lesser degree. In some, no Jewish participation at all was recorded. In Cleveland, "Solomon and Montefiore Lodges I. O. B. B. [International Order B'nai B'rith], under the marshalship of B. F. Peixotto, Grand Master of the Order in the United States," marched in the funeral procession that accompanied Lincoln's coffin. In Chicago, "the

reverend clergy … merged in the one great sorrow—Protestant and Catholic and Hebrew—all moving side by side." The city's Hebrew Benevolent Association, the B'nai B'rith Ramah Lodge, and at least one synagogue participated in the funeral procession.

Finally, in Springfield, where Lincoln was laid to rest on May 4, 1865, the clothing store of the Hammerslough Brothers displayed a portrait of Lincoln with the motto "Millions bless thy name," and Julius Hammerslough was among those who met the body, while his firm provided the black plumes that ornamented the cortege on the last leg of its journey. The funeral oration in Springfield went out of its way to mention Jewish participation in the obsequies in New York ("The Archbishop of the Roman Catholic Church in New York and a Protestant minister walked side by side in the sad procession, and a Jewish Rabbi performed a part of the solemn services").[13] While no Jew participated in the burial ceremony itself, the larger aim of the Jewish community —"to join our fellow citizens in paying a national tribute to a nation's lost chief"—was amply fulfilled.[14]

LINCOLN'S FUNERAL PROCESSION

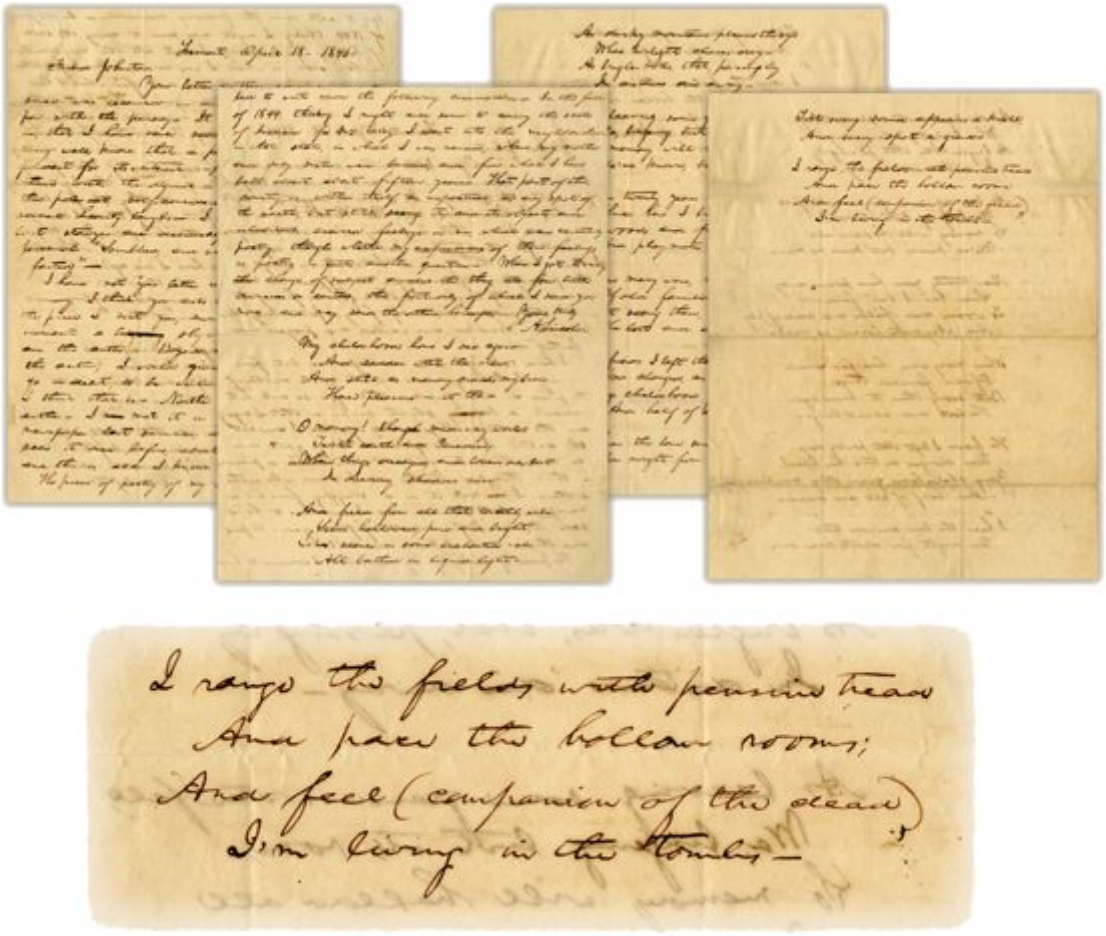
Jewish photographer Samuel Alschuler, who had twice photographed Lincoln in Illinois, captured Lincoln's funeral procession in Chicago on May 1, 1865, three days before his interment. This later etching is based on Alschuler's photograph.
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Jews had much more trouble joining with their fellow citizens on June 1, the day set aside by President Andrew Johnson "for special humiliation and prayer in consequence of the assassination of Abraham Lincoln."[15] Johnson had originally set aside the day of

May 25 for the commemoration. Following protests, however, he canceled that date, explaining that it was Ascension Day, "sacred to large numbers of Christians as one of rejoicing for the ascension of the Savior." Without checking with other religious groups, he proclaimed "that the religious services recommended as aforesaid should be postponed until Thursday, the 1st day of June next."[16] That conflicted with the second day of Shavuot, the Jewish Feast of Weeks, commemorating the giving of the Torah on Mt. Sinai. "It is not to be expected that President Johnson shall, amid the trying and important duties that devolve upon him at the outset of his administration, keep in memory every festival, fast-day, and ceremonial," the *Jewish Messenger* explained apologetically to its readers. But the lack of regard for Jewish sensibilities stung nevertheless. The paper wondered how broadly Ascension Day was really observed in America and noted that the new date placed Jews in "a position of … delicacy," since Shavuot was usually celebrated with "flowers and evergreens" and betokened "joy and happiness." Still, it pledged obedience: "There will not be a more faithful compliance with the spirit of President Johnson's Proclamation than in the Synagogues." "The Israelites of America," it patriotically promised, "will yet join in a sincere and earnest prayer to God for the repose of the soul of the late President Lincoln, whose memory all revere [and] for whose loss there is universal mourning."[17]

LINCOLN ON MOURNING

IN 1844, LINCOLN PAID HIS RESPECTS at the graves of his mother and sister in Indiana, following a fifteen-year absence. The visit had a profound impact on him, and during a period in which he was practicing his prose, Lincoln wrote a long poem grappling with their deaths. "And feel (companion of the dead) / I am living in the tombs," Lincoln completed the poem, so strong was his connection with his mother and sister upon the visit. Nearly twenty years after penning this poem, and, with having written the greatest speeches in American history, President Lincoln joined his mother and sister in the tombs. Just as Lincoln wrote about his mother and his sister with a great sense of loss, generations of poets and writers, would join him in step to write about another great loss, this time of their "lost Chief" Lincoln.



LINCOLN TO ANDREW JOHNSTON, APRIL 18, 1846

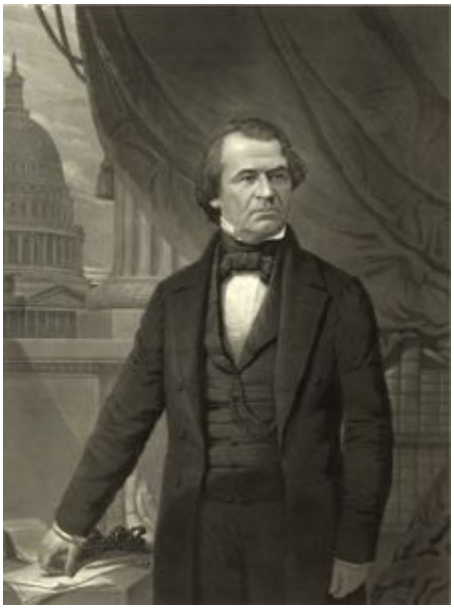
Lincoln shares this poem on mourning with Illinois friend and colleague, Andrew Johnston.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

Johnson's dismissal of Jewish needs was emblematic of his broader anti-Semitism. Charles Francis Adams, son of John Quincy Adams, remarked that "toward Jews, [Johnson] evidently felt a strong aversion."[18] Even in death Lincoln stood out against his predecessors and successors in his inclusiveness towards Jews.

Sabato Morais of Congregation Mikve Israel in Philadelphia, one of Lincoln's foremost rabbinic admirers, led the way on June 1 in memorializing the much-lamented slain president. "In this land of equal right, where the religious tenets of a majority can claim no higher privileges than those revered by a minority, there should not have been found protestants against the first summons of the authorities," he declared, lamenting that the original May 25 date had been changed. "But who among us will this day, let any motives sever him from the community?"[19] Some seven other Shavuot sermons memorializing the assassinated president survive, testimony to the "general attendance

at synagogue," noted by the *Messenger,* as well as to the public's growing obsession with all things Lincoln ("we do not get weary of speaking of his life and his calamitous end," one rabbi admitted), and to the Jewish community's prudent decision to comply with Johnson's executive order.[20] "Jews, Catholics, and Protestants Equally Observe the Day," *The New York Times* headlined, doubtless to the Jewish community's satisfaction.[21] Several synagogues included Lincoln in the Jewish memorial prayer (Yizkor) traditionally recited on the second day of Shavuot "for the repose of the souls of departed relatives, friends and prominent men of Israel."[22]

Jews abroad commemorated Lincoln as well. Great Britain's chief rabbi, Nathan Marcus Adler, pronounced what was described as a "magnificent funeral oration" for Lincoln. Speaking on the same platform, the world's best-known Jew and human rights advocate, Sir Moses Montefiore of England, linked Lincoln's efforts to liberate slaves to his own efforts to liberate Jews. "The Negroes are free and will remain so," he was quoted as saying. "Oh that I could say so much for my brothers of all the other lands."[23]

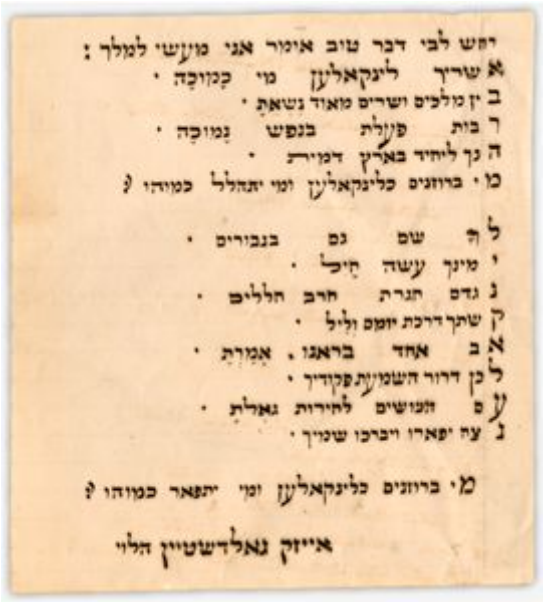


ANDREW JOHNSON, A CONTRAST IN TRUST

Andrew Johnson behaved in a way that was the antithesis of Lincoln's admiration and respect for Jews. Of Senator David Levy Yulee, Johnson once remarked, "... a miserable little cuss—a contemptible Jew ... despicable little beggar..." About Judah P. Benjamin, Johnson said in a speech on the floor of the Senate, that "he belongs to that tribe that parted the garments of our Savior."
Courtesy of the Library of Congress

Not all Jews, however, agreed that Lincoln's passing was to be mourned. "God grant so may all our foes perish!" twenty-six-year-old Eleanor H. Cohen of Columbia,

South Carolina, wrote in her diary, echoing the biblical Deborah's words in the Book of Judges (5:31). She described the news that "our worst enemy is laid low" as "glorious tidings."[24] David Naar, a pro-slavery Democrat from St. Thomas, who edited the Trenton, New Jersey, *Daily True American* and in 1843 served as appointive mayor of Elizabeth and a judge in Essex County, was more circumspect. Though he had long been critical of Lincoln, whom he labeled a "weak and unfortunate President," he publicly expressed the "sincerest sorrow at his death." Privately, however, he evinced "disgust at the various instances of fulsome adulation exhibited by our people." In an anonymous letter to the *Occident* under the name "Israelite," he attacked those who considered the president "deserving of any of the religious services appertaining to Jewish worship" and lambasted Jews who made "any comparison between the late President and their great law-giver [Moses], 'whom the Lord knew face-to-face.'"[25]


יחש לבי דבר טוב אומר אני מעשי למלך :
א שריך לינקאלען מי כמוכה ·
ב ין מלכים ושרים מאוד נשאת ·
ר בות פעלת בנפש נמוכה ·
ה נך ליחיד בארץ דמית ·
מ י ברוזנים כלינקאלען ומי יתהלל כמוהו ?

ל ה שם גם בגבורים ·
י מינך עשה חיל ·
נ גדם תגרת חרב תללים ·
ק שתך דרכת יומם וליל ·
א ב אחד בראנו . אמרת ·
ל כן דרור השמעת פקודיך ·
ע ם הנושים לחירות גאלת ·
נ צח יפארו ויברכו שמיך ·

מ י ברוזנים כלינקאלען ומי יתפאר כמוהו ?

אייזק גאלדשטיין הלוי

ISAAC GOLDSTEIN'S HEBREW ACROSTIC OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S NAME

The key lines of Goldstein's acrostic honoring Lincoln, translated into English, read as follows:
The Black people thou hast redeemed unto Freedom:
Forever they will praise and bless thy name.
Who among princes is like Lincoln? And who can be praised like him?
Courtesy of The University of Pennsylvania Library

Most Jews, though, eagerly participated in the national memorialization of Abraham Lincoln. The different ways that they did so bespoke their growing position in the

nation's cultural life. A poet-businessman from Poland named Isaac Goldstein even published in the *Jewish Messenger* an unusual Hebrew acrostic in Lincoln's memory.[26]

The renowned Jewish artist Solomon Nunes Carvalho (1815–97), born in South Carolina, produced a magnificent allegorical painting of Lincoln in 1865, the only known painting of him by a contemporary Jew. Lincoln is shown holding a scroll with words from his second inaugural clearly visible—"with malice toward none, with charity for all." A statue of George Washington, standing behind him, looks on with approval, while to his right, the ancient Greek Cynic philosopher Diogenes, remembered for carrying a lamp in daylight in search of a truly honest man, has dropped his lamp in shocked amazement—he has finally found one! The painting anticipated themes that would prove central to Lincoln iconography through the years and bespoke the terrible sense of loss that Carvalho felt upon Lincoln's death.[27]

Even the so-called last or "cracked-plate" photograph of Lincoln by the pioneering photographer Alexander Gardner, an image central to the memorialization of the slain president, had a Jewish angle to it. Adolphus S. Solomons, whose firm did substantial business with the government, recalled at the end of his life that Gardner was in charge of the photography branch of his company, Philp & Solomons. Solomons took credit for persuading Lincoln to give Gardner "another sitting" at his establishment, shortly before the assassination, and described how several initial snaps by the photographer failed to elicit an appropriate presidential expression. "Solomons, tell me one of your funny stories, and we will see if I can't do better," he quoted Lincoln as saying. The result was the photograph now considered to be "one of the great works of art in American history," an image that conveys both the likeness of Lincoln in his final days and the torments of his inner soul.[28]

Other Jews, even if they did not themselves help to create memorial art, responded generously when asked to contribute to public art in the president's memory. Sabato Morais proudly sent a check for $300 (about $4,400 in today's money) to Philadelphia's mayor, as "the voluntary contribution of my constituents towards rearing a monument to the memory of the deeply and universally lamented Abraham Lincoln." The synagogue's contribution, amounting to 1 percent of the total cost of the $30,000 bronze statue sculpted by Randolph Rogers, publicly evidenced the Jewish community's desire to be included among the religiously benevolent.[29]

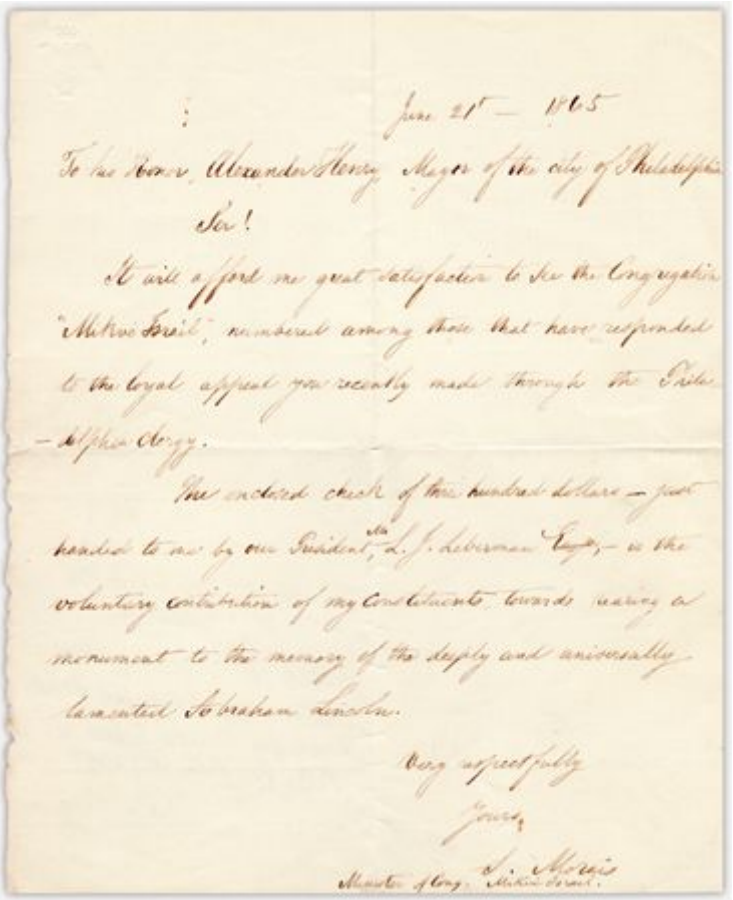
A PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN BY SOLOMON NUNES CARVALHO

The renowned Jewish artist Solomon Nunes Carvalho produced a magnificent allegorical painting of Lincoln in 1865, the only known painting of him by a contemporary Jew.
Rose Art Museum, Brandeis University

THE “CRACKED PLATE” PORTRAIT

Even the so-called last, or "cracked plate" image by photographer Alexander Gardner, involved a Jewish associate: Gardner worked for longtime Lincoln acquaintance Adolphus S. Solomons, who was also present at the photography shoot. The sitting produced at least five different Lincoln images and were the last of Lincoln taken while he was alive.
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution / Art Resource NY

In Springfield, Illinois, the National Lincoln Monument Association, which looked to erect a $250,000 ($3.7 million in today's money) monument to the slain president at the site of his tomb at Oak Ridge cemetery, directly solicited the country's Jews. Clothier Julius Hammerslough, who served as the association's "special agent" to the Jewish community, called upon "Hebrews" throughout the country to show "how highly we, as a race, appreciate freedom and the martyrs of liberty." "By contributing to this holy national work," he intimated, Jews would help "to meet prejudices still existing in the minds of many" and prove themselves "foes of all oppression and wrong."[30] Cincinnati's Jews responded warmly to this plea, appointing a five-man "Central Committee with power to collect funds for the purpose."[31] Nationwide, however, the campaign fizzled. By early 1867, the *Jewish Messenger* complained that the nation had become "strangely forgetful … of the good President who lived and died for his country" and it wondered what had "become of the subscriptions that were collected … for the national and local monuments?"[32]



June 21st — 1865

To the Hon. Alexander Henry, Mayor of the city of Philadelphia

Sir!

It will afford me great satisfaction to see the Congregation "Mikveh Israil" numbered among those that have responded to the loyal appeal you recently made through the Public Press of the City.

The enclosed check of One hundred dollars — just handed to me by our President, Mr. L. J. Lebrman Esqr., is the voluntary contribution of my Constituents towards raising a monument to the memory of the deeply and universally lamented Abraham Lincoln.

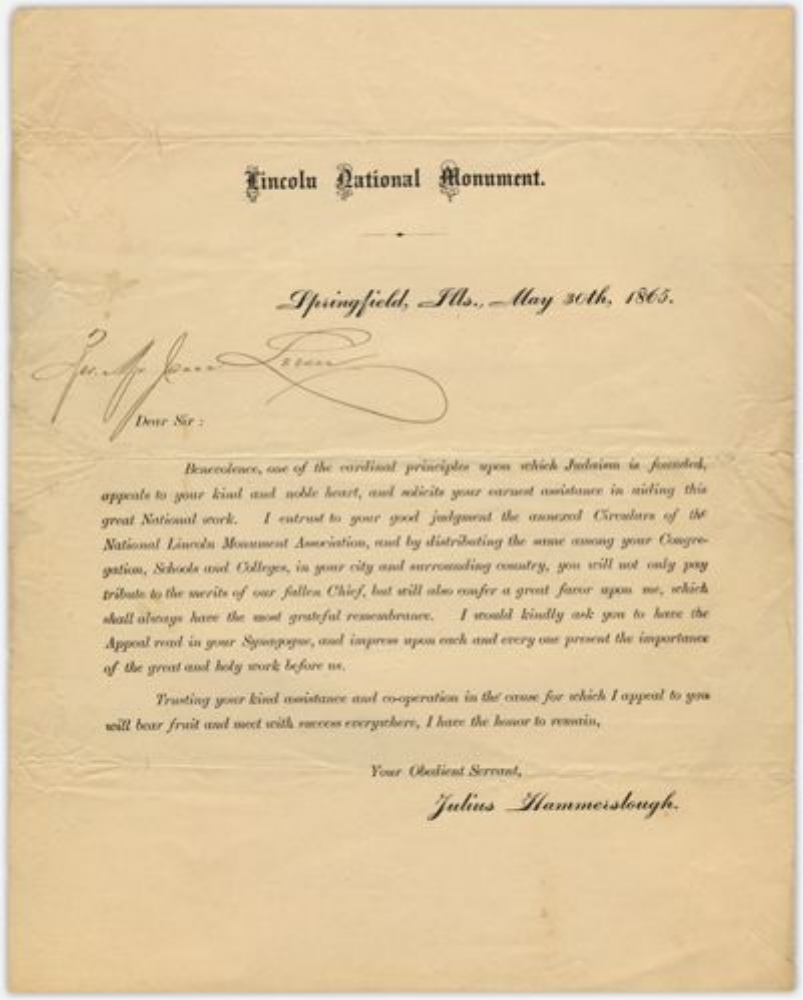
Very respectfully
Yours
Minister of Cong. Mikveh Israel

SABATO MORAIS TO HENRY ALEXANDER, JUNE 21, 1865

Rabbi Sabato Morais sends his synagogue's contribution to "A Monument to the Memory of the Deeply and Universally Lamented Abraham Lincoln."
Shapell Mansuscript Collection

Thanks to an infusion of state funds, the Springfield monument at Lincoln's Tomb was finally dedicated in 1874. A young Springfield Jew named Julius Rosenwald, later president of Sears Roebuck, recalled selling commemorative pamphlets to the crowd gathered at the event.[33] But by then, Hammerslough's efforts to solicit Jews had been forgotten, and no leading Jews participated in the dedication, which went unnoticed in the contemporary Jewish press. Only in 1886, when, in a break with precedent, a rabbi named Charles Austrian was invited to offer the closing prayer and benediction at the National Lincoln Monument on the twenty-first anniversary of Lincoln's death, did any hint of what had transpired earlier appear. "There has been a great deal of prejudice against the Jehudim [Jews] here formerly," the Springfield correspondent of the *American Israelite* revealed, an indication that Hammerslough's earlier comments about "prejudices still existing" was based upon personal experience. The

correspondent therefore took special pleasure in noticing that "the community at large" spoke "very favorably" of the rabbi's prayer "and were very much pleased."[34]



Lincoln National Monument.

Springfield, Ills., May 30th, 1865.

Dear Sir:

Benevolence, one of the cardinal principles upon which Judaism is founded, appeals to your kind and noble heart, and solicits your earnest assistance in aiding this great National work. I entrust to your good judgment the annexed Circulars of the National Lincoln Monument Association, and by distributing the same among your Congregation, Schools and Colleges, in your city and surrounding country, you will not only pay tribute to the merits of our fallen Chief, but will also confer a great favor upon me, which shall always have the most grateful remembrance. I would kindly ask you to have the Appeal read in your Synagogue, and impress upon each and every one present the importance of the great and holy work before us.

Trusting your kind assistance and co-operation in the cause for which I appeal to you will bear fruit and meet with success everywhere, I have the honor to remain,

Your Obedient Servant,

Julius Hammerslough.

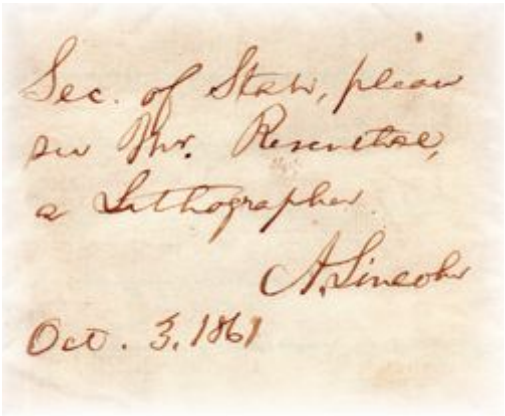
JULIUS HAMMERSLOUGH ENLISTS THE JEWS FOR LINCOLN, MAY 30, 1865

Addressed to Rev. Isaac Leeser, Hammerslough, who befriended Lincoln in Springfield as a young man, and who served as the association's "special agent" to the Jewish community, called upon "Hebrews" throughout the country to show "how highly we, as a race, appreciate freedom and the martyrs of liberty" and to support the efforts of the National Lincoln Monument Association.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

By the time Rabbi Austrian delivered his closing prayer and benediction, the majority of Americans and the great majority of American Jews held no conscious memories of Abraham Lincoln. They were immigrants or young people, and all that they really knew of America's sixteenth president was what they had read and heard about him. In the years that followed, books, articles, sermons, speeches, films, and eventually Web sites filled out the Lincoln story. They portrayed Lincoln as the savior of the Union,

the Great Emancipator, a peerless leader, a consummate politician, a man of the people, a self-made man, a student of the Bible, a prophet, a storyteller, a wit—and, above all, as the personification of all of the noblest qualities that Americans and Jews held dear. He became a never-ending source of inspiration and wisdom.[35]

Jews played a very significant role in shaping this portrayal of Abraham Lincoln. They studied Lincoln, collected Lincoln, chronicled Lincoln, quoted Lincoln, fictionalized Lincoln, dramatized Lincoln, painted Lincoln, sculpted Lincoln, wrote about Lincoln, preached about Lincoln, sang about Lincoln, and even, in the case of an east European Jewish immigrant named Victor David Brenner, designed the Lincoln image for the penny in 1909, on the occasion of the centennial of Lincoln's birth.



LINCOLN AND LITHOGRAPHER MAX ROSENTHAL

On October 3, 1861, Lincoln asked Secretary of State William H. Seward to see Jewish lithographer, Max Rosenthal.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

In 1908, Max Rosenthal created this signed image of Lincoln, based on the June 3, 1860 photograph by Alexander Hesler.
Shapell Manuscript Collection

This Jewish love affair with all things Lincoln harks back, one suspects, to Lincoln's own remarkable regard for the Jews. Over the course of his tragically foreshortened life, he interacted with Jews, represented Jews, befriended Jews, admired Jews, commissioned Jews, trusted Jews, defended Jews, pardoned Jews, took advice from Jews, gave jobs to Jews, extended rights to Jews, revoked an expulsion of Jews, and even chose a Jew as his confidential agent. His connections to Jews went further and deeper than those of any previous American president.

This happened, we have seen, even though Abraham Lincoln was not raised among Jews. Growing up, the only Jews he knew were those he read about in the Bible. It was only in the second half of his life, when he was already a grown man, that he encountered almost all the Jews that he personally became familiar with. Others who similarly watched the Jewish presence in America expand, including members of Lincoln's own inner circle, displayed overt prejudice, sometimes generalizing about Jews as a class. Lincoln never did. Instead, influenced by the Jews whom he befriended, he took account of Jewish sensitivities. His rhetoric and actions exemplified for Americans what it meant to embrace Jews as trusted insiders.

THE LINCOLN PROFILE AND 1909 PENNY

The Lincoln image that would go on to grace the one-cent coin was taken by Mathew Brady on February 9, 1864. The original Lincoln penny, designed in 1909 by Victor David Brenner, a Jewish engraver, was, for a short time, engraved with Brenner's initials on the back.

Shapell Manuscript Collection, Stack's Bowers Galleries

LINCOLN AND THE JEWS CHRONOLOGY

Highlighting Connections with Abraham Jonas (**Blue**) and Issachar Zacharie (**Red**)

1843

February 22: Washington's birthday is celebrated in Springfield. Abraham Jonas gives the address with Abraham Lincoln in attendance.

1848

Abraham Lincoln represents Elias Salzenstein in court.

1854

September 16: Earliest known letter from Abraham Jonas to Lincoln; it regards political affairs.

October 31: Lincoln meets with Abraham Jonas after arriving in Quincy, Illinois.

November 1: Following a political speech, Lincoln accompanies Jonas to an "oyster saloon" in Quincy.

December 2: In a letter, Abraham Jonas offers Lincoln his support for a Senate run in 1855.

1855

January 1: Lincoln meets Henry Greenebaum for the first time.

Lincoln meets Julius Hammerslough for the first time, in Springfield, Illinois.

1856

October 21: In a sign of their closeness, Lincoln writes Abraham Jonas of being "hobbled" by a case.

November 4: Lincoln and Jonas are electors in the 1856 presidential election, listed together in numerous poll books.

Lincoln is a judge on a case involving Gerhard Foreman, the brother-in-law of Henry Greenebaum.

1857

June 4: Abraham Jonas's son Benjamin works with Lincoln on freeing John Shelby, a black man held unjustly in a New Orleans jail.

Henry Rice serves as a witness in a court case of Lincoln's.

1858

April 3: Jackson Grimshaw writes to Lincoln about politics and mentions the role of Abraham Jonas in local events.

April 25: Lincoln sits for photographer Samuel Alschuler in Urbana, Illinois.

July 30: Abraham Jonas invites Lincoln to visit him in Augusta, Illinois, the next month.

August 2: Lincoln writes to Jonas that he will be with him in Augusta on August 25th.

August 5: Jonas writes to Lincoln that he has announced the visit of August 25th, and expects a large crowd for Lincoln's speech.

August 25: Between the first and second Lincoln-Douglas debates, Lincoln gives a speech with Abraham Jonas in Augusta.

August 25: Lincoln teases Abraham Jonas's son Edward during the assembly in Augusta.

December 26: At a meeting in the law offices of Jonas and Asbury, Lincoln is suggested as a potential presidential candidate.

1859

December 4–5: On the campaign trail, Lincoln visits the Wollman family in Leavenworth, Kansas.

1860

February 3: Jonas writes to Lincoln to request a copy of the Lincoln-Douglas debate book.

February 4: Lincoln writes to Abraham Jonas, noting that Jonas is one of his "most valued friends."

May 16: Mortiz Pinner attends the 1860 Republican National Convention as an unofficial delegate in support of Lincoln.

May 16: Lewis Dembitz attends the 1860 Republication National Convention as a delegate from Kentucky in support of Lincoln.

July 20: Jonas warns Lincoln of the rumors of Lincoln's presence at a Know-Nothing Lodge.

July 21: Lincoln responds to Jonas's warning regarding his rumored association with the Know-Nothings.

November 6: Sigismund Kaufmann serves as a Republican elector for Lincoln in the 1860 presidential election.

November 25: Lincoln sits for photographer Samuel Alschuler in Chicago.

November 26: Lincoln writes that he gave photographer Samuel Alschuler a sitting.

December 9: Orville Hickman Browning writes to Lincoln to request the appointment of Jonas as postmaster of Quincy, Illinois.

December 30: Jonas reports to Lincoln of a plot to assassinate the president-elect prior to Inauguration Day.

Lincoln inscribes a copy of the Lincoln-Douglas debate book to Abraham Jonas.

1861

January 1: Abraham Jonas signs a petition to Lincoln recommending a consular post.

February 11: Henry Greenebaum is part of the crowd that bids president-elect Lincoln goodbye at Springfield, Illinois.

February 19: Lincoln meets Sigismund Kaufmann, likely for the first time, at a reception for members of the Electoral College in New York.

March 4: Adolphus Solomons attends Lincoln's 1861 Inaugural Ball.

April 29: Lincoln nominates Abraham Jonas as postmaster of Quincy.

May 20: Lincoln endorses Julian Allen's proposal for a regiment of Polish-American volunteers.

May 26: Lincoln writes to Secretary of War Simon Cameron that he is "very much inclined to accept Col. [Max] Einsteins Regiment and wish you would have it mustered into service as soon as possible."

June 1: Lincoln appoints Charles Bernays as consul to Zurich.

July 10: Lincoln writes to the Senate to nominate Abraham Jonas.

July 21: Lincoln signs another appointment of Abraham Jonas as deputy postmaster.

August 10: Lincoln appoints Alfred Mordecai Jr. as second lieutenant.

September 3: Lincoln endorses Moritz Pinner as quartermaster.

September 10: Lincoln endorses the promotion of Isaac Moses to paymaster of New York.

September 25: Lincoln appoints Isaac Moses as assistant adjutant general with rank of captain.

October 3: Lincoln asks Secretary of State William Seward to see lithographer Max Rosenthal.

November 13: Lincoln appoints Max Einstein consul at Nuremberg.

November 23: Magicians Alexander and Carl Hermann perform at the White House.

December 6: Lincoln endorses clothier Henry Rice as military storekeeper.

December 11: Amid the chaplaincy affair, Lincoln receives Arnold Fischel at the White House.

December 14: Lincoln addresses the chaplaincy affair, on behalf of the "Israelites," in a letter to Arnold Fischel.

December 24: As a favor, Lincoln sends an autograph for Republican elector Sigismund Kaufmann.

1862

January 6: Lincoln nominates Charles Bernays as consul at Elsinore.

January 25: Lincoln recommends that Henry Moses Judah be appointed brigadier general.

February 17: Lincoln writes to Stanton to "renew" his endorsement of Henry Moses Judah.

March 13: Lincoln thanks Abraham Hart for his sermon.

May 27: Joshua Speed appeals to Lincoln to free Simon and Emanuel Bamberger, noting they are Jews.

July 31: Lincoln writes to financier—and Rothschild emissary—August Belmont that "broken eggs can not be mended."

August 21: William Cullen Bryant writes to Lincoln to introduce Issachar Zacharie and attest to his skills.

August 21: Isaac Leeser writes to Lincoln with a request; John Hay replies that Lincoln wants "it done."

September 11: Lincoln writes to Stanton regarding two long letters he has received from August Belmont.

September 13: Issachar Zacharie treats Lincoln for wrist sprains.

September 18: Lincoln appoints Jacob Frankel as the first Jewish chaplain in the Union army.

September 20: Lincoln writes his first testimonial for Zacharie.

September 22: Lincoln signs his second testimonial for Zacharie, on the day the Emancipation Proclamation is announced.

September 23: Lincoln writes his third testimonial for Zacharie.

November 4: Lincoln writes "We have not yet appointed a Hebrew," and recommends C.M. Levy as assistant quartermaster with rank of captain.

November 25: Lincoln writes to General Nathanial Banks to recommend Zacharie and his potential usefulness to the Union among his "countrymen" in the South.

December 2: Lincoln queries Stanton about Congressman Leonard Myers's recommendation for a chaplaincy appointment.

December 4: Lincoln appoints Charles Bernays as paymaster.

December 13: Lincoln directs Abraham Jonas, his "Loyal and Sensible" friend, to review a legal case.

December 29: Cesar Kaskel telegrams Lincoln to alert him to Grant's General Orders No. 11 expelling Jews from the area under Grant's control.

1863

January 4: Lincoln meets with Cesar Kaskel in Washington, D.C. about Grant's Orders No. 11.

January 5: Lincoln rescinds Grant's General Orders No. 11.

January 7: Lincoln meets with a delegation of Jews regarding General Orders No. 11.

January 14: Zacharie writes to Lincoln to seek permission to visit General Banks.

January 22: Lincoln considers the appeal of Confederate clothier Herman Koppel.

February 19: Zacharie reports to Lincoln with information from his mission to Louisiana

February 27: Lincoln pardons Simon and Emanuel Bamberger.

March: Lincoln speaks of his regard for the Jews with Henry Wentworth Monk.

March 6: Nathaniel Banks writes to Lincoln about Zacharie in Louisiana, noting that Zacharie has "been very active and among the People, especially among his own countrymen, who are numerous and powerful."

March 17: Zacharie telegrams Lincoln reporting his arrival in New York.

March 25: Lincoln writes to Benjamin Gratz to grant permission for a cross-border house guest.

March 25: Lincoln writes to Zacharie that he is "running your matter down as fast as I can."

March 27: Zacharie writes to Lincoln that he hopes Lincoln will follow his advice.

April 10: Lincoln appoints Ferdinand Sarner as Jewish chaplain in the Union army.

April 22: Lincoln reappoints Jacob Frankel as Jewish chaplain in the Union army.

April 25: Zacharie writes to Lincoln regarding the political and military situation in New Orleans.

May 6: Lincoln appoints Bernhard Gotthelf as Jewish hospital chaplain.

May 9: Zacharie writes to Lincoln with an update on the situation in New Orleans.

July 20: Zacharie writes to Lincoln to seek permission to visit General Banks.

July 24: Lincoln endorses a pardon for Rudolph Blumenberg.

July 25: Lincoln signs the pardon for Rudolph Blumenberg.

August 26: George Kuhne is among five convicted deserters to write to Lincoln requesting a stay of execution.

August 27: General George Meade writes to Lincoln regarding the execution of deserters, including George Kuhne.

August 27: Lincoln responds to George Meade regarding the execution of five soldiers, including Kuhne.

August 28: Lincoln writes to Major General John G. Foster to introduce Zacharie.

August 28: Lincoln writes that William Mayer "was the most efficient officer in suppressing the late New-York riots."

August 29: Benjamin Szold meets Lincoln at the White House to appeal the execution of George Kuhne.

September 29: Zacharie sends Lincoln a telegram saying that he will meet with him the following day.

September 30: Zacharie visits Lincoln at the White House.

October 3: Lincoln appoints Charles Weil as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Signal Corps.

October 22: Zacharie assures Lincoln in a letter that he has not told anyone about their recent meeting.

October 22: Abraham Jonas requests that Lincoln grant him a permit to visit his son Charles in a Union prison.

November 14: Lincoln considers the promotion of William Mayer to brigadier general.

November 14: Lincoln writes to Stanton about William Mayer's request to raise new troops.

1864

January 9: Rachel Rosalie Phillips meets Lincoln at a White House event with her uncle Adolphus Solomons.

January 9: On Lincoln's behalf, John Hay thanks Alexander Hart for sending a sermon by Sabato Morais.

January 12: Lincoln appoints Nehemiah Miller as Justice of the Peace in Washington, DC.

January 16: Lincoln renominates C.M. Levy as assistant quartermaster with the rank of captain.

January 25: Lincoln attends a performance of *Gamea, or the Jewish Mother,* in Washington, DC.

January 28: Lincoln attends *Gamea* for the second time in one week.

February 4: Zacharie visits Lincoln at the White House with Goodman Mordecai, a confederate POW freed by Lincoln.

February 13: Zacharie writes to Lincoln and encloses a barrel of hominy.

February 24: Lincoln interviews Joseph Merrifield, a soldier who has filed a complaint of anti-Semitism against General Butler.

March 1: Lincoln promotes Ephraim Joel to the rank of Captain.

March 2: Lincoln reappoints Jacob Frankel as Jewish chaplain in the Union army.

March 13: Lincoln asks Michael Hahn, the governor of Louisiana, how might full citizenship, the "jewel of liberty," be extended to African Americans in a postbellum state.

March 16: Lincoln frees Confederate POW Jacob G. Cohen, at the request of Zacharie, Cohen's uncle.

March 24: Famed pianist Louis Gottschalk plays for Lincoln in a concert at Willard's Hotel.

April 26: Lincoln endorses the court-martial of Ferdinand Levy, removing Levy's disability.

April 30: Lincoln endorses what Senator Conness says about Julius Silversmith.

April 30: Lincoln "cheerfully" endorses what Governor Nye says about Julius Silversmith.

May 4: Lincoln purchases a pair of eyeglasses from Jewish optometrist Isaac Heilprin, with a personal check.

May 13: Zacharie writes again to Lincoln, and sends his regards to Mrs. Lincoln.

June 2: Lincoln allows Charles Jonas, a Confederate POW, to visit his dying father, Abraham Jonas, in Illinois.

June 10: Orville Browning visits Lincoln to request the nomination of Louisa Jonas as postmistress of Quincy, Illinois.

June 13: Lincoln nominates Louisa Jonas as postmistress in place of her deceased husband, Abraham Jonas.

June 28: Lincoln signs the appointment of Louisa Jonas as postmistress of Quincy.

July 15: Lincoln thanks Philadelphia civic leader Lazarus Lieberman for the gift of a suit of clothes.

August 2: Lincoln writes to Treasury secretary William Fessenden to introduce Issachar Zacharie.

August 18: Lincoln appoints Ephraim Joel to serve on General Blair's staff.

September 9: Responding to a request by congressman Leonard Myers, Lincoln responds that "I really wish this done."

September 15: Lincoln orders Moses Waldauer, convicted on a spurious charge of aiding deserters, released from prison.

September 19: Lincoln thanks Zacharie for his commitment to the Union cause and mentions that the matter of his friend will be considered.

September 21: Zacharie writes to Lincoln that his note of the 19th has had the "desired effect."

September 24: Mary Lincoln writes to General Patrick requesting that Herman Grau be able to set up a business in City Point, Virginia.

September 24: Lincoln requests that Treasury secretary Fessenden "see and hear" Sigmund Griff.

September 26: Lincoln requests Secretary of War Stanton to receive Sigmund Griff.

September 27: Lincoln tells Griff that he will meet with Secretary of War Stanton on Griff's behalf.

October 8: Lincoln overturns the conviction of Moses Waldauer for assisting deserters.

October 26: Lincoln meets with Jews in the White House to discuss the Jewish vote in the upcoming presidential election.

November 1: At Lincoln's request, John Hay writes Myer Isaacs regarding issues of the Jewish vote.

November 3: Zacharie writes to Lincoln about political affairs.

November 8: Abram Dittenhoefer serves as Republican presidential elector for New York, upon Lincoln's reelection.

December 2: Lincoln directs Secretary of the Treasury Fessenden to "see and hear" Major Joseph H. Stiner.

December 9: Lincoln asks Attorney General James Speed to reappoint Nehemiah Miller as Justice of the Peace.

December 10: Lincoln frees prisoner Abraham B. Samuels, held by the notoriously anti-Semitic General Benjamin Butler.

December 26: Zacharie telegrams Lincoln to congratulate him on the fall of Savannah.

December 27: Lincoln grants Jacob G. Cohen, Zacharie's nephew, a pass to travel to Savannah.

December 27: Lincoln grants Zacharie a pass for travel to Savannah.

December 27: Lincoln writes to General William Sherman to introduce Issachar Zacharie.

1865

January 7: Lincoln goes to a performance of *Leah, the Forsaken* at Grover's Theater in Washington, DC.

January 8: Lincoln orders the protection of Philip and Meyer Wallach while they are held in prison.

January 11: Lincoln endorses the appointment of Abram Dittenhoefer.

January 12: Lincoln requests a review of the case of Philip and Meyer Wallach.

January 13: Lincoln writes of a request from congressman Leonard Myers: "I will do it, because Mr. Myers requests it."

January 25: Lincoln writes to Secretary of War Stanton, "About Jews," regarding Zacharie and, separately, Leopold Blumenberg.

January 25: Stanton responds to Lincoln's note "About Jews" that the requests have been addressed.

January 28: Lincoln endorses petition by Abram Dittenhoefer for the pardon of Morris and Abraham Leon.

February 6: Lincoln arranges for the release of Leopold Markbreit, a Union POW held and tortured by the Confederacy.

February 11: Myer S. Isaacs, Adolphus S. Solomons, and Zillah Solomons attend a reception at the Executive Mansion hosted by the first lady, with the President assisting.

February 17: Lincoln, in his third intervention in the Wallach brothers' case, allows them a "jubilee."

March 6: Lincoln grants Lion and Frank Silverman a pass to move their products across blockade lines.

March 11: Lincoln nominates Benjamin Levy to the volunteer force.

April 5: Gustavus Myers meets with Lincoln aboard the USS *Malvern* to discuss the conditions of peace.

April 14: C.H. Liebermann attends Lincoln's deathbed, pouring brandy down his throat.

NOTES

Please note that some of the links referenced in this work are no longer active.

List of Abbreviations:

AJA – American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH

AJA – American Jewish Archives (Journal)

AJHS – American Jewish Historical Society, New York, NY

AL – Abraham Lincoln

ALPLM – Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum, Springfield, IL

CW – The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln. Abraham Lincoln and Roy P. Basler, 8 vols. New Brunswick, N.J: Rutgers University Press, 1953.

PAJHS – Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society

LOC – The Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

AGO – *The Adjutant General's Office.* Washington: Dept. of Defense, Dept. of the Army, Adjutant General's Office, 1979.

NARA – U. S. National Archives and Records Administration

OR – *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies.* Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901.

PUSG – *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant,* ed. John Y. Simon, 31 vols. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967-2009.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE PROMISED LAND … WHOSE STONES ARE IRON AND OUT OF WHOSE HILLS THOU MAYEST DIG BRASS

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24. Joseph L. Blau and Salo W. Baron, *Jews of the United States 1790-1840: A Documentary History* (New York: Columbia U Press, 1963), I, 28-32; Jacob R. Marcus, *United States Jewry 1776-1985* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), I, 506-9.
25. Thomas Jefferson to Benjamin Rush (April 21, 1803) in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson,* ed. Andrew A. Lipscomb (Washington, DC, 1904), 10:382; Thomas Jefferson to John Adams (October 12, 1813) in *The Adams-Jefferson Letters,* ed. Lester J. Capon (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1959), 2:383; Thomas Jefferson to Mordecai M. Noah (May 28, 1818) in *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 3 (1895), 94-95; Robert M. Healey, "Jefferson, Judaism and the Jews: Divided We Stand, United We Fall!" *American Jewish History* 73 (June 1984), 359-374.
26. Constitutional guarantees of no "religious test" for public office, as well as no "establishment of religion" and the "free exercise" of religion only applied, at that time, to congressional legislation, not to state legislation.
27. Blau and Baron, *Jews in the United States: A Documentary History* I, 15-16, 33-55; Edward Eitches, "Maryland's 'Jew Bill,'" *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 60 (March 1971), 258-80.

CHAPTER TWO: AND THIS TOO SHALL PASS AWAY—NEVER FEAR

1. *Johnson v. M'Intosh,* 21 U.S. 543, 5 L.Ed. 681, 8 Wheat. 543 (1823); for an explanation of this famous case, see Eric Kades," History and Interpretation of the Great Case of J*ohnson v. M'Intosh,*" *Law and History Review* 19:1 (Spring 2001), 67-116.
2. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis, eds. *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interview, and Statements about Abraham Lincoln* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 201.
3. Herman E. Snyder, "A Brief History of the Jews in Springfield, Illinois and of Temple Brith Sholom," p.2, copy in Snyder Papers, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH; George W. Hawes, *Illinois State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1858 and 1859* (Chicago, 1858), 205-7; Curtis Mann, "North Side of Public Square," *For the People: A Newsletter of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 12 (Spring 2010), 1-2, online at http://www.abrahamlincolnassociation.org/Newsletters/12-1.pdf; M. R. Werner, *Julius Rosenwald* (New York: Harper, 1939), 7 dates the store to 1856.
4. Snyder, "Brief History," 2; "Julius Hammerslough, "*Men's Wear* 25 (1908), 54-55, online at Google books; "Julius Hammerslough, 1832-1908," http://www.frf.com/family/individual.php?pid=I200&ged=FRF_GED_ONLINE.ged (accessed 25 April 2013); George W. Hawes, Illinois State Gazetteer and Business Directory for 1858 and 1859 (Chicago, 1858), 205-7; *New York Times,* June 20, 1908; David Herbert Donald, *"We Are Lincoln Men": Abraham Lincoln and His Friends* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2003), xiv-xvi; Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 22–23.
5. Werner, *Julius Rosenwald,* 8; "Julius Hammerslough," *Men's Wear* 25 (1908), 54-55.
6. [Baltimore] Sun, Feb 16, 1856, Local Matters, pg. 1; Snyder, "Brief History," 2; *Israelite,* June 9, 1865, 397.
7. Selma Stern, *The Court Jew* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1950, esp. 59, 254; Yehezkel Kotik, *Journey to a Nineteenth-Century Shtetl: The Memoirs of Yehezkel Kotik,* ed. David Assaf (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 114-15.
8. "Salzenstein's Store: Abraham Lincoln Shopped Here," *Chicago Jewish History* 26 (Winter 2002), 7.
9. For the court cases, see *The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln,* University of Illinois Press, Champaign, IL, 2000.
10. "Salzenstein's Store: Abraham Lincoln Shopped Here," *Chicago Jewish History* 26:1 (Winter 2002), 6-7; http://www.abrahamlincolnlongninemuseum.com/map.php; Howard M. Sachar, *A History of the Jews in America* (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1992), 3-7. James E. Myers, a son of Albert Myers, helped to preserve and restore the Springfield office where Lincoln and William Herndon practiced law, today known as the Lincoln-Herndon Museum, and also authored *The Astonishing Saber Duel of Abraham Lincoln* (1968).
11. On Jonas, see Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 189-94; Ira L. Harris, "Abraham Jonas: Lincoln's Valued Friend," *Lincoln Herald* 92:4 (1990), 118-23; Mike Mehlman, "One of Lincoln's Most Valued Friends," *Lincoln Herald* 103:3 (2001), 145-55; Wayne C. Temple, "Abraham Jonas: One of Lincoln's 'Most Valued [Masonic] Friends,'" *The Illinois Lodge of Research Transactions* 14 (September 2005), 15-24 (online at http://www.illor.org/2005.pdf).
12. CW 3, 516, cf. CW4, 495.
13. Joseph Jonas, "The Jews in Ohio," reprinted in *A Documentary History of the Jews in the United States 1654-1875,* ed. Morris U. Schappes (3rd Edition, New York: Schocken, 1971), 224; Jonathan D. Sarna and Nancy H. Klein, *The Jews of Cincinnati* (Cincinnati: Center for the Study of the American Jewish Experience, 1989), 2, 25-29; *London Jewish Chronicle,* May 14, 1880, 5.
14. Jonas, "The Jews in Ohio," 225; Sarna & Klein, 27-29.
15. David Philipson, *The Oldest Jewish Congregation in the West, Bene Israel* Cincinnati (Cincinnati, 1924), 16-17.

    Lucia Orah's death is frequently misdated, but the tombstone clearly states "1st of Tammuz 5585." Rachel, the wife of Joseph Jonas, passed away less than two years later on February 19, 1827. Abraham Jonas married Louisa Block on October 11, 1829; see Malcolm Stern, *First American Jewish Families* (New York: Ottenheimer, 1981), 136 and Ira Rosenwaike, "Eleazar Block—His Family and Career," *American Jewish Archives* 31 (November 1979), 143-44.

16. On Jews and Freemasonry, see especially Jacob Katz, *Jews and Freemasons in Europe 1723-1939* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971); Samuel Oppenheim, "The Jews and Masonry in the United States before 1810," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 19 (1910), 1-94; and for a Jewish Mason who was contemporary with Jonas, Joseph L. Blau and Salo W. Baron, *The Jews of the United States 1790-1840* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), 3, 697700. Jonas's Freemasonry career is explored in Wayne C. Temple, "Abraham Jonas: One of Lincoln's 'Most Valued [Masonic] Friends,'" *The Illinois Lodge of Research Transactions* 14 (September 2005), 15-24, online at illor.org/2005.
17. According to legislative records, he was elected in 1828, 1829, 1831, and 1833.
18. CW 3, 29; see also Shearer Davis Bowman, "Comparing Henry Clay and Abraham Lincoln," *The Register of the Kentucky Historical Society* 106 (Summer/Autumn 2008), 495-512.
19. Robert V. Remini, *Henry Clay Statesman for the Union* (New York: Norton, 1993), 745.
20. Henry Clay to Abraham Jonas (May 3, 1838), Wells Family Collection; I am grateful to Cynthia Gensheimer for providing me with a transcript of this letter.
21. Henry Clay to Abraham Jonas (16 September 1842), *The Papers of Henry Clay: The Whig Leader,* ed. Robert Seager II (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1988), IX, 768.
22. Wayne C. Temple, "Abraham Jonas: One of Lincoln's 'Most Valued [Masonic] Friends," *The Illinois Lodge of Research* 14 (September 2005), 17.
23. John C. Reynolds, *History of the M.W. Grand Lodge of Illinois Ancient, Free and Accepted Masons: From the Organization of the First Lodge Within the Present Limits of the State Up to and Including 1850* (Springfield, 1860).
24. *Times and Seasons* 3 (1842), 749-50 as quoted in Rudolf Glanz, *Jew and Mormon* (New York: Waldon Press, 1963), 159.
25. Gary Vitale, "Abraham Lincoln and the Mormons: Another Legacy of Limited Freedom," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 101 (Fall–Winter 2008), 260-71.
26. Vitale, "Abraham Lincoln and the Mormons: Another Legacy of Limited Freedom," 262. *The Latter-Day Saints Millennial Star* 24 (London: 1862), 583, 663-65, 775.
27. Earl Schenck Miers, *Lincoln Day by Day: A Chronology 1809-1865* (Dayton: Morningside Press, 1991), 202; Charles M. Segal, "Abraham Jonas' Role in Lincoln's First Presidential Nomination," *PAJHS* 4 (December 1954), 98-99.
28. Brian J. Kenny. "Browning, Orville Hickman"; http://www.anb.org/articles/04/04-00164.html; American National Biography Online Feb. 2000; Access Date: Thu May 23 2013; see Maurice Baxter, *Orville H. Browning, Lincoln's Friend and Critic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957).
29. *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* ed. Theodore Calvin Pease and James G. Randall (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1927), 185 (May 31, 1855). Claims that they were partners from 1843 are unfounded.
30. Donald, *We Are Lincoln Men,* 103.
31. See the references to Jonas in *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning* and Miers, *Lincoln Day by Day,* 271 (April 23, 1846).
32. Gustav Philipp Körner, *Memoirs of Gustave Koerner, 1809-1896: life-sketches written at the suggestion of his children* (Cedar Rapids, OH: Torch Press, 1909), vol. 1, 479-80.
33. David Frolick, "From Strangers to Neighbors: The Children of Abraham in Quincy, Illinois," *Journal of Illinois History* 7 (2004) 17.; http://www.bnaisholomquincy.com/history.php.
34. *Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* 425 (August 25, 1860) et passim; AL to Abraham Jonas (July 21, 1860), CW 4, 86.
35. Harrison Dills to Abraham Lincoln (February 19, 1849, April 10, 1849), Abraham Lincoln Papers, LOC, online at memory.loc.gov; on Dills see http://djdills.blogspot.com/2013/05/harrison-dills-bits1.html.
36. *Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* 100 (April 15, 1853); 158 (October 18, 1854); Abraham Jonas to Abraham Lincoln (September 16 1854), Abraham Lincoln Papers, LOC.
37. CW 2, 282.
38. CW 4, 67.
39. Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln,* I, 363-76.
40. Abraham Jonas to Abraham Lincoln (September 16, 1854), Abraham Lincoln Papers, LOC.
41. CW 2, 240-283; Douglas, as quoted in David H. Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 178.

42. Abraham Lincoln to Abraham Jonas (July 21, 1860), CW 4, 85-86 recounted the visit, which is also described in *Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* 160 (November 1, 1854).
43. Abraham Lincoln to Richard Yates (October 30, 1854), CW 2, 284.
44. Abraham Jonas to Abraham Lincoln (December 2, 1854), Abraham Lincoln Papers, LOC.
45. David Osborn, "Trumbull, Lyman"; http://www.anb.org/articles/04/04-00998.html.
46. American National Biography Online Feb. 2000. Access Date: Mon May 27 2013: Ronald C. White, *A. Lincoln* (New York: Random House, 2009), 208.
47. Abraham Lincoln to Abraham Jonas (October 21, 1856), CW II, 380. Shapell Manuscript Collection.
48. Henry Clay Whitney, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln* ... (Boston: Estes and Lauriat Publishers, 1892), 475-77.
49. Ibid, 475-77; *People v. Johnson,* http://www.lawpracticeofabrahamlincoln.org/Details.aspx?case=136604.
50. http://www.historycentral.com/elections/1856Pop.html.
51. Charles M. Segal, "Lincoln, Benjamin Jonas and the Black Code," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 46 (Autumn 1953), 277-282; Eric Foner, *The Fiery Trial: Abraham Lincoln and American Slavery* (New York: Norton, 2010), 121.
52. Benjamin Franklin Jonas (1834-1911) subsequently fought for the Confederacy and, in 1879, was elected senator from Louisiana. During his term of office (1879–85), he was the Senate's only Jew; see Kurt F. Stone, *The Jews of Capitol Hill: A Compendium of Jewish Congressional Members* (Lanham:Scarecrow Press, 2011), 35-37.
53. B. F. Jonas to Abraham Lincoln (June 4, 1857), Abraham Lincoln Papers, LOC; Annie Jonas to Wm H. Herndon (October 28, 1866) in *Herndon's Informants: Letters, Interviews, and Statements About Abraham Lincoln,* eds. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.), online at http://lincoln.lib.niu.edu/file.php?file=herndon379.html; William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik, *Herndon's Lincoln,* eds. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006), 232-33.
54. *Dred Scott v. Sandford,* 60 U.S. 393, at 16; see Justice Curtis's pointed dissent at 181.
55. CW 2, 398-410.
56. Gale v Morgan County Bank, file ID: L02145, The Law Practice of Abraham Lincoln, http://www.lawpracticeofabrahamlincoln.org/Details.aspx?case=137526. On Rice, see the *New York Times* obituary, June 8, 1914.
57. Isaac Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 2324; Shapell Manuscript Collection.
58. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 27-28; H. L. Meites, *History of the Jews of Chicago* (Chicago: Jewish Historical Society of Illinois, 1924), 47-48; Tobias Brinkmann, *Sundays at Sinai* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 60-62.
59. Matthew 12:25, Mark 3:25.
60. CW 2, 461-69. Douglas, upon the death of his wife, became an owner of Mississippi slaves, which he held in trust for his children; see Martin H. Quitt, *Stephen A. Douglas and Antebellum Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 186-94.
61. Henry Asbury to Abraham Lincoln (July 28, 1858), Lincoln Papers, LOC.
62. CW 2, 533.
63. Abraham Jonas to AL (July 30, 1858), Abraham Lincoln Papers, LOC; CW 2, 533-34; 3, 37-38; John E. Boos, *Rare Personal Accounts of Abraham Lincoln,* William R. Feeheley and Bill Snack, eds. (Cadillac, Mich: Rail Splitter Publishing, 2005), 40-42.
64. *Quincy Daily Whig* (September 30, 1858), 2.
65. William A. Richardson Jr., "Pen Pictures of the Central Part of the City of Quincy as It Was when Douglas and Lincoln Met in Debate," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 18 (July 1925), 401-2.
66. *Quincy Daily Whig,* October 7, 1858, 2:1 as quoted in Mike Mehlman, "One of Lincoln's Most Valued Friends," *Lincoln Herald* 103:3 (2001), 148.
67. Maurice G. Baxter, *Orville H. Browning: Lincoln's Friend and Critic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1957), 94; http://www.thelincolnlog.org/Calendar.aspx?year=1858&month=10 (accessed June 4, 2013).
68. CW 3, 245-83; Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), 534-37, provides a summary and contrasting contemporary views on whether Lincoln or Douglas won the debate.
69. *Reminiscences of Abraham Lincoln by Distinguished Men of His Time,* ed. Allen Thorndike Rice (New York: North American Publishing Company, 1886), 537; Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln,* 545-54; Lincoln to Norman B.

Judd (October 20, 1858), CW 3, 329-30.

70. Henry Asbury to Abraham Lincoln (November 13, 1858), Abraham Lincoln Papers; LOC; Lincoln to Asbury (November 19, 1858), CW 3, 339.
71. AL to Norman B. Judd (November 15, 1858), AL Papers, LOC; AL to Norman B. Judd (November 16, 1858) Shapell Manuscript Collection. For Lincoln's discussion of the phrase "And this too shall pass away," see his address before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, Milwaukee, Wisconsin (September 30, 1859), CW 3, 482. See also Shnayer Z. Leiman, "Judith Ish-Kishor: This Too Shall Pass," *Tradition* 41: 1 (2008): 71-77; and Zola, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham,* 374–376.
72. Harry E. Pratt, *The Personal Finances of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield: Abraham Lincoln Association, 1943), 54, 77-79, 105. By the time the investment was repaid, Lincoln was no longer alive.
73. AL to Alexander Sympson (December 12, 1858), CW 3, 346; Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* I, 549-51.
74. Henry Asbury to K. K. Jones (October 2, 1882), copy in SC5836, AJA; *Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* 345 (December 26, 1858); Charles M. Segal, "Abraham Jonas' Role in Lincoln's First Presidential Nomination," *PAJHS* 44 (December 1954), 100.

CHAPTER THREE: ONE OF MY MOST VALUED FRIENDS

1. Abraham Jonas to Lyman Trumbull (December 26, 1858), Trumbull Papers, LOC.
2. *Occident* 16 (February 1, 1859), 536-42; David I. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (New York: Knopf, 1997), esp. 127; Bertram W. Korn, *The American Reaction to the Mortara Case* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1957).
3. Jonas to Trumbull (December 26, 1858), Trumbull Papers.
4. AL to Nathan B. Dodson (July 29, 1859) in CW 3, 396; AL to Hawkins Taylor (September 6, 1859) in CW 3, 400.
5. AL to Lyman Trumbull (January 29, 1859) in CW 3, 351.
6. CW 3, 369.
7. AL to Samuel Galloway (July 28, 1859), CW 3, 395; AL to Thomas J. Pickett (April 16, 1859), CW 3, 377-78.
8. AL to Schuyler Colfax (July 6, 1859), CW 3, 390. Shapell Manuscript Collection item.
9. Schurz's lecture (April 18, 1859) can be read at http://www.angelfire.com/ma3/bobwb/schurz/speech/americanism1859.html. On Schurz and his relationship with Jews, see Hans L. Trefousse, "German-American liberalism against Bigotry: Carl Schurz and the Jews," in *Germans in America: Aspects of German-American Relations in the Nineteenth Century,* ed. Edward A. McCormick (New York: Brooklyn College Press, 1983), 31-44.
10. AL to Theodore Canisius (May 17, 1859), CW 3, 380.
11. *Daily State Journal* (May 17, 1859) as reprinted in F. I. Herriott, *The Premises and Significance of Abraham Lincoln's Letter to Theodore Canisius (1915),* online at http://libsysdigi.library.uiuc.edu/OCA/Books2009-06/premisessignific00herr/premisessignific00herr.pdf, 35-37.
12. CW 3, 383.
13. Gary Ecelbarger, "Before Cooper Union: Abraham Lincoln's 1859 Cincinnati Speech and Its Impact on his Nomination," *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 30 (Winter 2009), online at http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jala/2629860.0003.103/--before-cooper-union-abraham-lincolns-1859-cincinnati-speech?rgn=main;view=-fulltext#link_note_12 (accessed July 12, 2013).
14. http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0027/tab09.txt; Jacob R. Marcus, *To Count a People: American Jewish Population Data, 1585-1984* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1990), 172-73. There were only about 1,500 Jews in Chicago at that time and 5,000 in San Francisco (Ibid, 28, 57).
15. http://library.cincymuseum.org/lincoln/items/litho1859.htm. Meyer Rosenbaum had a tin shop around 1860, and in 1861 he was selling stoves at 191 West 5th Street. According to the Cincinnati City Directory, it was not until 1866 that a "Rosenbaum & Bros. - Stoves" appears at No. 24, the address depicted in the lithograph, which reads: "Hanging Rock Stove - Foundry - Rosenbaum & (Bros.) - Stoves…"
16. Ecelbarger, "Before Cooper Union."
17. CW 3, 462; see Luke 11:23.
18. Quoted in Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), I, 568.
19. Ecelbarger, "Before Cooper Union."
20. Mark W. Delahay and 53 others to AL (November 15, 1859), AL Papers, LOC.
21. http://lincolninkansas.org/LincolnInKSFront-Info%20copy%201.pdf; a pitcher from that dinner is preserved in the city's Frontier Army Museum. An advertisement for J. Wollman & Co is found in the *Kansas Herald of Freedom* (March 14, 1857) and Betty Wollman's memories are preserved in the *New York Times* (March 27, 1927 and December 26, 1927). On Wollman and Abeles, see Joan Ferris Curran, *Jonas and Betty (Kohn) Wollman and Their Descendants* (Kansas City: J. F. Curran, distributed by H.W.B. Glock, 1986); Joan Ferris Curran, *Descendants of Salomon Bloch of Janowitz, Bohemia, and Baruch Wollman of Kempen-in-Posen, Prussia* (Baltimore: Gateway Press, 1996), 112-22, 192 (quote from p. 118); and Julia Wood Kramer, *The House on the Hill: The Story of the Abeles Family of Leavenworth, Kansas* (Chicago: 1990), 13-56. Kramer (p. 21) questions whether Abeles "was stirred by the slavery question or was an ideologue."

22. S. M. Pettingill to William H. Bailhache (October 12, 1859), as quoted in Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* I, 582.
23. Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* I, 582-83.
24. Harold Holzer, *Lincoln at Cooper Union: The Speech that Made Abraham Lincoln President* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2004).
25. Jacques J. Lyons and Abraham de Sola, *A Jewish Calendar for Fifty Years* (New York: Bloch, 1854), 160-167; Howard B. Rock, "Upheaval, Innovation and Transformation: New York City Jews and the Civil War," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 64 (2012), 2-3.
26. Holzer, Harold. *Lincoln at Cooper Union* (2005)
27. Abram J. Dittenhoefer, *How We Elected Lincoln: Personal Recollections* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2005 [1916]), 16.
28. Ibid, 4-5.
29. Ibid, 18-19; CW 3, 522-550.
30. Dittenhoefer, *How We Elected Lincoln,* 20; Harold Holzer, "The Speech That Made the Man," *American Heritage* 59:4 (2009), online at http://www.americanheritage.com/content/speech-made-man (accessed July 14, 2013).
31. AL to W. H. Wells (Jan 8, 1859), CW 3, 349; AL to W. H. Ross (March 26, 1859), CW 3, 372-73; AL to George Parsons et al. (December 19, 1859), CW 3, 510; Abraham Jonas to AL (February 3, 1860), http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/r?ammem/mal:@field(DOCID+@lit(d0232800)) (accessed July 15, 2013); AL to Abraham Jonas (February 4, 1860), CW 3, 516; Jay Monaghan, "The Lincoln-Douglas Debates, The Follett, Foster Edition of a Great Political Document," *Lincoln Herald* 45 (June 1943), online at http://archive.org/stream/thelincolndougla00mona#page/12/mode/2up (accessed July 15, 2013); David Henry Leroy, *Mr. Lincoln's Book: Publishing the Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (New Castle, DE: Oak Knoll Press; Chicago: Abraham Lincoln Book Shop, Inc., 2009), esp. 64-66, 145-49, 160.
32. Walter Stahr, *Seward: Lincoln's Indispensable Man* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2012), 174-81.
33. AL to Samuel Galloway (March 24, 1860), CW 4, 34.
34. K. K.Jones, "Abraham Lincoln: How He Was Nominated," *Indianapolis Sentinel* (29 Sept. 1882), p. 7. Jonas's former law partner, Henry Asbury, confirmed hearing this story from Jonas; see his letter to Jones (October 2, 1882), SC5386, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati OH [available online at http://americanjewisharchives.org/exhibits/aje/details.php?id=677]. See also *Proceedings of the Republican National Convention* Held at Chicago, May 16, 17 and 18, 1860 (Albany: Weed, Parsons, 1860), 108; Charles M. Segal, "Abraham Jonas' Role in Lincoln's First Presidential Nomination," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 44 (1954), 98-105; and for an account that credits Alexander Conner, Republican state chairman of Indiana, with rounding up the supporters, Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* I, 620.
35. Philippa Strum. "Dembitz, Lewis Naphtali"; http://www.anb.org/articles/11/11-00958.html; American National Biography Online Feb. 2000 (accessed Jul 16, 2013); Nelson I. Dawson, "Dembitz, Lewis Naphtali," *The Encyclopedia of Louisville,* ed. John Kieber (Louisville: University Press of Kentucky, 2001), 241-42; *Proceedings of the Republican National Convention,* 11, 35; Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 36.
36. Charles L. Bernays, the delegate from Missouri, descended from a prominent Jewish family and was known to be of Jewish extraction. A freethinker, he and his siblings had been Christened and confirmed as Lutherans by their Jewish parents in Germany. Bernays was a staunch opponent of slavery and editor of the German-American newspaper *Anzeiger des Westens.* See *PAJHS* 9 (1901), 52; 11 (1903), 50; Bertram W. Korn, *Eventful Years and Experiences* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1954), 8, 17; Carol S. Porter, *Meeting Louis at the Fair* (St. Louis: Virginia Publishing, 2004), 4-12; and, for the family background, Thekla Bernays, *Augustus Charles Bernays: A Memoir* (St. Louis: Mosby, 1912), 11-33.
37. *Daily Missouri Republican* (March 11, 1860); Moritz Pinner to Wendell Phillips (June 1, 1860), Blagden Collection of Wendell Phillips Papers, Houghton Library, Cambridge, MA, online at http://www.math.rutgers.edu/~zeilberg/family/wp2.html (accessed July 16, 2013); Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 34-36. A great deal of additional material on Pinner is available on the Web site established by his descendants: http://www.math.rutgers.edu/~zeilberg/family/moritz.html (accessed July 16, 2013). On the *Missouri Post,* see http://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87052125/.

38. Moritz Pinner to Wendell Phillips (September 2, 1860), Blagden Collection of Wendell Phillips Papers, Houghton Library, Cambridge, MA, online at http://www.math.rutgers.edu/~zeilberg/family/wp3.html (accessed July 16, 2013).
39. Dittenhoefer, *How We Elected Lincoln,* 38-40.
40. Segal, "Abraham Jonas' Role in Lincoln's First Presidential Nomination," 103-4; *Quincy Whig Reoublican* (May 26, 1860, June 9, 1860); Iris A. Nelson and Walter S. Waggoner, "Sick, Sore and Sorry: The Stone's Prairie Riot of 1860," *Journal of Illinois History* 5:1 (2002), esp. 28.
41. Abraham Jonas to AL (July 20, 1860), LOC, online at http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/P?mal:1:./temp/~ammem_e.
42. AL to Abraham Jonas (July 21, 1860), CW 4, 85-86.
43. AL to Joshua F. Speed (August 24, 1855) CW 2, 323.
44. AL to Abraham Jonas (July 21, 1860), CW 4, 86. Many Know-Nothings and members of the American Party ultimately supported Lincoln, preferring him to Douglas (who had a Catholic wife) and to the Southern candidates; see Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* I, 659-62, 682-83.
45. AL to Joshua F. Speed (May 22, 1860), CW 10, 53-54.
46. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 35-36.
47. Theodore Calvin Pease and James G. Randall, eds., *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* 2 vols., Collections of the Illinois State Historical Library (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Library, 1925-1933), 2:415.
48. AL to Cassius M. Clay (May 26, 1860), Shapell Legacy Partnership.
49. CW 3, 395.
50. AL to William D. Kelley (October 13, 1860), Shapell Legacy Partnership.
51. AL to David L. Phillips (July 2, 1860), Shapell Manuscript Collection; CW 4, 81; on Phillips see John Y. Simon, "Union County in 1858 and the Lincoln-Douglas Debate," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 62 (1969) 267-92, esp. 281.
52. AL to Hannibal Hamlin (July 18, 1860), CW 4, 84.
53. AL to William Seward (October 12, 1860), Shapell Legacy Partnership.
54. Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* I, 680.
55. Howard B. Rock, "Upheaval, Innovation and Transformation: New York Jews and the Civil War," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 64 (2012), 11.
56. Edward H. Mazur, "Chicago's Jews and Abraham Lincoln: The Politics of the Civil War Era," *Chicago Jewish History* 33 (Winter 2009), 6.
57. "Translation of Selected Minutes of the New York Turn Verein,", July 20, 1850, p.15, http://www2.ku.edu/~maxkade/finding_aid_nytv.pdf; see also Frank Baron, "Abraham Lincoln and the German Immigrants: Turners and Forty-Eighters." *Yearbook of German-American Studies Supplemental Issue 4* (Lawrence, KS: Society for German-American Studies, 2012).
58. *New York Daily Tribune* (February 10, 1861), 8, col. 4. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 32, embellished the quote and misdated it.
59. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 32; see also Jacob R. Marcus, *United States Jewry 1776-1985* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1993), III, 211.
60. Lincoln to Weed, December 17, 1860. Shapell Legacy Partnership.
61. *Charleston Mercury* (December 21, 1860).
62. Judah P. Benjamin, Speech of Hon. J. P. Benjamin of Louisiana on the Right of Secession (December 31, 1860), 16, online at http://ia700303.us.archive.org/23/items/speechofhonjpben00benj/speechofhonjpben00benj.pdf.
63. Abraham Jonas to AL (December 30, 1860), AL Papers, LOC.
64. William H. Seward to AL (December 29, 1860) as quoted in CW 4, 170.
65. AL to Salmon P. Chase (December 31, 1860), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
66. The proclamation may be found at http://www.wallbuilders.com/libissuesarticles.asp?id=3587.
67. *Israelite* (November 30, 1860), 172; (December 28, 1860), 205.
68. *Jewish Messenger* (January 11, 1861), 10.
69. Morris J. Raphall, "The Bible View of Slavery" (1861), http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/raphall.html (accessed July 21, 2013); Adam Good-heart, "The Rabbi and the Rebellion," *New York Times* (March 7, 2011),

http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/03/07/the-rabbi-and-the-rebellion/ Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (New York: Atheneum, 1970), 15-31.

70. *Jewish Messenger* (January 11, 1861), 10.
71. R.S.H., "Rabbi Raphall," *The Independent* (February 21, 1861), 8.
72. "David Einhorn's response to 'A Biblical View of Slavery,'" http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/einhorn.html.
73. http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/heilprin.html; for his brother, Isaac, and Lincoln's spectacles, see Roland T. Carr and Hugh Morrow, "We Found Lincoln's Lost Bank Account," *Saturday Evening Post* (February 14, 1953).
74. Rev. Hugh Brown, Review of Rev. Dr. Raphael's [*sic*] disco'rse on "American slavery as being consistent with the Hebrew Servitude of the Old Testament," a sermon preached (by request) in the Baptist church, Shushan, on Wednesday, March 27th, 1861; http://archive.org/stream/reviewofrevdrrap00brow/reviewofrevdrrap00brow_djvu.txt (accessed July 21, 2013).
75. Illowy's speech is available in full at http://www.jewish-history.com/Illoway/sermon.html (accessed July 21, 2013).
76. *Speech of Hon. Joseph Jonas of Hamilton County in the House of Representatives, February 25, 26, 1861,* SC 5829, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH.
77. Hyman L. Meites, *History of the Jews of Chicago* (Chicago: Chicago Jewish Historical Society and Wellington Publishing, 1924), 45; Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 25-26; Abram Vossen Goodman, "A Jewish Peddler's Diary 1842-1843," *American Jewish Archives* 3 (June 1951), 81-110.
78. Abraham Kohn to AL (February 6, 1861), RG 59, Entry 760, Records of the State Department, Appointment Records, Applications and Recommendations for Office, Applications and Recommendations for Public Office, 1797-1901, National Archives College Park. On Waughop, see *The Bench and Bar of Chicago: Biographical Sketches* (Chicago: H. C. Cooper, 1883), 395-96.
79. *New Hampshire Statesman* (February 23, 1861) col. D; *The Daily Cleveland Herald* (February 25, 1861), col. B; *Lowell Daily Citizen and News* (February 16, 1861), *Col. B; Highland Weekly News* (February 28, 1861), 1. Note that Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 25, and later sources consistently describe the gift as a "silk flag," but the contemporary newspapers all describe it as a "picture." The acknowledgment found in the archival collection of Congregation KAM from Chicago businessman J. Scammon Young [wrongly identified as a presidential aide], who apparently made the actual presentation of the gift to Lincoln, similarly refers to "your beautiful painting of an American flag," see *Chicago Jewish History* 33 (Winter 2009), 4, and Korn, *American Jewry and Civil War,* 205, 301 n. 64. Harold Holzer, *Lincoln President-Elect: Abraham Lincoln and the Great Secession Winter 1860–1861* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2009), 187, provides context but misidentifies the biblical verse.

CHAPTER FOUR: WE HAVE NOT YET APPOINTED A HEBREW

1. CW 4, 190; Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 27-28; for the Provisional Constitution of the Confederacy, see http://avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/csa_csapro.asp.
2. CW 4, 218; *Israelite* (February 15, 1861), p.262.
3. Abram J. Dittenhoefer, *How We Elected Lincoln: Personal Recollections* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2005 [1916]), 43; CW 4, 233.
4. CW 4, 239.
5. David H. Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 273; Isaac M. Fein, "Baltimore Jews During the Civil War," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 51 (December 1961), 67-96.
6. CW 4, 262-71.
7. CW 4, 271.
8. *Israelite* (March 15, 1861), 294.
9. Ibid.
10. See, generally, Catherine A. Brekus and W. Clark Gilpin (eds.), *American Christianities: A History of Dominance and Diversity* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), esp.1-24.
11. Don E. Fehrenbacher and Virginia Fehrenbacher (eds.), *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 25; Allen Guelzo, *Abraham Lincoln: Redeemer President* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999), 313.
12. Jonathan D. Sarna, "Christians and Non-Christians in the Marketplace of American Religion," *American Christianities,* ed. Brekus & Gilpin, 119-32.
13. *Jewish Messenger* (February 18, 1861), online at http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/semi02.htm.
14. Ari Hoogenboom, *Outlawing the Spoils: A History of the Civil Service Reform Movement* 1865-1883 (New York: Praeger, 1982); Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2008), II, 69-97.
15. *Israelite* (April 5, 1861), 317.
16. *Israelite* (May 24, 1861), 374.
17. *Quincy Daily Herald* (November 30, 1860), 3; *Orville Browning to Abraham Lincoln* (December 9, 1860), AL Papers, LOC; *Quincy Whig Republican* (May 25, 1861), 3.
18. CW 4, 386
19. AL to Simon Cameron (May 26, 1861) in CW 4, 386; Shalom E. Lamm, "Colonel Max Einstein," http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/einstein.html, which also quotes Geiss's letter to William Seward (February 24, 1862); Henry S. Morais, *The Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: Levytype, 1894), 480-82; George B. McClellan to Irvin McDowell (August 16, 1861); Max Einstein to Simon Cameron (August 18, 1861), Simon Cameron Papers, LOC; George B. McClellan to Simon Cameron as quoted in Roger D. Hunt, *Union Army Colonels of the Civil War* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole books, 2007), 61, and in Letters Received, Volunteer Service Branch, Adjutant General's Office, File P17(VS)1861, National Archives; for a history of the 27th Regiment, see http://www.pa-roots.com/pacw/infantry/27th/27thorg.html.
20. Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln,* II, 93-94; *Israelite* (November 6, 1861), 76; Sol Stroock, "Switzerland and American Jews," *PAJHS* 11 (1903), 50; Richmond Dispatch (June 8, 1861), *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America (1861-1862),* First Session: 375 (July 10, 1861), 484 (July 26, 1861); Second session: 70 (January 6, 1862), 96 (January 22, 1862); on Bernays, see above chapter 3, n. 36.
21. Francis B. Cutting to AL (May 28, 1861), AL Papers, LOC.
22. Sigmund Diamond (ed.), *A Casual View of America: The Home Letters of Salomon de Rothschild 1859-1861* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1961), 123-24 [Salomon's letter, written from New Orleans, was dated 28 April 1861].
23. David Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue: The Fortunes of August Belmont* (New York: Dial, 1981)
24. August Belmont to Lionel de Rothschild (May 21, 1861); Francis B. Cutting to AL (May 28, 1861), AL Papers, LOC.
25. David Black, *The King of Fifth Avenue: The Fortunes of August Belmont* (New York: Dial Press, 1981), 207.

26. August Belmont to AL (May 9, 1862), AL Papers, LOC; Black, *King of Fifth Avenue,* 209-11.
27. August Belmont to Thurlow Weed (July 20, 1862), AL Papers, LOC; AL to August Belmont (July 31, 1862) in CW 5, 350-51; Black, *King of Fifth Avenue,* 216-18, 241-60.
28. John Bassett Moore (ed.), *The Works of James Buchanan* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1911), XI: 353 (online at http://archives.dickinson.edu/digitized-resources/works-james-buchanan-comprising-his-speeches-statepapers-and-private); *New York Times* (November 9, 1864), 2; Black, *King of Fifth Avenue,* 242, 257-58.
29. Appointment of Alfred Mordecai Jr. (August 10, 1861), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
30. Varina Davis, *Jefferson Davis: Ex-President of the Confederate States of America* (New York: Belford, 1890), I, 535-36; Emily Bingham, *Mordecai: An Early American Family (New York: Hill* & Wang, 2003), 235-37; Stanley Falk, "Alfred Mordecai, American Jew," *American Jewish Archives* 10 (1958), 125-32.
31. Bingham, *Mordecai,* 245-51; Stanley L. Falk, "Divided Loyalties in 1861: The Decision of Major Alfred Mordecai," in Sarna & Mendelsohn, *Jews and the Civil War: A Reader,* 201-25; Jean E. Friedman, "The Moral Imagination of Confederate Family Politics," in *Inside the Confederate Nation: Essay in Honor of Emory M. Thomas,* eds. Lesley J. Gordon and John C. Inscoe (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 167-87.
32. Bingham, *Mordecai,* 237, 250, 261. Mordecai concluded his career, in 1895, as superintendent and commandant of the Springfield Armory.
33. John Fitch, *Annals of the Army of the Cumberland* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1864), 264, 270.
34. Philip Kearny to AL; AL to Kearny (September 3, 1861), Abraham Lincoln Collection, Clements Library, University of Michigan (see http://quod.lib.umich.edu/c/clementsmss/umich-wcl-M-816lin?view=text); CW, Supplement I, 95,; http://www.math.rutgers.edu/~zeilberg/family/moritz.html.
35. The Shapell Roster of Jews in the service of the Union and Confederate Armies and Navies during the American Civil War period of 1861–1865.
36. Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 118-26.
37. On Alfred Raphall, see House of Representatives, 53rd Congress, 2nd Session, "Alfred M. Raphall: Report to Accompany H.R. 954."
38. AL to Edwin M. Stanton (November 4, 1862), CW Supplement, p.162; original in Shapell Manuscript Collection; for evidence of Levy's Orthodoxy and stature, see Hyman B. Grinstein, *The Rise of the Jewish Community of New York 1654-1860* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1945), 577 n. 64.
39. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 108.
40. AGO, General Orders No. 332, Shapell Manuscript Collection; "Proceedings of a General Court Martial, August 10, 1863, Trial of Captain Cherrie [*sic*] M. Levy," NARA; AL to Samuel C. Pomeroy (November 8, 1863), CW 7, 4.
41. Richard Busteed to AL (November 18, 1863) and other letters appended to "Proceedings of a General Court Martial, August 10, 1863, Trial of Captain Cherrie [*sic*] M. Levy," NARA (Busteed was appointed judge on November 17, 1863.) In his letter, Busteed noted that Levy's "father-in-law is the well-known Jewish prelate Dr. Raphael [*sic*], and a large circle of his countrymen are much interested in the case." "I have heard his story," he concluded, "and I believe his narration of the affair." In his eulogy for Lincoln, Raphall reported in the third person that he had seen Lincoln but once, "but on that single occasion, he had shown himself friendly to him—he [Raphall] had asked him but one favor, but that time he had granted it freely—he had granted it lovingly, because he knew the speaker was a Jew—because he knew him to be a true servant of the Lord"; Emanuel Hertz, *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 169.
42. M. J. Raphall to AL (March 1, 1864), AL Papers LOC; for the renomination, see *Senate Executive Journal* (January 18, 1864), 380.
43. *Senate Executive Journal* (March 25, 1864), 458; Samuel F. Chalfin to Cheme M. Levy (July 16, 1864), AL Papers, LOC; "Proceedings of a General Court Martial, August 10, 1863, Trial of Captain Cherrie [sic] M. Levy," NARA; Samuel C. Pomeroy to AL (July 22, 1864), AL Papers, LOC; *Report of Committees of the Senate of the United States for the First Session of the Forty-Fourth Congress 1875-1876* (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1876), Report #370.
44. Shakespeare Henry V, ii. i. 106.
45. On sutlers see Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews, 19;* Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 90.

46. AL to Simon Cameron (September 5, 1861), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
47. AL seemingly to Simon Cameron (December 6, 1861), Shapell Manuscript Collection. On sutlers, see Francis A. Lord, *Civil War Sutlers and Their Wares* (New York: Thomas Yoselof, 1969); David Michael Delo, *Peddlers and Post Traders: The Army Sutler on the Frontier* (Salt Lake City, 1992).
48. The Shapell Manuscript Collection has compiled a preliminary list of Jewish sutlers. For the March 19, 1862 Act "to provide for the appointment of sutlers … and to define their duties," see OR, Series 3, Vol. 1, 938-40.
49. CW 5, 447.
50. Herman A. Norton, *Struggling for Recognition: The United States Army Chaplaincy* (Washington DC: Office of the Chief of Chaplains, 1977); Warren B, Armstong, *For Courageous Fighting and Confident Dying: Union Chaplains in the Civil War* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998); Steven Woodworth, *While God Is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 145-74; Gardiner H. Shattuck Jir, *A Shield and Hiding Place: The Religious Life of the Civil War Armies* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987), 51-72.
51. OR, Series 3, volume 1, 380-82; for the chaplaincy, see section 9.
52. *Congressional Globe* (July 12 [13], 1861), 100.
53. OR Series 3, volume 1, 154,157.
54. *Congressional Globe* (July 12 [13], 1861), 100.
55. *Israelite* (September 6, 1861), 76 (quoted); (July 19, 1861), 23.
56. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 58-60; David de Sola Pool, "The Diary of Chaplain Michael M. Allen, September 1861," *PAJHS* 39 (December 1949), 177-82; http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/mmallen.htm (accessed 1 September 2013).
57. For documents, see Myer S. Isaacs, "A Jewish Army Chaplain," *PAJHS* 12 (1904), 127-37; and Gary P. Zola, *They Called Him Rabbi Abraham* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014). The standard account of this episode is Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 56-97. For the "sizable number of undesirables," among early Civil War chaplains, including illiterates and irreligious laymen, see Norton, *Struggling for Recognition,* 85. On Fischel, see Jonathan Waxman, "Arnold Fischel: 'Unsung Hero' in American Israel," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 60 (June 1971), 325-43. Note that Fischel's term at Shearith Israel was ending, and he may well have been looking for another job.
58. Steven E. Woodworth, *While God Is Marching On: The Religious World of Civil War Soldiers* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2001), 145.
59. *Israelite* (November 15, 1861), 157; (December 6, 1861), 177.
60. For an analysis of these petitions, see Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 66 and 258, nn.37-42.
61. AL to John J. Hughes (October 21, 1861), CW 4, 559-60.
62. Arnold Fischel to Henry I. Hart (December 11, 1861), Board of Delegates Papers, AJHS, NY reprinted in *PAJHS* 12 (1904), 131-32.
63. United States Christian Commission, *Facts, Principles and Progress* (Philadelphia: Sherman, 1863), 7-8; AL to George H. Stuart (December 12, 1861), CW 5, 67.
64. AL to Arnold Fischel (December 14, 1861), CW 5, 69.
65. *PAJHS* 12 (1904), 134.
66. *The Presbyter* as quoted in Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 64.
67. Statutes at Large, 37th Congress, Second Session (1862), 595; Norton, *Struggling for Recognition,* 87-93; Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 71-72.
68. Isaac Leeser to AL (August 21, 1862), endorsed by John Hay and Joseph R. Smith, AL Papers, LOC; Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 77; in 1864, Frankel was appointed visiting chaplain with specific responsibility for Jewish soldiers, see Armstrong, *For Courageous Fighting and Confident Dying,* 39.
69. Henry I. Hart and Myer J. Isaacs to AL (October 6, 1862), Thomas F. Perley to William H. Hammond (October 27, 1862), AL Papers, LOC; Fischel had estimated that there were "thirty to forty" Jews in Washington-area hospitals, but that would not have justified a chaplain either, *PAJHS* 12 (1904), 136; Waxman, "Arnold Fischel," 341-42.
70. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 84-87.
71. Ibid, xv-xvi, 82-83; *Israelite* (May 15, 1863), 357. On Gotthelf, see Iuliu Herscovici, *The Jews of Vicksburg, Mississippi* (2007), 322-34.

72. James Shrigley in Osborn H. Oldroyd, *Lincoln Memorial: Album Immortelles* (New York: Carleton, 1883), 336-37; P. M. Zall (ed.) *Abe Lincoln Laughing* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 82-83. Philadelphia Congressman Leonard Myers, of Jewish descent, was among those who recommended Shrigley to Lincoln. See Myers to AL (November 19, 1862), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
73. CW 8, 102-3; on Gibson, see Ann Braude, *Radical Spirits: Spiritualism and Womens Rights in Nineteenth-Century America* (Boston: Beacon, 1989), 92, 127.
74. CW 5, 497-98; the order was dated November 15, 1862. Washington's earlier order was dated July 9, 1776.
75. *Occident* (January 1, 1863), 25.
76. Bernhard Behrend to AL (December 4, 1862) in *Occident* (January 1, 1863), 25; online with additional information on Behrend at http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/shabbat.htm; see also *Jewish Life in Mr. Lincoln's City,* eds. Laura Cohen Apelbaum and Claire Uziel (Washington, DC: Jewish Historical Society of Greater Washington, 2009), 39, 138.
77. *Israelite* (January 16, 1863), 218; Jonathan D. Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* (New York: Schocken, 2012), 23.
78. On this episode, see Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews.*
79. *PUSG* 6:238, 283, 393-94; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 44-45.
80. *PUSG* 7: 8-9; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 45,170 n.34.
81. Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 47.
82. Sylvanus Cadwallader, "Forty Years With Grant," 47-49 in Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Springfield Illinois; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 47-48, 171.
83. PUSG 7: 53; see John Y. Simon, "That Obnoxious Order," *Jews and the Civil War,* eds. Jonathan D. Sarna & Adam Mendelsohn (New York: NYU Press, 2010), 358.
84. U. S. Grant to Jesse Grant, August 14, 1868, Shapell Manuscript Collection.
85. OR, series I, vol. 17 (part 2), 463, 471; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 8.
86. *Israelite* (January 2, 1863), 202; *Jewish Record* (January 13, 1863); Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 17-18.
87. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 123; John E. L. Robertson, *Paducah: Frontier to the Atomic Age* (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Books, 2002), 44; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 6-7.
88. OR, series I, vol. 17 (part 2), 506; PUSG 7: 54; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 11.
89. *Memphis Daily Bulletin* (January 6, 1863) as cited in Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 272 n.16; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 11, 35-37.
90. SC-4218, AJA; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 12-13.
91. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 125; Markens, *Lincoln and the Jews,* 118.
92. *Israelite* (January 16, 1863); PUSG 7: 53-54; OR, series I, vol. 17 (part 2), 544; Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews,* 21-22.
93. St. Louis B'nai B'rith to Abraham Lincoln (January 5, 1863), AL Papers, LOC; Isidor Bush to Edward Bates (January 6, 1863), endorsed by Edward Bates (January 12, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
94. *Israelite* (January 16, 1863), 218; the article was reprinted as far away as San Francisco: *San Francisco Evening Bulletin* (February 10, 1863).

CHAPTER FIVE: I MYSELF HAVE A REGARD FOR THE JEWS

1. Diary of Edward Rosewater, January 1, 1863, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH, online at http://americanjewisharchives.org/exhibits/aje/_pdfs/X_58.pdf.
2. Edward Rosewater to Leah Colman, September 18, 1862, Colman-Schwarzenberg family album, private collection, as quoted in Kathryn Hellerstein, "A Letter from Lincoln's Jewish Telegrapher," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 94:4 (Fall 2004), 629-30.
3. Diary of Edward Rosewater, January 1, 1863, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH, online at http://americanjewisharchives.org/exhibits/aje/_pdfs/X_58.pdf.
4. Don E. Fehrenbacher and Virginia Fehrenbacher, *Recollected Words of Abraham Lincoln* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), 397; Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), II, 469.
5. CW 6, 28-20; John Hope Franklin, "The Emancipation Proclamation: An Act of Justice." *Prologue Magazine* 25 (Summer 1993), online at http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/1993/summer/emancipation-proclamation.html; Hellerstein, "A Letter from Lincoln's Jewish Telegrapher," 625-36; see also Isaac Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* (New York, 1909), 56.
6. *Jewish Record* 1 (January 23, 1863) as quoted in Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 27.
7. *Israelite* (February 27, 1863), 268.
8. *Occident* (February 1, 1863), 16.
9. Simon Wolf, *The Presidents I Have Known from 1860-1918* (Washington, DC, 1918), 8.
10. *Hamagid* 7 (January 29, 1863), 34. Earlier, Vidaver was more sympathetic to the South; see Harvey A. Richman, "The Image of America in the European Hebrew Periodicals of the Nineteenth Century (Until 1880)" (Ph.D., University of Texas, Austin, 1971), 206-15, esp. 211.
11. Esther 8:8.
12. AL to John Alexander McClernand (January 8, 1863), Shapell Legacy Partnership.
13. *New York World* (September 24, 1864) as quoted in Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 194.
14. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 194; Gary P. Zola, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham: Lincoln and American Jewry—A Documentary History* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014), 44.
15. While later sources list his birth as 1827, he was listed on the ship's manifest upon the arrival of the Zacharias in 1832 as being seven years old, and the 1850 U.S. Census lists him as being aged twenty-five. His marriage in 1844 likewise points to the earlier birth year.
16. Elizabeth P. Bentley, *Passenger Arrivals at the Port of New York, 1830-1832, From Customs Passenger Lists* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 2000), 1102.
17. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (December 28, 1863), reprinted in Charles M. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie: Lincoln's Chiropodist," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 43 (December 1953), 115 (for Charles Johnson, his letter writer, see p. 94); he likewise admitted to his lack of education in a talk reprinted in *Jewish Messenger* (May 13, 1864), 141.
18. Charles E. Krausz, "Issachar Zacharie, 1827-1900," *A Fast Pace Forward: Chronicles of American Podiatry* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania College of Podiatric Medicine, 1987), 19.
19. The 1850 U.S. Census lists him as living with his wife's family (see below, n. 29); for quote see *Jewish Messenger* (May 13, 1864), 141 and for Lincoln, see below and CW 8, 238.
20. Cameron Kippen, "A Potted History of Podiatry," http://foottalk.blogspot.com/2008/12/potted-history-of-podiatry.html; D. R. Tollafield & J. C. Cagnall, "Introduction: an historical perspective," in D. R. Tollafield & L. M. Merriman (eds.) *Clinical Skills in Treating the Foot* (Edinburgh: Churchill Livingstone, 1997), 1-6; James E. Bates (ed.) *A Fast Pace Forward: Chronicles of American Podiatry* (Philadelphia: Pennsylvania College of Pediatric Medicine, 1987), 5; Collin Dagnall, "The Origin of 'Chiropodist'" *Podiatry Now* 12 (April 2009), 48.
21. "Lewis Durlacher," *The Palgrave Dictionary of Anglo-Jewish History,* ed. William D. Rubinstein et al. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 235; W. Seelig, "Durlacher: Four Generations of a Family in English Chiropody," *The Chiropodist* 11 (1956), 76-83.
22. *British and Foreign Medical Review* 20 (1845), 521.

23. *The Medico-chirurgical Review, and Journal of Practical Medicine,* new series, 2 (1845), 546.
24. J. C. Dagnall, "Who Wrote 'Eisenberg on the Diseases of the Human Foot'?" *The ClioPedic* Items 1 (1985), 7-12 suggests that Eisenberg was the nom de plume of George Gabriel Sigmond. Many thanks to Dr Anthony S. Travis for valuable research that is partially incorporated here.
25. I. Zacharie, *Corns, Operations on the Feet* (New York: [I. Zacharie, 186?]) as quoted in Charles M. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie: Lincoln's Chiropodist," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 43 (December 1953), 72-73, 78.
26. I. Zacharie, *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot* (Rev. ed, London: Adams Brothers, 1876), ii; the dedication is practically word-for-word identical to John Eisenberg's dedication of his book to the great British physician and physiologist Marshall Hall; see John Eisenberg, *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot* (London: Henry Renshaw, 1845), iii. Zacharie presumably backdated his dedication to 1844 so as to pretend that Eisenberg plagiarized him. A "certificate," purportedly from Valentine Mott and dated August 1858 testifying to Zacharie's skills, appears in *Corns, Operations on the Feet.* For the original, see Shapell Manuscript Collection.
27. Bates, *A Fast Pace Forward,* 12 includes an ad for Davidson's establishment; for his Jewish connections, see *Jewish Exponent* 1 (July 22, 1887), 8.
28. *The Freemason,* 29 September 1900; on Mutter see E. S. Harris and R. F. Morgan, "Thomas Dent Mutter, MD: Early Reparative Surgeon," *Annals of Plastic Surgery* 33 (September 1994):333-38.
29. The Census listed him as "Isicca Zackriah" and misidentified him as female but correctly listed the first names of his wife and children and listed the head of the household as Jacob Lawson, his father-in-law.
30. Charles M. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie: Lincoln's Chiropodist," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 43 (December 1953), 74-79, quoting documents now in the possession of the Shapell Manuscript Collection.
31. Ibid, 76, Shapell Manuscript Collection.
32. Ibid, 77, Shapell Manuscript Collection.
33. Krausz, "Issachar Zacharie, 1827-1900," 19.
34. *Freemason's Chronicle* 51 (29 September 1900), 147-148; http://www.orderofthesecretmonitorlondon.org.uk/history.html (accessed 25 December 2013).
35. *New York Atlas* (August 29, 1858) as reprinted in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 77-78; see also Zacharie's brochure *Corns: Operations on the Feet* (n.p., n.d. [1862?])
36. Gilbert Muller, *William Cullen Bryant: Author of America* (Albany: SUNY, 2008), 74.
37. *New-York Evening Post* (February 19, 1859), as quoted in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 78-79. For his "personal experience" as a patient, see Willliam Cullen Bryant to Edwin M. Stanton (August 21, 1862), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
38. *New York Times* (December 12, 1862); Frank R. Freemon, "Lincoln Finds a Surgeon-General: William A. Hammond and the Transformation of the Union Army Medical Bureau," *Civil War History* 33 (1987), 5-21; Bonnie E. Blustein, *Preserve Your Love for Science: Life of William A Hammond, American Neurologist* (New York: Cambridge, 2002), 62, 82.
39. Bryant to Stanton (August 21, 1862), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
40. W. C. Bryant to AL (August 21, 1862), Shapell Manuscript Collection. Zacharie, of course, was not a "regularly educated surgeon," but he performed like one.
41. George Opdyke to AL (August 28, 1862), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
42. Rufus F. Andrews to AL (August 29, 1862), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
43. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 80-81.
44. *New York Herald* (October 3, 1862), 4.
45. I. Zacharie to E. M. Stanton (August 26, 1862), Letters Received Files, August 27, 1862, Records of the War Department, Office of the Surgeon General, National Archives, Washington, DC in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 80.
46. *New York Herald* (October 3, 1862), as reprinted in Zola, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham,* 54.
47. Lincoln's signed, handwritten testimonial (September 20, 1862) is in the Shapell Manuscript Collection.
48. Lincoln's signed, handwritten card, dated September 22, 1862, is in the Shapell Manuscript Collection.
49. *New York Herald* (September 26, 1862) as quoted in http://www.thelincolnlog.org/Calendar.aspx?date=1862-09-25. Lincoln had sprained his wrist on September 13th trying to restrain his runaway horse during a morning ride.

50. The testimonial signed by Lincoln and Seward (September 23, 1862) is in the Shapell Manuscript Collection; see also CW Supplement I, 152-153.
51. The order is reprinted in *PAJHS* 43 (1953), 123. The pass was subsequently continued for sixty days more.
52. "Ode to Dr. Zacharie," *Vanity Fair* 6 (October 18, 1862), 190.
53. Bryant was president of the New York Homeopathic Society; see http://homeoint.org/photo/b2/bryantwc.htm.
54. Blustein, *Preserve Your Love for Science: Life of William A Hammond, American Neurologist,* 81-83; see also p. 59: "Hammond was more than a little arrogant."
55. CW 5, 444-445.
56. William A. Hammond, *A Statement of the Causes Which Led to the Dismissal of the Surgeon-General William A. Hammond from the Army with a Review of the Evidence Adduced Before the Court* (New York: 1864), 52. https://archive.org/details/statementofcause01hamm.
57. Maine Historical Society; Zola, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham,* 58.
58. N. P. Banks to J. A. Dix (October 6, 1862), Shapell Manuscript Collection; Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 83, 124.
59. I. Zacharie to William H. Seward (November 24, 1862) reprinted in Charles M. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie: Lincoln's Chiropodist—Addendum," *PAJHS* 44 (1954), 107.
60. AL to Banks (November 25, 1862), CW Supplement 1, 165; Brown University Library Center for Digital Scholarship, Call no. LA2260 (online: http://library.brown.edu/cds/catalog/catalog.php?verb=render&id=1212770838390625&view=pageturner&pageno=1).

61. James G. Hollandsworth Jr., *Pretense of Glory: The Life of General Nathaniel P. Banks* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 83-88.
62. Bertram W. Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham: American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 227.
63. Benjamin F. Butler to Myer S. Isaacs (February 13, 1864), in *PAJHS* 29 (1925), 121; on Butler's anti-Semitism, see also Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 164-66 and Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 275.
64. Benjamin F. Butler to U.S. Attorney General, October 23, 1862, Shapell Manuscript Collection.
65. Numbers of Zacharies and Zacharias are listed in the 1840 census from New Orleans, and Zacharie later reported that he had hired "men I have known from my infancy" to assist him in his mission; see Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 86.
66. Jonathan D. Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* (New York: Schocken, 2012), 44-45. Actually, Grant's order only applied to the area under his command, which did not include New Orleans.
67. N. P. Banks to I. Zacharie (January 1, 1863) in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 85.
68. I. Zacharie to AL (January 14, 1863, February 19, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
69. I. Zacharie to AL (May 9, 1863) reprinted in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie-Addendum," 112-13. Zacharie sent practically the same words to Banks (Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 98). For Gutheim's view of Lincoln, see Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 48. While Gutheim was an immigrant, his wife was a native of Mobile, Alabama.. Gutheim was banished and moved to Montgomery; he did not return to New Orleans until July 1865. See William Warren Rogers, "In Defense of Our Sacred Cause: Rabbi James K. Gutheim in Confederate Montgomery," *Journal of Confederate History* 7 (1991): 113-122; Gary P. Zola," Gutheim, James Koppel"; http://www.anb.org/articles/08/08-01796.html; American National Biography Online (accessed July 9, 2012); and Scott Langston, "James K. Gutheim as Southern Reform Rabbi, Community Leader and Symbol," *Southern Jewish History* 5 (2002), 69-102.
70. *New York Herald* (June 13, 1863), 8; see also Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 196.
71. I. Zacharie to AL (January 14, 1863, February 19, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
72. Raymond H. Banks, *King of Louisiana, 1862-1865 and Other Government Work: A Biography of Major General Nathaniel Prentice Banks* (Las Vegas: R. H. Banks, 2005), 588-89; see Zacharie to Banks (May 3, 1863): "I write by every Steamer to the President & Mr. Seward" in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 98.
73. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (January 11, 1863) in ibid, 86-87.
74. James Marten, "The Making of a Carpetbagger: George S. Denison and the South, 1854-1866," *Louisiana History* 34:2 (Spring 1993), 141.
75. Salmon P. Chase, "Diary and Correspondence of Salmon P. Chase," in *Annual Report of the American Historical Association, the Year 1902* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1903), 355, 359; cf. 353.
76. G. F. Shepley to B. F. Butler (February 20, 1863) in *Private and Official Correspondence of General Benjamin F. Butler* (Norwood: Plimpton Press, 1917), 3:14.
77. Michael Hahn to AL (June 6, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
78. See Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 90-95; and Segal "Isachar Zacharie-Addendum," 110-12 for key evidence. In a letter to Lincoln (Zacharie to AL (February 19, 1863), AL Papers, LOC, Zacharie blamed his enemies for accusations that he was speculating. A secret March 7, 1863 business agreement between Zacharie and rebel sympathizer W. G. Betterton suggests that Zacharie did indeed stand to benefit personally from a deal he advanced to exchange Southern cotton for Northern goods, but Banks may have had knowledge of the matter. See the letter from Zacharie's secretary, Charles Johnson, to Banks (September 24, 1863): "the doctor [Zacharie] just before leaving recd a very scurrilous letter from Mr. Betterton, & intended writing you on the subject, but did not have time" [Typescript in SC 13335, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH; original at the University of Rochester].
79. N. P. Banks to W. H. Seward (July 2, 1863) reprinted in Fred H. Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," *American Historical Review* 46 (October 1940), 77.
80. I. Zacharie to AL (March 17, 1863), AL Papers LOC.
81. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 92-95; Banks, *King of Louisiana,* 760-62; 1209.
82. I. Zacharie to AL (March 27, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
83. Richard S. Lambert, *For the Time Is at Hand: An Account of the Prophecies of HENRY WENTWORTH MONK of Ottawa, Friend of the Jews, and Pioneer of World Peace* (London: Andrew Melrose, Ltd., [1947]);

Peter A. Russell, "Monk, Henry Wentworth," in *Dictionary of Canadian Biography,* vol. 12, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed December 31, 2013, http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/monk_henry_wentworth_12E.html. On Artas, which was also the home of Clorinda Minor's short-lived colony of former supporters of the American end-of-days prophet William Miller and is misnamed and mischaracterized both by Lambert and by Russell, see Lester I. Vogel, *To See a Promised Land: Americans and the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 128-32.

84. Lambert, *For the Time Is at Hand,* 81-82. Lambert quotes this from a contemporaneous letter sent by Monk to his friend the Canadian publisher and businessman, William Cameron Chewett. We have been unable to locate the original letter, which Lambert reported to be in private hands, but we take the letter to be genuine, for it includes language and allusions that are characteristic to Lincoln and that neither Monk nor Lambert could have invented.
85. Joel 2:27/3:1
86. Edward Yates to Abraham Lincoln (February 16, 1863), AL Papers, LOC; see Yates's *A Letter to the Women of England, on Slavery in the Southern States of America* (London, 1863).
87. W. T. Sherman to Philemon B. Ewing (November 2, 1862); Shapell Manuscript Collection. See above Chapter 4
88. *Lincoln Day by Day: A Chronology 1809-1865,* eds. E. S. Miers and C. P. Powell (Dayton: Morningside, 1991) lists just four personal visits of Zacharie to the White House, two of them after Monk was there; cf. n. 13 above, where the *New York World* described Zacharie as the "favored family visitor at the White House."
89. On the peace mission, see Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 79-86; Fred Harvey Harrington, *Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1970 [orig. ed. 1948]), 126; James G. Hollandsworth Jr. *Pretense of Glory: The Life of General Nathaniel P. Banks* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), 154-57; and Banks, *King of Louisiana,* 763-65; the quoted phrase was used by Zacharie in his letter to Banks (December 28, 1863), in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 86.
90. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (July 30, 1863) in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 79.
91. Both Gordon and Jefferson Davis were related to the Confederate general Richard Taylor, the son of former President Zachary Taylor; see Banks, *King of Louisiana,* 765 n.30.
92. N. P. Banks to AL (September 11, 1863) in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 82-83.
93. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (September 8, 1863); AL to J. G. Foster (August 28, 1863), John A. Dix to J. G. Foster (September 7, 1863), Lincoln Manuscripts, Brown University Library, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:71965/ and CW Supplement I, 199-200.
94. Eli N. Evans, *Judah P. Benjamin: The Jewish Confederate* (New York: Free Press, 1988), 232.
95. I. Zacharie to J. P. Benjamin (September 28, 1863) in Zola, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham,* 59-60; for a possible interpretation of what they may have been doing that night, see Daniel Brook, "The Forgotten Confederate Jew," *Tablet* (July 17, 2012), http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/books/106227/the-forgotten-confederate-jew.
96. Zacharie to AL (September 29, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
97. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (October 9, 1863) in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 83-84.
98. Ibid; Zola, *We Called Him Rabbi Abraham,* 55-56, 61 reprints both that letter and the *New York Herald* report (October 21, 1863) on his peace plan. For the request to "lay quiet" see I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (December 28, 1863), in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 86. Blair's plan was likewise discussed at the Hampton Roads Peace Conference of 1865, see James P. Conroy, *Our One Common Country: Abraham Lincoln and the Hampton Roads Peace Conference of 1865* (Guilford, CT: Lyons Press, 2014).
99. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (October 9, 1863) in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 84.
100. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (October 16, 1863) in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 85.
101. I. Zacharie to N. P. Banks (December 28, 1863) in Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," 86.
102. *New York Daily Tribune* (June 24, 1864), 5.
103. G. L. Mordecai, *A Tribute to Lincoln: "Happy to Serve an Enemy"* [New York: Lownsbury, n.d. [1910]), available on the Internet Archive; reprinted from *New York Daily Tribune* (February 13, 1901); see also Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews,* 50-51; Korn, *American Jewry and Civil War,* 199; Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates,* 41, 434 n.184; and on Lewis, Howard S. Stein, "Samuel A. Lewis: Nineteenth-Century Jewish American Leader," SC-15490, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH.

104. J. G. Cohen to I. Zacharie (March 5, 1864), RG 45, entry 36, miscellaneous letters received, NARA, online at http://lincolnpapers2.dataformat.com/images/1864/03/291966.pdf. For evidence that Cohen was actually captured while running the blockade in the sloop *Annie Thompson,* see *Official Records of the War of the Rebellion* (Washington DC, 1902), Series I, vol. 15, 245.
105. I. Zacharie to AL (February 13, 1864); I. Zacharie to AL (May 13, 1864) AL Papers, LOC.
106. *Jewish Messenger* 15 (May 13, 1864), 141; Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 199.
107. OR, Series 1, vol. 24, part 1, 9.
108. Eric Benjaminson, "A Regiment of Immigrants: The 82nd Illinois Volunteer Infantry and the Letters of Captain Rudolph Mueller," *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 94:2 (Summer 2001), 137-80; Joseph R. Reinhart, *Yankee Dutchmen Under Fire; Civil War Letters from the 82nd Illinois Infantry* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 2013), 23-26, 37-44. For Lincoln's knowledge of Hecker's military activities, see CW 4, 390.
109. H. L. Meites, *History of the Jews of Chicago* (Chicago: Jewish Historical Society of Illinois, 1924 [1990 Facsimile edition]), 93; Reinhart, *Yankee Dutchmen Under Fire,* 84-98.
110. *Jewish Messenger,* July 10, 1863, online from Morais's ledger at http://sceti.library.upenn.edu/pages/index.cfm?so_id=1661&PagePosition=40&level=1; see Marc Saperstein, *Jewish Preaching in Times of War 1800-2001* (Oxford: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2008), vii-viii.
111. Others claim that he borrowed it from Speaker of the House Galusha Grow, who used the phrase "Fourscore years ago" back on July 4, 1861; see Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* II, 570.
112. Abraham Hart to AL (April 23, 1862) AL Papers, LOC. Lincoln responded to Hart on May 13, 1862, AL Papers LOC: "My dear Sir Permit me to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of April 23d containing a copy of a Prayer recently delivered at your Synagogue, and to thank you heartily for your expressions of kindness and confidence. I have the honor to be Your Obt. Servt. A. LINCOLN."
113. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 36; Arthur Kiron, "'Dust and Ashes,' The Funeral and Forgetting of Sabato Morais," *American Jewish History* 84:3 (1996), 164; John Hay to A. Hart (January 9, 1864), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
114. Edward Everett, "Gettysburg Oration" (1863) online at http://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Gettysburg_Oration.
115. *History of the 118th Regt. P.V. Corn Exchange* (Philadelphia: JL Smith, 1905), 296—online at http://freepages.military.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pa91/cc382902.html; see also Alexandra Lee Levin, *The Szolds of Lombard Street* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1960), 37.
116. Joan E. Cashin "Deserters, Civilians and Draft Resistance in the North," in *The War Was You and Me,* ed. Joan Cashin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 264. Proportionately, even more soldiers deserted from the Confederacy: see Ella Lonn, *Desertion During the Civil War* (Gloucester: Peter Smith, 1966 [orig. ed.1928]); cf. Robert Fantina, *Desertion and the American Soldier 1776-2006* (New York: Algora, 2006).
117. Quoted in Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2008), II, 493.
118. Simon Wolf, *The Presidents I Have Known From 1860 to 1918* (Washington: 1918), 5-7. Original research from the Shapell Roster suggests that the soldier about whom Corwin and Wolf are referencing is actually a combined account of the lives of Private Michael Wolf(e), Company C, 20th Regiment Massachusetts Infantry (Shapell Roster ID #1193) and Private Adam Wolf(e), Company H, 13th Regiment Massachusetts Infantry.
119. Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: A Life,* II, 492-94; Thomas P. Lowry, *Don't Shoot That Boy: Abraham Lincoln and Military Justice* (Mason City: Savas, 1999). According to Cashin (p. 270), 80,000 deserters were arrested, but only 141 were executed.
120. Charles Walter et al. to George Meade (August 25, 1863)
121. Meade to AL (August 27, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
122. Walter, Rainese, Faline, Lae. and Kuhn to AL (August 26, 1863), AL Papers, LOC.
123. Abraham Lincoln to George G. Meade, Autograph telegram signed, August 27, 1863, ALPLM, copied onto a telegram. Thomas T. Eckert Papers, Series 1: Telegrams Sent, vol. 16: p. 281, Huntington Library.
124. George Meade to AL, August 27, 1863 Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress.
125. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 109; Gregory Acken (ed.) *Inside the Army of the Potomac: The Civil War Experience of Captain Francis Adams Donaldson* (Mechanicsburg, PA: Stackpole, 1998), 332-36; Levin, *Szolds of Lombard Street,* 37; Markens, *Lincoln and the Jews,* 47–48; *Jewish Messenger* (September

4, 1863), 69. Korn's account relies on contemporary sources including the *Jewish Record,* and is preferable to some later retrospective accounts.

126. *History of the 118th Regt. P.V. Corn Exchange* (Philadelphia: JL Smith, 1905), 296 – online at http://freepages.military.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pa91/cc382902.html; James H. Clossen to Mother (September 3, 1863), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
127. Jessie L. Pryer (?) to Sallie (September 11, 1863), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
128. The Survivors' Association. *History of the 118th Regt. P.V. Corn Exchange.* Philadelphia: JL Smith, 1905.
129. George Levy, "President Lincoln Rejects an Appeal for Mercy," *The Lincoln Newsletter,* 13:3 (Fall 1994): 1, 4–7.

CHAPTER SIX: ABOUT JEWS

1. *Israelite* (January 16, 1863), 218.
2. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 156-88.
3. AL to Edwin M. Stanton and Henry W. Halleck (Nov 14, 1863), Shapell Manuscript Collection; for an August 28, 1863, letter on the same subject, see CW 6, 419-20 and Milton Shutes, "The Case of Colonel William Mayer," *Lincoln Herald* 63 (1961), 24-26; an additional letter on Nov 14, 1863 AL to Stanton about Mayer raising troops, CW 10, 210. On Mayer, see the *New York Times* (April 18, 1906), 11; Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 117; Howard Rock, *Haven of Liberty: New York Jews in the New World 1654-1865* (New York: NYU Press, 2012), 248-49; Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen* (New York: Gregg Press, 1972 [orig. 1895]), 284.
4. War Department. The Office of the Judge Advocate General. Court Martial File No. NN-2345 (Moses Waldauer) in Court Martial Case Files 1809–1894. Record Group 153: Records of the Office the Judge Advocate General-Army. National Archives and Records Administration, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
5. AL to Officer in Charge of Caroll Prison (January 8, 1865), Shapell Manuscript Collection; War Department, General Court Martial Orders #398 (December 30, 1864); Mark E. Neely, *The Fate of Liberty: Abraham Lincoln and Civil Liberties* (New York: Oxford, 1991), 99-103; AL to Joseph Holt (February 17, 1865), CW 8, 303-4; for the pardon, see War Department, General Court Martial, Orders No. 99 (February 18, 1865), Case Files of Investigations by Levi C. Turner and Lafayette C. Baker, compiled 1862-1865. NARA microfilm publication M797. Record Group 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office. National Archives and Records Administration, National Archives Building, Washington, DC.
6. *Journal of the Executive Proceedings of the Senate of the United States of America* 13 (January 11-12, 1864), 369.
7. "Local News," *Evening Star,* Washington, DC (November 21, 1864).
8. National Archives online: Letter from Chief Justice D. K. Cartter and Andrew Wylie, Justice of the Supreme Court of D.C., 12/05/1864. http://research.archives.gov/description/6783000.
9. David Hirsch to AL (December 23, 1863), AL Papers, LOC; David Hirsch to Ulysses S. Grant (January 28, 1864), *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant: January 1 - May 31, 1864,* Vol. 10 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1982), 519-20; Jeffrey N. Lash, *A Politician Turned General: The Civil War Career of Stephen Augustus Hurlbut* (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2003), 107-47, esp. 127-28.
10. J. W. Calvert et al to AL (September 9, 1864) AL Papers, LOC; AL notes (September 24, 26, 27, 1864), in the David Benjamin Family Collection.
11. AL to Hon. Sec of Navy (September 9, 1864), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
12. AL to Myers, January 13, 1865, CW 8
13. AL to Joseph H. Stiner (December 2, 1864), Shapell Manuscript Collection.
14. Mary Lincoln to General Patrick (September 24 [1864], Shapell Manuscript Collection.
15. David Rankin Barbee, "The Musical Mr. Lincoln," *Abraham Lincoln Quarterly* 5 (December 1949), 449-50, 452.
16. Mary Lincoln to General Patrick (September 24 [1864], Shapell Manuscript Collection; "City Point During the Civil War," *Encyclopedia Virginia,* http://www.encyclopediavirginia.org/City_Point_During_the_Civil_War (accessed April 7, 2014).
17. AL to L. J. Lieberman (July 15, 1864) Shapell Manuscript Collection. On Lieberman [Leberman], see Herbert S. Morais, *The Jews of Philadelphia* (Philadelphia: 1894), 58, 268, and on Rockhill and Wilson, see Mark R. Wilson, *The Business of Civil War* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), 124.
18. Carr, Roland T. and Hugh Morrow, "We Found Lincoln's Lost Bank Account," *Saturday Evening Post,* February 14, 1953.
19. Robert Putnam, *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010), 526-34.
20. Shapell Manuscript Collection, CW 6, 1-2; Leslie J. Perry, "Appeals to Lincoln's Clemency," *The Century Magazine* 51 (December 1895), 252. On Thoroughman, see Howard L. Conard, *Encyclopedia of the History of Missouri* (New York: Haldeman, Conard, & Co., 1901), VI, 190.

21. *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* Volume I, 1850-1863, eds. Theodore C. Pease and James G. Randall (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Society, 1927), 627 [April 16, 1863].
22. Amy E. Murrell, "Union Father, Rebel Son: Families and the Question of Civil War Loyalty," *The War Was You and Me: Civilians in the American Civil War,* ed. Joan E. Cashin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002), 358-91; Sarna, *American Judaism,* 114.
23. "Postmaster Jonas and the Herald," *Quincy Daily Whig,* July 26, 1862. We are greatly indebted to Cynthia Gensheimer for this and other material concerning Abraham Jonas.
24. *Quincy in the Civil War: A View of the Great Conflict.* Charles A, Landrum, Quincy and Adams Historical Society, 1965; *Quincy Daily Whig,* October 21, 1862.
25. Robert Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 151.
26. *The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* Volume I, 1850-1863, eds. Theodore C. Pease and James G. Randall (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Society, 1927), 639.
27. Abraham Jonas to Abraham Lincoln (October 22, 1863), AL Papers, Library of Congress, online at lincolnpapers2.dataformat.com/images/1863/10/280384.pdf. We are indebted to Cynthia Gensheimer for bringing this letter to our attention. O. H. Hickman to W. Stanton (October 22, 1863), Records of the Commissary General of Prisoners, Letters Received, Box 17 (1863), RG 249, NARA.
28. W. Hoffman to Abraham Jonas (October 30, 1863), Records of the Commissary General of Prisoners, Letters & Telegrams Sent, vol. 5, R.G. 249, NARA.
29. O. H. Browning to Annie Jonas (June 2, 1864), Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, Browning, O. H. SC 195 and in Charles M. Segal, "New Light on Lincoln's Parole of Charles H. Jonas," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 42 (June 1953), 407-12; cf. *Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* 671-672.
30. Order for Parole of Charles H. Jonas, Shapell Manuscript Collection (June 2, 1864).
31. Segal, "New Light on Lincoln's Parole," 412; Markens, *Lincoln and the Jews,* 20-21.
32. *Diary of Orville Hickman Browning,* 672; Cynthia Gensheimer, "Annie Jonas Wells: Jewish Daughter, Episcopal Wife, Independent Intellectual," *American Jewish History* 98 (July 2014), 102 n. 98.
33. George B. Jonas to Abraham Lincoln (August 31, 1864), AL Papers, LOC.
34. See above, chapter 3, nn. 1-3.
35. David H. Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), 569-70; Thomas Bogar, *American Presidents Attend the Theatre* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2006), 103; cf. David I. Kertzer, *The Kidnapping of Edgardo Mortara* (New York: Knopf, 1997), 252.
36. Some sources credit the play (partly or wholly) to Jean-François Mocquard; see, for example, Olive Logan, "Mocquard," *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* 36 (December 1867-May 1868), 114. Modern scholarship credits Séjour.
37. "Albion, 1863," *Bulletin of the New York Public Library* 44 (New York: New York Public Library, 1940); *L'Ami de la Religion* as quoted in Victor Séjour, *The Fortune Teller,* translated from the French by Norman Shapiro. Introduction by M. Lynn Weiss (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), xxi.
38. Séjour, *The Fortune Teller,* translated from the French by Norman Shapiro. Introduction by M. Lynn Weiss, makes available the original French play in translation, with an illuminating introduction; for quote, see p. 162. While I have not located the text of the nineteenth-century English adaptation, which included music for Vestvali to sing, a synopsis of the play survives in *Vestvali in English Drama: "Monday, March 28th, 1864, at the Boston Theatre in the New and Powerful Drama ... Called Gamea; Or—the Jewish Mother"* (Boston 1864).
39. Thomas A. Bogar, *American Presidents Attend the Theatre* (Detroit:McFarland, 2006), 103
40. Sejour, *The Fortune-Teller,* xxii-xxiii.
41. CW 7, 514; Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln,* II, 704-10.
42. Samuel A. Lewis to Abraham Lincoln (October 26, 1864), AL Papers, LOC.
43. AL to W. P. Fessenden (August 2, 1864), Brown University Library, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr%3A72310/ and in CW Supplement I, 253-54.
44. AL to Isachar Zacharie (September 19, 1864), CW 8, 12.
45. I. Zacharie to W. H. Seward (September 21, 1864) reprinted in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 116.
46. Ibid, and Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War,* 199-200.
47. AL to Isachar Zacharie (September 19, 1864), CW 8, 12.
48. *New York Times* (September 23, 29, 1864); Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 114, 116-17.

49. Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln,* II, 721.
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51. Myer S. Isaacs to AL (October 26, 1864), AL Papers LOC.
52. Isachar Zacharie to AL (November 3, 1864), AL Papers, LOC [English slightly modernized].
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56. Pass for Isachar Zacharie (December 27, 1864); AL to William T. Sherman (December 27, 1864), Lincoln Collection at Brown University.
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—Dr. Jonathan D. Sarna

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—Benjamin Shapell

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FRONTISPIECE: *On October 3, 1861, Abraham Lincoln asked his Secretary of State to see Polish-born Jewish lithographer Max Rosenthal. In 1908, Rosenthal etched this portrait of Lincoln based on an 1860 photograph of Lincoln.*

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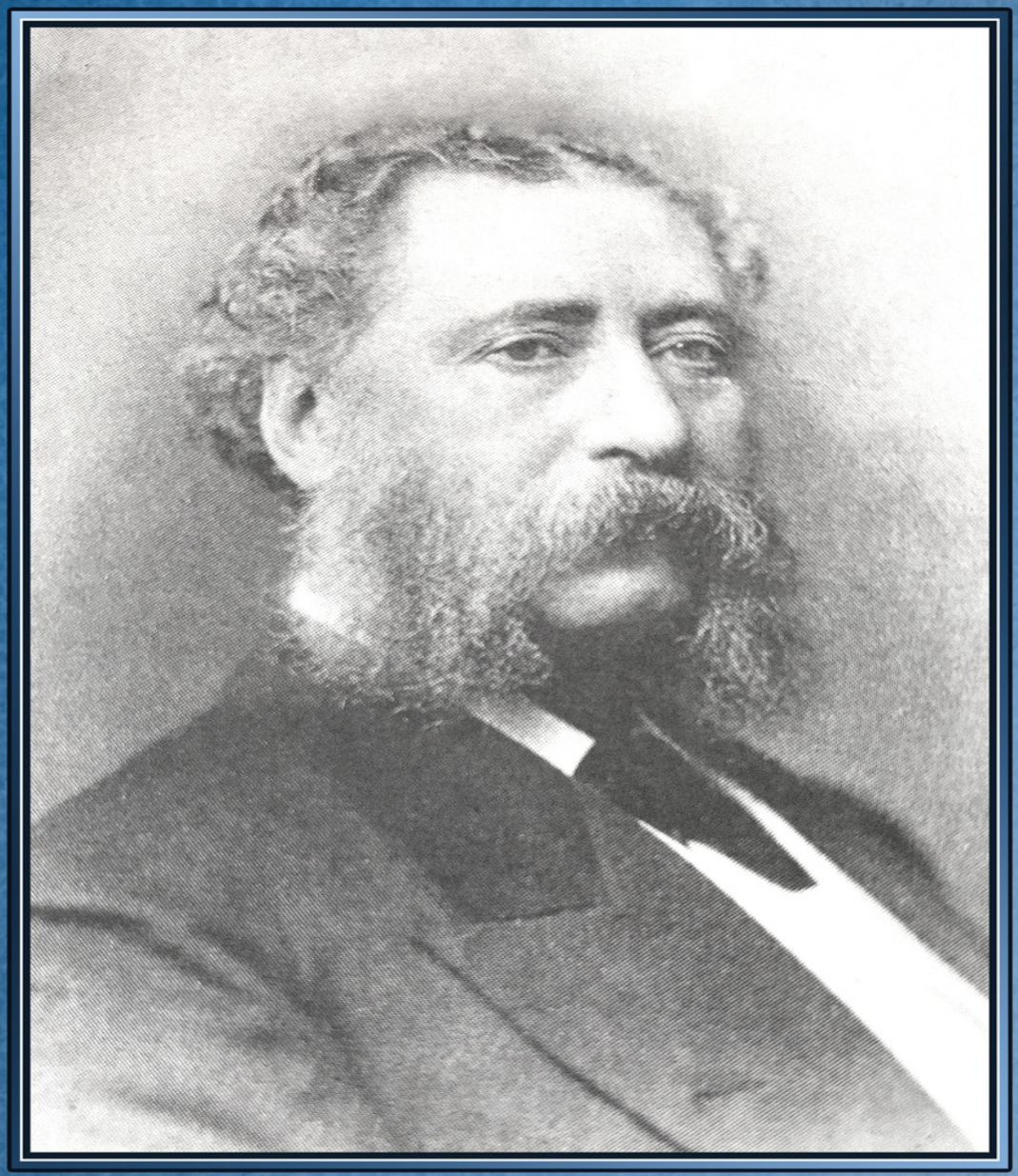

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Lincoln’s Jewish Spy

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Lincoln's Jewish Spy

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E. LAWRENCE ABEL

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Front cover image of Zacharie in later years (photograph courtesy American Jewish Historical Society)

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To Barbara,
My soulmate, wife, editor, and conscience,
With much love.
You are the best of me.

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Author’s Note

Most of the information about Issachar Zacharie comes from letters to and from him. These letters contain so many misspellings that to note them all with the usual “sic” would have been tiresome for the reader. Accordingly, I have not noted or corrected the misspellings in these letters. Misspellings from other sources are duly noted. I have also, in some instances, taken the liberty of transforming comments in letters into spoken comments. The wording, however, is still as it appeared in the original.

Introduction

John Hay, President Abraham Lincoln's personal secretary, knocked on Lincoln's office door at the White House and entered. Turning to the dapper, bearded man behind him, Hay introduced Dr. Issachar Zacharie. Lincoln and Zacharie shook hands. Chatting briefly, each man took the measure of the other. Then Lincoln sat down, peeled off his slippers and stuck out his bare foot.

Issachar sat down on a chair opposite the President, opened his bag, and took out a sharp knife. Holding the President's foot in his left hand, he offered a few brief words of assurance that he would feel little pain and began to scrape away his corns. Afterwards, a grateful President wrote a public testimonial to the chiropodist: "Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with good success and considerable addition to my comfort."

What they talked about while the foot doctor scraped away is not known. The two men were opposites in almost every imaginable way. Lincoln was a towering six foot four inches in height, one of the tallest men in the country. Issachar Zacharie was no more than five foot seven inches. Lincoln's face was craggy; Issachar had a round, cherubic face. Lincoln dressed casually; Issachar dressed to the nines. Lincoln was President of the United States. Issachar was a foot doctor, born in England and still a British citizen. Lincoln's parents were Baptists; Issachar's parents were Jewish.

Despite their differences, a camaraderie developed between the two men. In future letters to the President, Issachar headed his correspondence, "My Dear Friend," and regularly sent baskets of pineapples, bananas, and oranges to Lincoln along with "kind regards" to Mrs. Lincoln. Issachar was one of the few people on friendly terms with the President's mercurial wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, a woman John Hay called a "Hell-Cat" and "Her Satanic Majesty."

Lincoln was on cordial terms with many Jews, but his relationship with Issachar was by far the most intimate. The President, the *New York World* told its readers, "has often left his business apartment to spend an evening in the parlor of his favored bunionist." When a visitor came to the White House to discuss an early Zionist idea of reestablishing a Jewish homeland in Palestine, Lincoln told him he was not at all opposed to the idea. "I myself have regard for the Jews," he said, "my chiropodist is a Jew, and he has so many times 'put me on my feet' that I would have no objection to giving his countrymen 'a leg up.'"

Issachar was far from a paragon of virtue. He claimed to have been tutored in chiropody by the most famous physicians of his day, which was a lie. He was largely self-taught. He claimed to have earned a medical degree from a medical school in, of all places, Cuba. This also was not true. All the more unbelievable because Issachar didn't know a word of Spanish. He claimed to have authored a text on chiropody. Not true. He plagiarized the book and substituted his own name for the author's.

Lincoln sensed the corn-cutter was duplicitous, but Lincoln had a peculiar fondness for flawed characters. Lincoln was himself not above a certain amount of duplicity. A slightly damaged, overly ambitious man like Issachar Zacharie, he thought to himself, would make a good spy. Lincoln sent him to New Orleans, telling General Nathaniel P. Banks, head of the Department of the Gulf, that Dr. Zacharie could be of help. He could keep him abreast of citizens' attitudes about the Union occupation and Confederate activities in and around the city. Unbeknownst to Banks, Issachar was a double agent. Lincoln was also sending him to New Orleans to keep him informed about Banks' performance. Lincoln had such confidence in the man that he later entrusted him to be his unofficial envoy to confer with Judah P. Benjamin, the Jewish Secretary

of State, and other Confederate leaders in Richmond about a peaceful end to the war.

Issachar Zacharie is not known today, although during the Civil War, his name regularly appeared in the newspapers throughout the North. A smattering of historians, Jewish and gentile, are aware of his friendship with Lincoln and his role as Lincoln's spy and unofficial envoy, but other than a paragraph or two, most rarely go beyond mentioning it. Even fewer have been curious about what happened to him after the war, mistakenly assuming he just faded into oblivion.

My aim in this book is to tell the hitherto unknown story of an eccentric man whom the war-time *New York World* newspaper characterized as "the most favored family visitor at the White House." I started this project anticipating something akin to hero-worship for a man who came from nothing, to be on speaking terms with the President of the United States and the Secretary of State of the Confederacy. I finished uncertain of whether he was a well-meaning entrepreneur or a self-serving opportunist. But uncomplicated men or women rarely make history. Or hold the interest of a biographer or a reader.

Part One

The Past Is Prologue

1

“Sucking the egg”

Issachar Zacharie was born in 1825 in Chatham, England. It was the year composer Johann Strauss II, biologist Thomas Henry Huxley, and neurologist Jean-Martin Charcot were born, and the year inventor Eli Whitney, composer Antonio Salieri, architect Pierre Charles L’Enfant, and astronomer Edmond Halley died. The most significant inventions that year were the electromagnet and cement. In America, John Quincy Adams took the oath as the sixth president of the United States, and the Erie Canal opened. On the Indiana frontier, a tall, lanky 17-year-old Abraham Lincoln was splitting rails for 25 cents a day.

Lodged along the banks of the River Medway about 30 miles southeast of London, Chatham was an industrial naval dockyard and mercantile port dating back to the time of Queen Elizabeth I, “notorious for its poor health and living conditions.”[1] The streets were muddy and filthy with manure and rotting garbage. The air reeked from its stench, from hot tar oakum and oak chips wafting from the dockyard, and from a fetid stream coursing through the back part of the town to the river.

Off-duty seamen and dockworkers with nowhere to go spent their time in public houses and brothels. An undermanned police force contended with drunks, vagrants, pickpockets, thieves, pimps, and prostitutes who wandered the streets in search of prey. Royal marines armed with rifles herded convicts, like animals, to hulk prison ships on the River Medway. Not for nothing was Chatham called “the wickedest place in the world.”[2]

Issachar’s family lived above a wooden dry goods shop on High Street, Chatham’s business district. The offal-saturated street was Issachar’s front garden and playground. He fell asleep to the din of drunken men singing, shouting, and pummeling one another in midnight brawls. Unlike Charles Dickens, who lived in a house on a hill in Chatham far above the streets and dockyards during his early childhood and fondly remembered those days, Issachar never spoke about his early years in Chatham.

* * * * * * * *

Issachar’s father, Jan Zachariah, was born in 1797, and emigrated to England sometime around 1820, from eastern Prussia. Many years later, when a census taker in the United States asked him about his homeland, Jan proudly said Poland,[3] although that country no longer existed at the time of his birth. It had been partitioned and annexed in the late 1700s by Prussia, Russia, and Austria.

Like many of the Jews who emigrated to England and America in the late 1700s and early 1800s, Jan left because he saw no future for himself if he stayed. Most of those who emigrated were single men between the ages of 20 and 26; some were as young as 16.[4]

Jewish emigrants making their way to England mainly settled in the East End of London. Others headed for the naval dockyard towns of Chatham, Portsmouth, Plymouth, Exeter, and Bristol. Dockyard towns and their surroundings were home to thousands of men and their families. A man could earn a modest living as a merchant or peddler in those places.[5]

Jan may have made his way to Chatham because other Jews from his community had gone there before him. Emigrating to places where family or friends of family were already living

meant there would be someone there to help a newcomer get settled. In 1780, there were enough Jews in the village and nearby Rochester to build a synagogue called the Chatham Cottage Jews' Tabernacle.[6] It was a small wooden building with Hebrew lettering on its face and a clock visible from several streets away.

Chatham's Jews were third on Charles Dickens' list of what was "principally remarkable" about that seaport town. First and second were its soldiers and sailors.[7] Dickens was exaggerating about Chatham's Jews. When Dickens lived in Chatham between 1817 and 1822, there were only about 60 Jewish families in the town and surroundings among the city's estimated 15,000 dock workers, seamen, and marines.

Most of Chatham's Jews are "the humbler sort," a visitor commented. Their main means of earning a living was dealing in "civil habiliments shed by the recruits when they assume the military or naval uniform."[8]

The "richer sort" of Jews in Chatham and the nation's other seaport towns were the butchers, apothecaries, tobacconists, dentists, chiropodists, silversmiths, watchmakers, pawnbrokers, and shopkeepers who bankrolled itinerant peddlers.

With no known skills, Jan eked out a living as a peddler. If he had some money, he would have bought wares from a local businessman to sell on the street or in the countryside. If he didn't have enough to get started, he would have asked a Jewish merchant for start-up funds or merchandise. In many instances, merchants in smaller Jewish communities who had unmarried daughters loaned peddlers money or goods interest free. Those loans often resulted in marriages through which the peddler became a salesman or partner in the family business.

In 1818, when he was 21, Jan, now calling himself Jonathan, married a local girl, Amelia Cohen. Amelia was the only daughter of Eliezer Cohen, the *Hazzan* (cantor) for Chatham's Jewish community.[9] A year later, in 1819, Amelia gave birth to their first child, a daughter they named Martha. A second daughter, Francesca, "Fanny," was born in 1820. Two years later, in 1822, Rebecca was born. Jonathan and Amelia's eldest son, the boy who would later become Lincoln's Jewish doctor, was born in 1825, and named Issachar Zachariah, Jr. They named their next two children, both daughters, Amelia Lavinia and Jane.

Seemingly inconsequential, Jonathan's and Amelia's naming their son Issachar, Jr., and one of their daughters Amelia, the same name as her mother, implies that either Jan, Amelia, or both may have been of Sephardic heritage. Sephardic Jews are the descendants of Jews banished from Spain and Portugal in 1492 and 1495, respectively. Sephardic Jews consider it a great honor to have a baby named after a father, mother, or other family member.

Until recently, Ashkenazi Jews, who hailed from Russia, and Central and Western Europe, rarely named a child after a living relative. This is because a longstanding superstition among the Ashkenazi is that if a child has the same name as a living relative, the Angel of Death might get confused. When the time came for him to take the older relative, he might mistakenly take the life of the baby with the same name. It is customary, on the other hand, to name a child after a recently deceased relative as a way of keeping his or her memory alive.[10]

Eight days after Issachar was born, he was circumcised in accordance with an age-old Jewish practice and given his name, Issachar, Jr. In Sephardic tradition, it is customary to name sons after grandparents in a prescribed order. Firstborn sons are named after a paternal grandfather (Jonathan's father); second sons are named after a maternal grandfather. Jonathan and Amelia named their second son, born later in America, Eleazar after Amelia's father. Issachar used the "Jr." and "Jun." suffix in his name until 1843, when he dropped it and changed his surname from

Zachariah to Zacharie.[11]

Coming from Poland, Jonathan should have been Ashkenazi. But not all Polish Jews were Ashkenazi. During the 16th century, a small enclave of Sephardic Jews came to Poland from Italy, where they had relocated after being banished from Spain and Portugal in the late 15th century. A small remnant of these Sephardic Jews, known only by their surnames,[12] continued to live in and around Lublin for many generations[13] The best known of these Sephardic descendants is the Yiddish novelist Isaac Leib Peretz (1852–1915) (originally "Perez"). Issachar's mother's maiden name, Cohen, is both Ashkenazi and Sephardic.[14]

By the time Issachar was born, his father was doing well enough to afford becoming one of the lessees for Chatham's Cottage Jews' Tabernacle.[15] Jonathan's name on the lease was "Jonathan Zacharia of Chatham, salesman."[16] A "salesman," in mid–19th century England, was a storeowner, not a clerk.[17] Attaching the name of a town to his name was a sign Jonathan Zachariah was a respectable member of his community.[18] The other leasees were two other "salesmen," five shopkeepers, five "slop sellers," three stockbrokers, a tobacconist, an apothecary, and a butcher.[19]

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In June or July 1832, Jonathan and Amelia Zachariah and their six children, Martha, 13, Fanny, 12, Rebecca, 10, Issachar, 7, Amelia Lavinia, 4, and one-year-old Jane, boarded a coach to London, where they boarded a ship headed to the United States.[20]

The Zachariahs were just another family, among the thousands of immigrants from Britain, Ireland, Germany, and other areas of Central Europe, who left their homes for America in the 1830s and 1840s, to escape an economic depression that had the Continent and England in a -tight-fisted grip.[21] Chatham had been especially hard hit. Budget tightening forced the Navy Board to reduce dockyard expenditures. Shipbuilding was put on hold. Dock workers were laid off. By the early 1830s, Chatham's workforce was half what it had been before the Napoleonic wars.[22] The Zachariahs may also have left to escape a cholera outbreak that Chatham experienced, along with much of England. "We have witnessed in our days the birth of a new pestilence," a contemporary magazine agonized, "which in the short space of fourteen years has desolated the fairest portions of the globe, and swept off at least fifty million of our race."[23]

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Issachar's father had known how heart-rendering it was to leave his home. It took a lot of courage to say goodbye to family, friends, and a country he had grown up in. No matter how dismal a future it might have been at home, England was a country of strangers. He had had to learn a new language, find a place to live, and make a living. Now he once again was starting over. This time he had a family to provide for.

Had Issachar's father not had the money to pay for his family, he would have left on his own and sent for Amelia and his children when he could pay for their passage. It was not unusual for a family to be separated for several years until a father or brother saved enough to bring them to America. The possibility of his going it alone must have been discussed. Perhaps Amelia did not want to wait and have to live with and burden her parents, despite the possibility they might succumb to cholera on the ship.

Jonathan had an inkling of what to expect in emigrating to a new country. For Amelia, it was the first time she was leaving home and family. Like many of those sailing to America, she

undoubtedly was fearful, not just of what awaited her across the Atlantic, but of the long dangerous voyage across the sea. Issachar and his sisters were probably excited about the new adventure, but they must have been apprehensive as well about going to a foreign country where they had no friends. When it came time to leave, there were the final tearful goodbyes with family and friends.

There were practical things to consider once Jonathan and Amelia decided to leave. Jonathan had to sell his business. It was a buyer's market. He had to take whatever offer came his way. Amelia had to decide what belongings to take. Space aboard ship was limited. Besides clothes, bedding, and utensils for cooking on board, they had to decide what items reminded the family of home. Immigrants were advised to mark all their luggage clearly with their names. It was not unusual for sailors or passengers to "mistake" another passenger's belongings for their own. One guide to prospective immigrants advised packing as little as possible. "Hard cash is the only substance worth bringing."[24]

Immigrant guides and government pamphlets all recommended making the Atlantic crossing in early spring. Crossing in late fall or winter was treacherous. Arriving in spring or summer gave immigrants time to get settled without having to make hasty decisions. The most reliable crossing was by packet ships because they departed from port on a regular schedule, an innovation at that time. The *Hendrick Hudson*, the ship the Zachariahs sailed on,[25] left London for America three times a year.[26]

Packet ships were tubby-looking. They averaged about 170 feet in length and about 35 feet in width and displaced about 750 tons. The ships were called "packets" because when ships in the 16th century first began carrying mail, it was called "packettes."

The Atlantic crossing was not cheap. The *Hudson*'s first-class cabins, located under the upper deck were the most comfortable of the accommodations, came with a mattress, linens, wash basin, and some drawers. They were also the most expensive at £12 to £20 (about $1700 to $2850 in 2020 dollars) per person.[27] Even so, first-class cabins were not sole accommodations. In some cabins, four to 12 passengers shared the room, two to a bunk. Second-class cabins, situated on the same level but behind the first, were lightly furnished. Steerage passengers in the decks below made do as best they could with little more than cots.

Steerage passage (so-called because ships were once steered from that part of a ship), also called "emigrant class," cost £4 to £5 for adults (the modern equivalent of about $700) and half that for children under 14.[28] (Steerage aboard the *Titanic*, 80 years later, was about $700 for adults and $300 for children.) For the Zachariah family of seven, the cost of steerage on the *Hudson* would have been the equivalent today of more than $3,000.

Like everyone else, within hours of leaving England, the Zachariahs were seasick. Huddled on the lower decks, many passengers couldn't hold their stomachs and retched on the floor before they could reach slop buckets. Some managed to get to the upper deck to vomit over the side of the ship. Some passengers became so weak they couldn't walk without help. In violent gales, typically occurring at least once during a transatlantic crossing, hatches were fastened down to prevent the interior from flooding. The heat and lack of air made seasickness even worse. After a while, the Zachariahs and other passengers no longer cared about the nauseating odor. By the end of the 40-day plus voyage, the stench was overwhelming. A standing joke was that immigrant ships could be recognized by their smell.[29] Until the mid–1800s, as many as 20 percent of the passengers died on board the "coffin ships" from typhus and cholera. Sometimes, entire families were wiped out and their bodies were summarily cast overboard.

When the *Hendrick Hudson* docked in New York on August 24, 1832, the captain handed his passenger list to the port authorities to comply with the American immigration act of 1819. The law required ship captains to record and submit passengers' names, ages, occupations, country of last residence, name of ship, port of embarkation, and date of arrival.[30] Jonathan listed his occupation on the manifest list as "mechanic."[31] In the 19th century, a "mechanic" was a tradesman or general workman.[32] Issachar's birth year on the manifest was 1825.[33] He was seven years old.

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So many people immigrated from England to New York during the 1830s that enterprising authors wrote manuals for them to find their way once they landed. When a man is determined to leave England for the United States, Charles Knight wrote in the preface to his manual, *The British Mechanic's and Labourer's Handbook, and True Guide to the United States*, "he does so in most cases from a wish to better his circumstances…. He fancies he possesses, to use a familiar phrase, a new and improved mode of 'sucking the egg.'" "It would not be all 'beer and skittles,'" Knight cautioned, using another familiar English phrase that meant a good time. "If he should happen to be a little too sanguine in this respect," the newcomer stood "a very fair chance of being most egregiously disappointed."[34]

Knight advised passengers not to be in a hurry to remove their baggage from the docking area once they cleared customs. Under no circumstances, he cautioned, should they "accept the aid of those who swarm about and press their services" upon new arrivals. "Too frequently here, as in the steamboats of the interior, this class of persons are much more ready to help themselves than the stranger."[35]

The Zachariahs had no relatives in New York to meet or help them among its quarter of a million inhabitants. If New York had been their destination, they didn't stay long. Shortly after landing, the Zachariahs boarded a train to Philadelphia. The 90-mile trip cost $3.00 for each family member.[36]

ABL LOC Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress. The papers are online at https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/malquery.html.
AJA American Jewish Archives
CW Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln
LOC Library of Congress
NA National Archives
OR. Official Records of the War of the Rebellion
PSUG. Papers of Ulysses S. Grant
RRL Rush Rhees Library, University of Rochester

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2

“Act according to the custom of that place”

New York, Philadelphia, Newport, Baltimore, Charleston, and Savannah, the earliest North American cities where Jews mainly settled, were port cities. They were also cosmopolitan communities. Unlike Boston, colonial America’s most homogenous city, cosmopolitan cities offered greater economic and social opportunities for immigrants.[1] New Orleans would have been a destination, except that until the 1800s, the authorities discouraged Jews from settling there.[2]

Philadelphia in the 1830s was America’s cultural center, the “Athens of America.” Its port bustled with cargo ships from Europe and South America and with packet liners bringing immigrants from Liverpool and Continental Europe and from other parts of America. Immigrants headed there for a good reason: jobs. Pennsylvania was in the midst of a building frenzy. Hundreds of miles of canal beds and railway lines were created connecting Philadelphia with Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and other parts of the state and with other eastern cities. There was work for unskilled laborers, and they came in droves. The frontier was constantly spreading westward. It was a perfect place to start an itinerant peddling business or a more permanent shop.

There was another reason Jonathan and Amelia headed for Philadelphia—the Dessaus. Jonathan and the Dessaus were either distantly related or had known each other beforehand. The Dessaus (the surname is variously spelled “Dessan” and “Dessaue” in street directories) were originally from Dessau, a town in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany, the birthplace of Moses Mendelssohn. Jacob H. Dessau and his brother, M. H. Dessau, had emigrated to America in the late 1820s. Jacob owned a dry goods store at 108 Sassafras Street in Philadelphia. The Zachariahs would have a place to stay with the Dessaus until they found a place of their own. Four years later, in 1836, Jonathan and Amelia’s second daughter, Fanny, married Abraham Dessau,[3] a “trader.”[4] Several years later, Jacob Dessau married Issachar’s sister, Amelia Lavinia, the “third daughter of Jonathan Zakeriah Esq.”[5]

* * * * * * * *

After moving in with the Dessaus, Jonathan lost no time “starting a business.” Slinging a pack filled with household goods, sponges, tools, ribbons, combs, pins and needles, inexpensive jewelry, and sundry other wares over his shoulder, he trudged the countryside, leaning on a long stick that he also used to beat off dogs that barked and bit “whenever a Jewish peddler comes.”[6]

Jewish peddlers became known far and wide in farming communities, where they were regarded less as itinerant merchants than as friends bringing things they needed. Usually welcomed by a lonely housewife whose husband and older sons were away in the field, he would show her his wares, and she would invariably buy some trifling “notion” so he would return the next time he was in the area.[7]

Jewish peddlers still clinging to their religion made it a point to reach a Jewish home before the Sabbath. Simon Wolf, a future president of B’nai B’rith, recalled how 20 to 30 Jewish peddlers would start out with packs weighing more than 80 pounds on their backs. After walking 60 to 80 miles, they would return a week later, with a much lighter load “and an adequate return

in their pockets."[8] When the money the peddler earned was "adequate" enough, he bought a horse and wagon so that he could carry many more items, including ready-made clothes and heavier items.

By 1850, there were 10,669 peddlers in America. By 1860, they numbered 16,594.[9] The actual numbers were likely much higher since itinerant peddlers were often not counted by census takers. Less than one percent of the peddlers in mid–1800s America were Christian. "Eleven times out of ten the peddler is a Jew," a German writer chuckled.[10]

Shortly after coming to Philadelphia, Jonathan became a member of Mikveh Israel (Hope of Israel). Founded in 1782 by Sephardic Jews, Mikveh Israel was Philadelphia's first Jewish congregation and included some of Philadelphia's most influential Jews, among them the Gratz family. Five of the Gratzs were members of the Philadelphia Club, the oldest and most exclusive men's club in Philadelphia.[11] German-born Isaac Leeser was Mikveh Israel's hazan-minister. Leeser became one of the best known and most influential Jewish leaders during the American Civil War.[12] Several years after Mikveh Israel was founded, in 1795, a group of primarily German and Dutch Ashkenazim founded a second synagogue they called *Rodeph Shalom* (Pursuit of Peace), making Philadelphia the first city in America with two Jewish congregations and the first to follow the prayers, customs, and rituals of Ashkenazi tradition.[13]

When Jonathan's and Amelia's second son, Eleazar, was born in Philadelphia in March 1834, there was one more mouth to feed. Jonathan had joined Mikveh Israel when he first came to Philadelphia, but its dues were beyond what he could afford. Jonathan resigned from Mikveh Israel and joined Rodeph Shalom, which assessed minimal annual dues of $4. In cases of hardship, it exempted them.[14] Jonathon became a founder of its charitable Hebrew Society that provided relief for the poor and the sick. Although a founder, Jonathan could not afford the $50 joining membership that exempted members from all further contributions and all fines "except fines for improper conduct at a meeting." Founding member Jonathan Zachariah wasn't able to come up with enough for the exemption.[15] He was bankrupt.[16]

The Zachariahs would have been in dire straits had it not been for the Dessaus. With money she borrowed from them, Amelia opened a millinery store on Cedar Street (now South Street), the downtown avenue of Philadelphia's retail trade, selling straw bonnets, ribbons, and caps.[17] Amelia had a head for business. A year later, she relocated to Sassafras,[18] the same street Jacob Dessau's shop was on.[19]

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Nothing is known about Issachar's childhood in Philadelphia, except by inference. At 13, Jewish boys were accepted as adults in their religious community. They were expected to be able to read or at least pronounce Hebrew words. In a rite of passage, they were called to the synagogue bema on their birthday or the Sabbath closest to it and read a portion of the Torah before the congregation. After that, they were obliged to obey all the commandments of Jewish law and could be counted as one of the 10 adult men required for a *minyan* necessary for communal prayers. There was no equivalent of the modern-day *bar mitzvah*, the Jewish rite of passage. Issachar never mentioned having participated in this rite of passage or his ever being able to read Hebrew.

Many years later, Issachar married Mary Ann Lawson, a Christian girl from Philadelphia. How his and Mary Ann's romance began isn't known. Since they lived in the same neighborhood—Issachar's mother's clothing goods shop was on Cedar Street, which intersected with Green

Street, where the Lawsons lived[20]—they may have met at one of Philadelphia's "free schools." Other than Mary Ann, there is no record of Issachar's involvement with any other woman before or after they were married.

In 1840, for some unknown reason, the Zachariahs were on the move again. They packed their belongings, 15-year-old Issachar said goodbye to 12-year-old Mary Ann and his other friends and neighbors, and he boarded a train with his family for the 680-mile trip to Charleston, South Carolina.

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By the mid–1700s, Charles Towne was the busiest seaport on the Atlantic and the largest and wealthiest city in the South. Ships from all parts of Europe docked at its harbor, unloaded their goods, and loaded their cargoes of indigo dye for England's navy uniforms, along with rice, deerskins, and tobacco for all parts of the world. Although the South had been growing cotton since colonial days, relatively small amounts were exported in the mid–1700s.

That arguably changed after France's Queen, Marie Antoinette, posed for her portrait in a provincial cotton dress. Women of her stature normally wore lavish silk gowns at court. Like the millions of men and women who adopt the fashions worn by movie stars today, fashionable women of her day wanted to dress like the exotic French Queen. Demand for cotton soared throughout Europe. Voracity for cotton increased even more after the French Revolution, when economies across Europe plunged and the zeal for more costly silk collapsed. By the end of the century, cotton and muslin had nearly completely replaced silk as the fashionable fabric of choice.[21]

Up until then, most of Europe's cotton had come from India, but when India could not keep up with demand, Europeans began looking elsewhere. Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin in 1794 made it possible to keep up with demand. The Industrial Revolution alchemized it into textiles on a massive scale. In 1790, the American South exported 3,000 bales a year. By 1810, exports amounted to 178,000 bales.

Following the American Revolution, most Northern states outlawed slavery (Delaware was a notable exception). It seemed the South would follow. When cotton became an important cash crop, the insatiable demand for it created a surge in demand for slave labor in the South. In 1790, the slave population numbered about 654,000. By 1810, it was 1.1 million. Marie Antoinette's dress had launched an unimaginable "butterfly effect."[22]

After cotton became "king," it took over as South Carolina's main staple. Fortunes were made almost overnight. For $5,000 to $6,000, which included wages for an overseer and food and clothing for slaves, a cotton crop could fetch more than $40,000.[23] Jewish merchants who catered to rich plantation owners or were owners themselves likewise became wealthy.

Relatively few manual laborers went south to work. Because of the South's large slave force, wages in the south for mechanics, carpenters, blacksmiths, construction workers, and other manual laborers were lower than in other parts of the country. Where others saw unemployment, Jewish merchants saw opportunity. Some remained in Charleston, some went up country and opened stores in surrounding districts, and some ventured further into the backcountry. Eventually, there was at least one Jewish shop in every town in South Carolina that sold clothing, hardware, groceries, notions, trinkets, cigars, and any other marketable goods.

Jonathan's profession is not known. Possibly he peddled clothes and trinkets in the country side while Amelia operated a woman's clothing store at 147 King Street between Queen and Clifford streets.[24] King Street today is a long, pedestrian-clogged hodge-podge of bars,

restaurants, souvenir shops, jewelers, antique dealers, a library, and Charleston's preservation society. Original store fronts from the 1840s and 1850s have been torn down or renovated. Across the street from the bygone Zachariah store is a three-story building, one of the few buildings from that time that is still standing. The salesgirl selling jewelry inside did not know how old it was, but it looked very much like it could have been built in Issachar's time.

Amelia was an astute businesswoman. An advertisement in the 1849 *Charleston Courier* informed the city's women that Mrs. Zachariah was adding a second branch to her business at 147 King, succeeding Mrs. Rayne: "She hopes by strict attention and economy in her charges, to deserve the patronage of the friends of her predecessor." In addition to "French corsets, shoulder braces, girdles or Zohans," Amelia advertised "cleaning, dying and altering straw hats."[25]

Like Amelia, many of the store owners on King Street were women. Miss Ellen M. Cambridge had a millinery next door to Amelia at 146 King, where she exhibited "a select and most fashionable display" of straw bonnets and accessories, "all of which have been purchased with cash, from extensive importers of the latest and most fashionable style of goods in N. York." Madame Figeroux sold silk and spring bonnets and some of the finest "Artificial French Flowers" at 188 King. Further down the street at 253 and 304 King were Mrs. F. Day's and W. Hancock's dry goods stores. A Miss Babcock sold bonnets of "Chameleon and Drab Velvets and silks" at 322 King Street.[26]

Rebecca De Mendes Benjamin, whose son Judah became one of only two Jews to be elected to Congress before the war and who later become Secretary of State for the Confederacy, owned a fruit store on King Street near the docks.[27] Judah was no longer living in Charleston when Issachar was growing up there. Although they would not have known one another then, fate brought them together many years later. Their parents, on the other hand, were probably acquainted.

The Benjamins drew the ire of Charleston's traditionalist Jewish community because Rebecca kept her store open on Shabbos, the Jewish Sabbath on Saturdays. Traditionalists expected the Sabbath should be strictly observed. Since storekeepers were not allowed to operate on Sundays, the Christian Sabbath, closing her store on Saturdays would have meant two days without income, a financial burden for a family struggling to make ends meet. In 1845, Judah's brother Solomon was charged with violating Charleston's 1801 ordinance by selling a pair of gloves on Sunday. He was fined $20.[28]

Women like Amelia and Rebecca Benjamin were often the family's main income earners or took over the family business from their husbands when it fell on hard times. Amelia's daughters probably helped out in her stores, but young Issachar was out of place in a business catering to women and was more likely to have been on his own, wandering about Charleston's streets. It was a vibrant city, with craftsmen going about their work and markets bustling with wagons filled with oranges from Florida, pineapples from Cuba, and vegetables from local farms.

Charleston was also a major center for the slave trade. By the 1850s, there were 32 active slave brokerages in the city.[29] Wandering through the streets, Issachar probably saw black men, women, and children in chains being sold at auction houses throughout the city. But Issachar didn't have to wander the streets to become familiar with slavery. His family owned two house slaves, Harriet Segars, age 60, and Charlotte Bright, age 40.[30]

Except for their religion, Jews were no different from non-Jews in the South in nearly every respect. Charleston's Jews did not question the Talmudic principle that "the law of the land is the law."[31] The principle was inherent in the Sephardic precept, "Every place you go, act according

to the custom of that place."[32]

Acceptance and assimilation meant conformity to the South's "peculiar institution." If Jews needed to own slaves and could afford them, they bought them.[33] Since most Jews lived in cities and towns, most of the slaves they owned were domestic servants. Judah Benjamin's parents owned several house slaves. As a successful Louisiana lawyer and plantation owner, he himself owned 140 slaves.[34]

By 1830, 83 percent of the Jewish households in Charleston owned at least one slave, slightly less than the percentage owned by gentile households[35]; by mid-century, there were 5.5 slaves per Jewish household.[36] Charleston's free African Americans, by comparison, owned three times more slaves than Charleston's Jews.[37]

In 1850, Amelia and Jonathan were living in St. Michael's and St. Philip's parish, around Broad and Meeting streets.[38] All of Issachar's sisters were married by then and had left home.[39] Issachar's niece, his sister Rebecca's 12-year-old daughter, also named Rebecca, was living with Jonathan and Amelia instead of her own parents for some unknown reason. Besides Issachar's family and Harriet Segars and Charlotte Bright, and their two household slaves, there were seven others in their home: Lewis and Anne Loyal and their two children, ages 1 and 3, and Frances Martin and his two sons, Jacob, 21, and James, 20.[40] Nothing is known as to whether the Loyals and the Martins were distant relatives or boarders. Lewis Loyal was born in France; his wife, Anne, was born in South Carolina. The Martins were all born in South Carolina.[41]

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1. Jonathan D. Sarna, "Port Jews in the Atlantic: Further Thoughts," Jewish History, 20 (2006), 214, 213–219.
2. Irwin Lachoff and Catherine C. Kahn, The Jewish Community of New Orleans (Charleston, SC: Arcadia, 2005), 1.
3. Daily Pennsylvanian, August 24, 1836, 2.
4. M'Elroy's Philadelphia Directory, for 1839 (Philadelphia: A. M'Elroy, 1839), 62.
5. Charleston Courier, December 23, 1843, 2.
6. Rudolf Glanz, Studies in Judaic Americana (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1970), 63.
7. Quoted in Ester L. Panitz, Simon Wolf (Cranbury, NJ: Associated University Press, 1987), 19.
8. Glanz, Studies, 104–121.
9. U.S. Census, 1850, 1860.
10. Glanz, Studies, 56.
11. E. Digby Baltzell, Philadelphia Gentlemen (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2004), 279.
12. Leeser organized Philadelphia's first Jewish parochial school at Mikveh Israel and edited The Occident and American Jewish Advocate, the first Jewish monthly periodical in America, and the American Jewish Publication Society. He was also one of the founders of America's first rabbinical college and the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, the first association of Jewish congregations. Lance J. Sussman, Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995; Korn, American Jewry, 6–7.
13. The split was inevitable. Sephardic prayers and rituals were different from the Ashkenazis' synagogue prayers and rituals. Sephardim pronounced Hebrew differently and chanted different melodies. Rodeph Shalom was the first of many splinterings within American Jewish communities. Henry Berkowitz, "Notes on the History of the Earliest German Jewish Congregation in America," Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, 9 (1901), 125.
14. Edwin Wolf and Maxwell Whiteman, The History of the Jews of Philadelphia (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1975), 234. To encourage members to attend Friday night and Saturday morning services and remain until the end of services, Rodeph Shalom imposed a fine of 25 cents for missing services; the only excuse was if a member were out of town or ill. Members leaving services early were also fined 25 cents (Berkowitz, "Notes," 126).
15. Wolf and Whiteman, History of Jews, 234.
16. Daily Pennsylvanian, April 11, 1837, 1.
17. A. M'Elroy's Philadelphia Directory, for 1839 (Philadelphia: A. M'Elroy, 1839), 284. Cedar/South Street became the core Jewish neighborhood in the 1880s, when it became known as "the great Street for Polish Jews and huckstering of every variety." Harry Bonin, "The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia," https://www.phillyhistory.org/blog/index.php/2008/03/the-jewish-quarter-of-philadelphia/.
18. A. M'Elroy's Philadelphia Directory, for 1840 (Philadelphia: A. M'Elroy, 1840), 283.

19. M’Elroy’s Philadelphia Directory, for 1839, 62.
20. M’Elroys Philadelphia Directory, 1840, 142.
21. Caroline London, “The Marie Antoin-ette Dress that Ignited the Slave Trade,” https://www.racked.com/2018/1/10/16854076/ma rie-antoinette-dress-slave-trade-chemise-a-la-reine, accessed February 10, 2018.
22. Ibid.
23. Thomas W. Knox, Camp-Fire and Cotton-Field (New York: Blelock and Co., 1865), 380.
24. James William Hagy, Directories for the City of Charleston, South Carolina for the Years, 1849, 1852, and 1855 (reprint, Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1998), 47. There are no city directories for Charleston for 1840 to 1848.
25. Charleston Courier, October 17, 1849, 3.
26. Charleston Courier, January 19, 1843; October 19, 1843, 3; October 21, 1843, 3; April 15, 1844, 3; October 16, 1849, 3.
27. Reznikoff, Jews of Charleston (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1950), 71.
28. City Council of Charleston vs. Sa. A. Benjamin, March, 1847; http://www.jewish-history.com/occident/volume4/mar1847/sunday.html, accessed July 7, 2018. The constitutionality of the ban was challenged in 1848, in the Court of Errors in Charleston and upheld. The full text is available at http://www.jewish-history.com/occident/volume5/mar1848/sunday.html.
29. Stephanie E. Yuhl, “Hidden in Plain Sight: Centering the Domestic Slave Trade in American History,” Journal of Southern History, 79 (August 2013), 597.
30. U.S. Census, 1850.
31. Quoted by Jason H. Silverman, “The Law of the Land Is the Law,” in Jack Salzman and Cornel West (eds.), Struggles in the Promised Land (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 81
32. Rosengarten and Rosengarten, A Portion of the People (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1002), 63.
33. Bertram W. Korn, Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789–1865 (Elk-ins Park, PA: 1961), 26. Issachar rarely expressed any views about slavery, but on the one occasion he did, it was derogatory. Letter of Zacharie to General Nathaniel Banks, January 25, 1863, Nathaniel P. Banks papers, LOC (henceforth Banks Papers), Box 79.
34. Silverman, “The Law of the Land,” 73.
35. James William Hagy, This Happy Land: The Jews of Colonial and Antebellum Charleston (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1993), 91.
36. Ibid. 93.
37. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 16, 382, n23.
38. U.S. Census 1850. The parish was the local government unit. The two separate parishes were combined for voting purposes.
39. Rebecca married Abraham Dessau, a “trader,” in 1836 in Philadelphia; Amelia Lavenia married Jacob H. Dessau, a “dry goods” merchant, in Charleston in 1843 (Elzas, Jewish Marriage Notices, 21); and Jane married Abraham Backer in 1848 and was living in Columbus, Georgia (Charleston Courier, March 13, 1848, 2).
40. U.S. Census 1850.
41. Although listed in the 1850 census, they are not listed in Hagy’s Happy Land appendix of Charleston’s Jews (277–414).

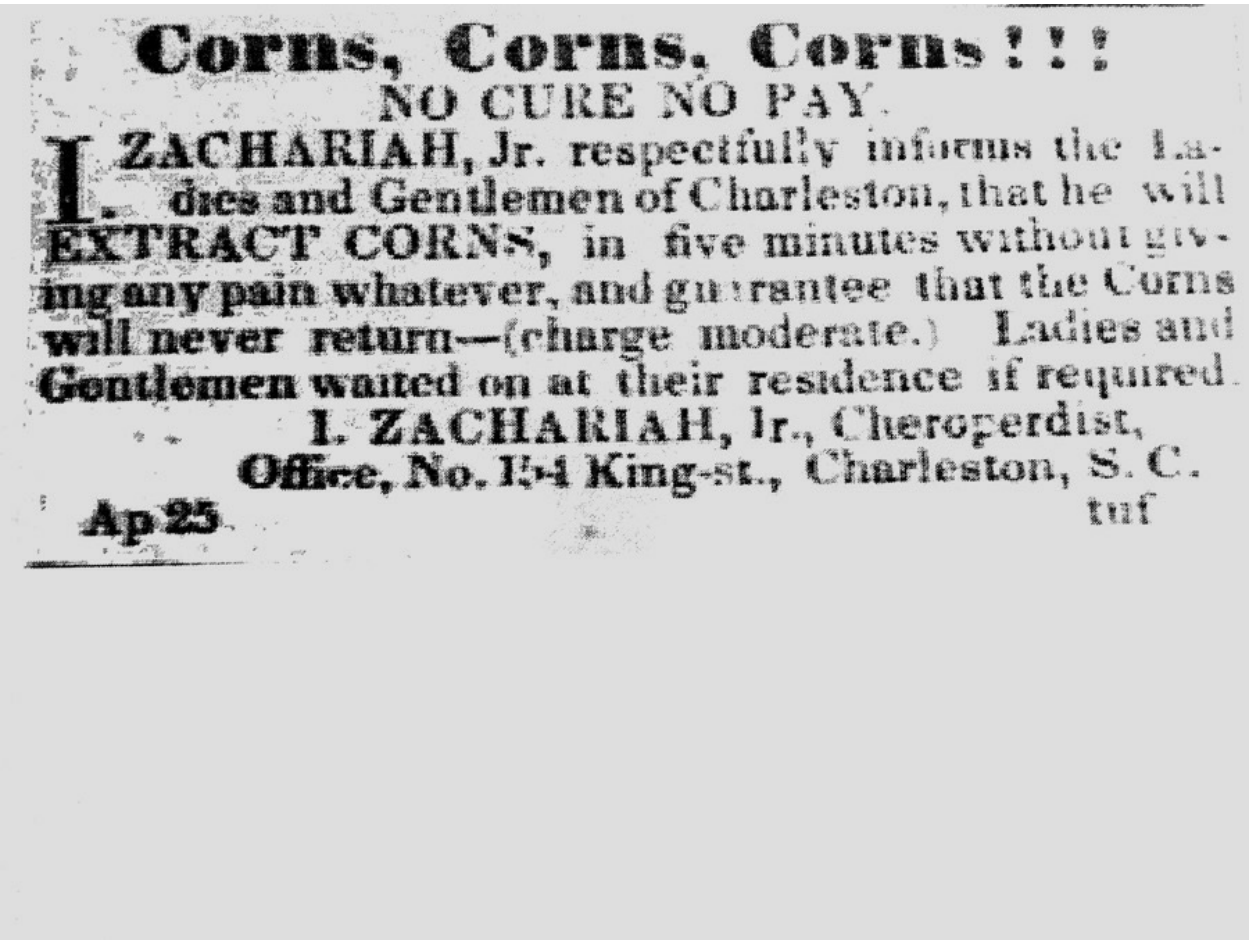
PART TWO

I. Zachariah, Jr., Cheroperdist

3

“No Cure No Pay”

In April 1843, 16-year-old Issachar Zachariah, Jr., placed an advertisement in the *Charleston Southern Patriot*, “respectfully” informing “the Ladies and Gentlemen of Charleston” that he “will EXTRACT CORNS at his office at No. 154 King St., in five minutes without giving any pain whatever and guarantees the Corns will never return.” The ad stated he was only charging a “‘moderate’ fee,” for his services, and guaranteed “NO CURE NO PAY.” It was signed I. Zachariah, Jr. Cheroperdist.[1] Besides cutting corns, he was also selling patent medicines and perfumes at his King Street store.[2]



Corns, Corns, Corns!!!

NO CURE NO PAY.

I. ZACHARIAH, Jr. respectfully informs the Ladies and Gentlemen of Charleston, that he will EXTRACT CORNS, in five minutes without giving any pain whatever, and guarantee that the Corns will never return—(charge moderate.) Ladies and Gentlemen waited on at their residence if required.

I. ZACHARIAH, Jr., Cheroperdist,
Office, No. 154 King-st., Charleston, S. C.

Ap 25 tuf

One of Zacharie’s early advertisements, using his birth name (*Charleston Southern Patriot*, 1843).

Issachar’s advertising himself as a chiropodist, or as he termed it, a “cheroperdist,” came out of nowhere. There is nothing to indicate how he learned how to treat corns and bunions or why he even went into that line of work instead of the family dry goods business.

* * * * * * * *

Corns, bunions, and ingrown toenails seem rather trivial problems compared with our present-day anxieties and dread about cancer, heart disease, and other ailments. But in mid-nineteenth-century America, people rarely talked about those diseases. Instead, they were much more concerned about annoyances that made everyday life painful in one way or another. High up on the list of distressing irritations were corns and bunions. Newspapers were full of commentaries about the effects of these "excrescences." Many people would have agreed with the *New London* Connecticut *Daily Chronicle*'s comment, "Corns have produced more bad tempers and caused more swearing than any other grievance that flesh is heir to."[3]

Corns and bunions made it painful to walk. For women, it was not just painful, it was embarrassing if their corns and bunions became public. Chiropodists, as podiatrists were then known,[4] advertised their willingness to treat women in their homes to avoid public embarrassment. Some chiropodists provided separate entrances at their offices for women desiring priv-acy.[5] It was not an idle whim.

In Paris, a ladies' shoemaker blackmailed his female patients by threatening to reveal details about their feet. He sent them a proof copy of a memoir he was writing about his patients. For 15 francs, he promised to leave their names out of it. One of the entries described a "Madame A ___lives Rue___, No___first floor; married in 1844; three children, pays badly; feet very difficult to fit, instep too flat, two corns and three bunions; walks awkwardly, and wears her shoes out in the inside very fast."

The blackmailer characterized a "Madame B___Rue___, No.__" as "still an old maid … pays her bills, but makes a hard bargain; feet spreading, toes crowding one over the other; two corns and a bunion." Madame C "gives her children nothing, and never pays until served with a writ; feet flat, large, and very apt to burst the leathers; a great many corns and bunions, all mixed up together."

When several of the women he was blackmailing complained to the police about the "literary shoemaker," he was arrested and sent to jail for a month.[6]

* * * * * * * *

People have been hacking corns and calluses from their feet with coarse tools or sharpened instruments on their own or enlisting the help of someone else for the task from the time such tools were invented. As far back as the ancient Egyptians, specially trained professionals took care of foot problems. Hippocrates, the "father" of medicine, mentions removing hardened skin on the feet and invented a scraping tool for just that purpose.[7]

After a 12th-century Papal decree, forbidding clerics from treating foot problems that might cause bleeding, barber surgeons and others took over the trade. An early 17th-century play has one of the characters at a fairground, selling herrings, oysters, pies, and tarts and offering to sharpen knives to "very nicely cut your corns."[8] Corns became much more of a problem during the 17th century, when people began wearing closed-toed leather boots and shoes. Kings and queens who luxuriated in the palaces of Europe experienced the same discomfort as farmers who toiled behind a plough.

The term "chiropody" came into existence in 1785, when a London corn cutter, David Low, wrote a textbook on foot care. Low plagiarized much of his book from an earlier French text, *L'Art de Soigner les Pieds*, written in 1781 by King Louis XVI's corn cutter. To create the impression of originality, Low changed the title to *Chiropodologia*, combing the Greek word *chiro*, meaning hand, and the Latin word *pod*, for foot. *Chiropodologia* eventually became

chiropody.[9]

Most medically trained doctors in the 18th and 19th centuries considered treating foot problems literally and figuratively beneath them. Medicine's snobbery left it to barber surgeons and corn cutters to take care of corns, bunions, and related foot problems. Heyman Lion was awarded a doctor of medicine degree from the University of Edinburgh in 1796, and passed his exams with high honors, but the College of Physicians and Surgeons in London denied his application for a diploma. Lion said he intended to specialize in treating foot ailments. The college stated its denial was to maintain the dignity and high standard of the profession. A doctor of medicine, the college said, should not be involved in a degrading business like "corn-cutting."[10]

Despite physicians' low opinion of foot healers, people suffering from painful corns were more than willing to pay to have their annoying foot growths removed. By the 18th century, cutting corns or "corn operating," as practitioners preferred to call what they did, had become a burgeoning profession. Some chiropodists even became very respectable and influential. In 1774, a Mr. March, a prominent London corn cutter, was appointed nail cutter to His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, at an annual salary of 50 guineas (about $6,000).[11] After word got out that the Prince of Wales had his own personal "corn operator," aristocrats and anyone else with money had no qualms about employing chiropodists to remove their corns.

By the mid–18th century, corn cutters were such a common fixture in English society that they were featured in popular illustrations. One such picture shows an elegantly dressed corn operator wearing a wig and spectacles and standing before an array of surgical instruments. The fact that he was worth depicting indicates the profession had gained respectable traction.[12] Napoleon Bonaparte's constant companion and confidant, Monsieur Sagrada, was the emperor's personal "corn operator"[13] Napoleon's nemesis**,** the Duke of Wellington, had no liking for corn cutters. The Duke sued a London corn cutter for claiming in the press that he had cut Wellington's corns.[14]

Since foot care, and especially removing corns, was not a recognized profession, there was no formal apprenticeship for that line of work. In most cases, individuals learned whatever there was to know from someone in their family who trained them. Fathers taught their sons, who in turn taught their sons. Every city had at least one corn cutter.

Prevented from attending Europe's medical schools, many Jews became proficient at treating foot problems, a skill credentialed physicians regarded as undignified. By the 18th century, Jewish barber surgeons and bloodletters in Europe and England were considered specialists in the profession.[15] "Surgeon-chiropodist" Lewis Durlacher (1792–1864), the most famous chiropodist of his day, treated the foot ailments of three British monarchs, George IV, William IV, and Queen Victoria.

Durlacher was taught chiropody by his father, Solomon Durlacher, "Dr., Surgeon, Dentist and Corn Operator." Solomon took his last name from the town of Durlach in Germany when Jews were made to take surnames. He came to England in the 1780s, settled in Birmingham, and married Betsy Harris. The couple later relocated to Bath, where he taught the skill to both his son and his wife Betsy, corn cutter "for the ladies."[16] Jewish "Surgeon-chiropodist" John Eisenberg, an Austrian émigré to England, claimed he had pared the corns from the feet of European nobility, including French Emperor Napoleon III.[17]

* * * * * * * *

Issachar may have decided to become a “cheropedist” after watching itinerant corn cutters who travelled along the Atlantic coast treating patients. Eighteen-year-old Nehemiah Kenison (1824–1891) left home in New Hampshire in 1842 trying to find some kind of work that interested him and found “the very business that I had been hunting and praying for ever since I first left my native town.” Kenison started out as peddler in the rural South. This is how Kenison described his epiphany:

> “What do you suppose I saw upon entering the hotel (in Greenville)? Well, I thought, I have found it at last, and it’s mine. A man by the name of James McMellon was operating on a gentleman’s foot, for the relief of a corn, as I entered the hotel. That would be nothing uncommon now. But it was new to me; and it made a very strong and favorable impression upon me when I saw the doctor receive $5.00 for his fee for only a few minutes’ work. I watched the operation and made up my mind that was the business for me.”

Kenison persuaded McMellon to take him on as an apprentice. In the early part of the century, many of the corn cutters treated corns by digging them out with a scalpel as far down as they dared, until the person being treated howled in pain. McMellon taught Kenison how to remove corns painlessly by first softening them with acid and then carefully shelling them out with a dull bone blade.

A few months later, he returned home to New Hampshire, married his sweetheart, and in 1846, opened an office in Boston where “I soon began to operate, and was a success from the first. I soon bought me a horse and travelled in a number of different Southern States for twenty-two months.”[18]

Issachar’s “James McMellon” was Dr. E. Barinds, a German chiropodist who set up a corn-removing office in Charleston in 1840, at 97 King Street, several stores down from Issachar’s parents’ dry goods store at 147 King St.[19] Barinds’ advertisement assured Charlestonians he “effectually extracts corns” without pain, cures bunions and defective nails “with treatment entirely his own,” and “particularly attended diseases of the teeth.” A curious 15-year-old boy, Issachar watched Barinds extracting corns. Like Kenison, he realized, “there is money in it.”

Many itinerant corn cutters like Barinds also advertised their skills as dentists (until the mid–19th century, both professions were often practiced by the same individual). Barinds offered to “scale teeth to a pearly whiteness, and arrest carious Teeth from further decay.” If a client suffered from rheumatism, Barinds sold a “European Liniment which has never been known to fail.”[20] When Barinds wasn’t cutting corns or pulling teeth, he sold homemade remedies to treat conditions that for “ages baffled the skill of the profession.” With Barinds as his role model, Issachar decided corn cutting had a future for him.

* * * * * * * *

At age 16, I. Zachariah, Jr., went into business for himself as a chiropodist (undoubtedly with the support of his parents) at 154 King Street. Taking a page from Barinds and other chiropodists, he promised, “NO CURE NO PAY.” Clients were also offered “nostrums, salves, lineaments, balms, soaps, plasters, lotions, perfumery” and “a large number of other articles too numerous to mention” at “Thirty Per Cent Cheaper Than Can Be Bought Elsewhere.” In addition to those remedies, he sold his own “Zachariah’s celebrated patent Labor saving preparation for cleaning brass.” Issachar offered potential customers who were used to bartering or buying on credit “a large discount for cash.”[21]

Issachar got the idea to hawk nostrums he claimed to have invented himself from other local businesses in Charleston that were selling eponymously named potions. At 19 Hayne Street, a P. M. Cohen, was doing a thriving business selling “Peter’s Pill,” the “wonderful cures” of which were “the all-engrossing subjects of the day” because of its power to “procrastinate death for

years."[22] Further up the street from Issachar's shop, Haviland, Harral & Allen at 286 King Street sold a wide variety of nostrums, including "Sand's Sarsaparilla," "for the removal and permanent cure of all diseases arising from an impure state of the blood" at $1 per bottle, six for $5. If Sands' Sarsaparilla didn't do the job, customers suffering from scrofula, or King's Evil, incipient cancers, syphilitic and mercurial diseases, and a host of other disorders could also try "the Indian Panacea."[23]

Issachar's dual ads ran continuously from April through July. Two months after embarking on his new-found career as a corn cutter, and a month after inventing his patented labor-saving device, he placed a new ad in the *Charleston Southern Patriot*. In those two months, Issachar had acquired the self-proclaimed medical title "doctor" (in the early 19th century, there was no licensing for practicing medicine—anyone could practice medicine) and invented a new medicine to purify the blood and remove "bilious diseases":

> THE SUMMER HAS COME! and every person that wants to purify their BLOOD now is their chance!—for Dr. I. Zachariah Jr. Has just invented a new preparation for purifying the Blood and removing all Bilious diseases, called Zachariah's Compound Alternative Prepared and sold by the INVENTOR & SOLE PROPRIETOR.[24]

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1. Charleston Southern Patriot, April 28, 1843, 1.
2. Ibid.
3. New London Connecticut Daily Chronicle, May 12, 1862, 2.
4. "Words" The British Medical Journal, 1 (No. 6166) (March 24, 1979), 814, 1; (No. 1522) (March 1, 1890), 489.
5. Littlefield and Westervelt advertisement, New York Herald, May 6, 1858, 9.
6. Alexandria Gazette, March 6, 1860, 6.
7. John Pearson, "A Brief History of Chiropody and Podiatry," https://johnrpearson.wordpress.com/tag/a-brief-history-of-chiropody-and-podiatry/; Cameron Kippen," A Potted History of Professional Foot Care," http://foottalk.blogspot.com/2008/12/-potted-history-of-podiatry.html, accessed May 25, 2015.
8. Ben Jonson, Bartholomew Fair (1614), quoted by Pearson, "Brief History."
9. Pearson, "Brief History." The full title of Low's book was Chiropodologia, Or a Scientific Enquiry into the Causes of Corns, Warts, Onions and Other Painful or Offensive Cutaneous Excrescences: Confirmed by the Practice and Experience of D. Low.
10. Maurice Marks, "Recent History of Chiropody," in Maurice J. Lewi (ed.), The Text Book of Chiropody (New York: School of Chiropody, 1914), 70.
11. Pearson, "Brief History."
12. Ibid.
13. Kippen, "Potted History."
14. Ibid.
15. Lewi, Text Book, 103.
16. J. Colin Dagnall, "The English Influence on the Beginnings of American Podiatry," in Lisbeth M. Molloway, A Fast Pace Forward (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania College of Podiatric Medicine, 1987), 6–18; Kippen, "Potted History"; Lewis Durlacher's 1845 book, A Treatise on Corns, Bunions, the Diseases of Nails, and the General Management of the Feet (Philadelphia, Lea & Blanchard, 1845) was published within the year in Philadelphia. Malcolm Brown and Judith Samuel, "The Jews of Bath," Jewish Historical Society of England 29 (1982–1986), 157.
17. John Eisenberg, Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot; with Instructions for Their Treatment. To Which Is Added Advice on the Management of the Hand (London: John Eisenberg, 1845).
18. Nehemiah Kenison, The New Revelation; Or Dreams Relating to the Mysteries of the Soul (St. Louis: Privately published, 1879), 8.
19. Charleston Courier, January 31, 1840, 3.
20. Camden (South Carolina) Journal, June 27, 1840, 3.
21. Charleston Southern Patriot, April 28, 1843, 1; May 30, 1843, 1; May 31, 1843, 3.
22. Ibid., April 29, 1843, 4.
23. Ibid., March 4, 1843, 4; April 6, 1843, 1.
24. Ibid., July 15, 1843, 3.

4

“Where more money could be made faster”

In August 1843, just four months after opening his store in Charleston, Issachar received a letter from his mentor, Dr. Barinds, advising him to come to New Orleans, “where more money could be made faster than any other place on the continent.”[1] Issachar was never to return to Charleston. Packing his tool kit and clothes, he said goodbye to his parents and siblings and boarded a stagecoach to New Orleans.

Stagecoaches were so-called from their changing relays of horses at regular stages, stopping every 10 to 15 miles to change to a fresh four-horse team at relay stations along the way.[2] A stagecoach journey like Issachar’s was nothing to take lightly. For one thing, it was expensive. At about 10 cents a mile, the 510-mile trip from Charleston to Montgomery, Alabama, where he could board a ferry to Mobile, would cost the equivalent of about $1 per mile today. Added to that was the costs of lodging and food along the way.[3]

The stagecoach part of the journey was over bone-rattling rutted roads that continuously bounced Issachar against the passenger sitting next to him. Each coach carried up to nine passengers seated on three benches, three to a bench. The front and back seats faced inward and had back rests. The middle bench, the most uncomfortable, had a broad strap for a back support. Front and back seats were given to women. If they were with their husbands, they sat beside them. Issachar’s other passengers, few if any, recently washed and tidy, in their “little ark of humanity”[4] could have been gamblers, prostitutes, merchants, or young or old fortune-hunters like himself.

After 12 or more hours, the coach stopped overnight at an inn, where Issachar slept, his shirt on and trousers off, with two or three other men on greasy pillows in the same soiled bed.[5] Three or four days after leaving Charleston, he arrived in Montgomery, Alabama. From there, he boarded a steamboat for another two-day trip to Mobile, then boarded a train to New Orleans.[6]

* * * * * * * *

Located between Lake Pontchartrain and the Mississippi River, “The Crescent City” (so-called because of the large crescent bend the Mississippi makes near the French Quarter) was the gateway into and from the country’s heartland. New Orleans was much larger, much more cosmopolitan, and much more raucous than Charleston. Peddlers, merchants, planters, factors, sailors, gamblers, pimps, prostitutes, and con men were everywhere. About 40 percent of the population were foreign born, mainly French, German, and Irish.[7] Free blacks made up more than 40 percent of its African American population.

In 1724, the French governor of Louisiana had issued the Code Noir, which expelled Jews from the colony. In 1803, New Orleans became an American city as part of the Louisiana Purchase, and the ban was no longer enforced. Although most of the Jews coming to Louisiana, settled in New Orleans, a sizable number ventured farther inland to Baton Rouge, the second largest town in the state, or Shreveport and Donadlsonville.[8] Judah Benjamin came to New Orleans in 1828. The year before, the Sephardic community, with the help of local merchants like Judah Touro and Jews in other parts of the country, built the city’s first synagogue, the Gates

of Mercy.[9]

Most of New Orleans' Jews were small businessmen selling clothing or textiles at the wholesale or retail level or jewelry, tobacco, and fancy import goods at fixed store locations on Chartres Street. Others sold wares at temporary stalls and pushcarts along the river in the French Quarter or at auction or by peddling. A few operated taverns.[10]

Canal Street, with its small, specialized, expensive stores, had carriage tracks and rows of sycamores in the center of the street extending its whole length. Judah Touro, the richest man in the city, lived on Canal Street.[11] Issachar took in all the wealth and allure as he strolled down Canal to St. Charles Street. Dr. Barinds had his office and living quarters at No. 3 St. Charles, at the corner of Canal.[12]

No. 3. St. Charles Street was a large rooming house where "a few young gentlemen [could] be accommodated with board and lodging, or board only, on reasonable terms."[13] Within days of moving in, Issachar placed an ad in the New Orleans *Times-Picayune* that was not much different from his ads in Charleston. Starting off with the same bold "CORNS!" heading and the same guarantee of "No Cure No Pay," "Dr. Z" assured the ladies and gentlemen of New Orleans that if their corns returned after he removed them at his office or their homes, their money would be refunded.[14]

There was money to be made in New Orleans, but corn-sufferers preferred seeing the older Dr. Barinds. Issachar left after only two months.[15] He did not return for another three years.

After he packed his tool bag and left New Orleans, Issachar headed for Richmond, Virginia, where he briefly leased an office in May 1844, at the Columbian Hotel at 26 Cary Street.[16] He didn't stay long. An ad he placed in the *Richmond Whig* only ran for one day. Issachar's whereabouts for the next few months are not known. In September, he was back in Philadelphia to marry his childhood sweetheart.

* * * * * * * *

Issachar and Mary Ann Lawson met in Philadelphia when they were teenagers, before his family moved to Charleston. They probably met in school or when Issachar's family lived on Cedar Street near Green Street, where the Lawsons lived. Mary Ann was the oldest of Jacob's and Elizabeth Lawson's five children (four girls and one son). The Lawsons were a middle-class Christian family. Mary Ann's parents were both born in Philadelphia. Jacob was a saddler, and Mary Ann was a dressmaker at the family's new home at 44 Coates.[17] None of the letters Issachar and Mary Ann sent to each other has survived, but they must have written often enough for Issachar to ask her to marry him.

They married in Philadelphia on September 11, 1844.[18] They were both 17. It was a Christian ceremony. Issachar's parents did not attend.

Although Issachar was the grandson of the leader of a Jewish community in England and his father had been an active synagogue member in Philadelphia's and Charleston's Jewish communities, Issachar didn't feel he was turning his back on his ancestral religion when he married Mary Ann. Many Jews who married Christians continued to regard themselves as Jews,[19] although the children of mixed marriages were nearly always raised as Christians by their Christian mothers. Issachar was not a practicing Jew. For him, being Jewish was an ethnicity, not a religion.[20]

* * * * * * * *

Shortly after marrying, Issachar left Mary Ann with her parents while he continued moving from city to city practicing his profession. In April 1846, he was back in New Orleans clipping corns at a "fancy store" at the St. Charles Hotel, when he was arrested.[21]

The charge was forgery, a crime the newspapers called swindling. A New Orleans lawyer, acting on behalf of his brother, a man named Glenn, alleged that when Issachar was in Philadelphia, he had cashed a draft for $217.50 with Glenn, on Issachar's father-in-law Jacob Lawson's account, "under false pretenses."[22] Glenn hadn't pressed charges because Issachar had left Philadelphia, and he did not know where he had gone. By chance, he learned through his brother in New Orleans that Issachar was in that city. Glenn's brother swore out a warrant for Issachar's arrest on his behalf. Issachar was arrested, released on bail, and scheduled to appear in court two days later.

The case drew such wide interest in the newspapers that the New Orleans *Daily Delta* informed its readers it had been requested to ask them not to prejudge the case until Dr. Zacharie had his day in court.[23] At the hearing, Glenn's lawyer said he had no personal knowledge of the facts other than what his brother had told him. Issachar's lawyers strongly objected to his request for a delay and moved for dismissal. They contended Issachar had been charged based on an affidavit from his accuser who was not in court, and there was no evidence corroborating the alleged fraud. The judge agreed, and Issachar was released.[24] Although the case had been dismissed, many people in New Orleans believed he was guilty and stopped coming to his "fancy store." Issachar closed his business and returned to Philadelphia.

After a brief stay there, he and Mary Ann moved to Baltimore, where Issachar leased a home and set up a new practice. In June 1846, "Dr. I. Zachariah, Jr. Surgeon Chiropedist" placed an ad in the *Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser* stating he was now "permanently located" in Baltimore and "would be treating patients, either at his home at 111 Lexington Street or at their residence if required."[25] Shortly after moving to Baltimore, Mary Ann became pregnant. Months later, she moved back to Philadelphia so her mother could help her during and after her pregnancy. Issachar's and Mary Ann's first-born son, Charles Lawson Zacharie, was born in 1847.[26]

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1. Samuel Wilson, Jr., and Bernard Lemann, New Orleans Architecture (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co., 1998), xiv.
2. J. Russell Smith, "Line Traffic in the United States Coasting Trade," The Railroad Gazette, 44 (March 1908), 377.
3. William I. Hair, "Stagecoaches and Public Accommodations in Antebellum Georgia," Georgia Historical Quarterly, 68 (Fall 1984), 326.
4. Ibid., 327.
5. Everett Dick, The Dixie Frontier: A Social History of the Southern Frontier from the First Transmontane Beginnings to the Civil War (Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, 1948), 211–212.
6. Gary Gorton, Ante Bellum Transportation Indices, http://faculty.som.yale.edu/garygorton/documents/AnteBellum TransportationIndices.pdf.
7. Lachof and Kahn, Jewish Community of New Orleans.
8. Louisiana State Museum, "Antebellum Louisiana III: Urban Life," www.crt.state.la.us/louisiana-state-museum/online-exhibits/the-cabildo/antebellum-louisiana-urban-life/index, accessed February 28, 2018.
9. Leo Shpall, "The First Synagogue in Louisiana," Louisiana Historical Quarterly 21 (1938), 518; Elliott Ashkenazi, The Business of Jews in Louisiana, 1840–1875 (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1988), 105.
10. Knox, Camp-Fire, 392.
11. Peggy Scott Laborde and John Magill, Canal Street. New Orleans' Great Wide Way (Gretna, LA: Pelican Publishing Co., 2006), 31; Ashkenazi, Jewish Businesses, 10.
12. (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, January 15, 1843, 3.
13. Ibid., March 9, 1841, 1.
14. Ibid., September 6, 1843, 2.
15. His last ad appeared in the Times-Picayune on November 5, 1843, 1.

16. Richmond (VA) Whig, May 28, 1844, 2.
17. A. McElroy's Philadelphia City Directory for the Year 1844 (Philadelphia: Edward C. Biddle, 1844). Coates was renamed "Fairmount Avenue." Neither Mary Ann nor Issachar are listed in the Philadelphia City Directories for 1845–1848, under Lawson or Zachariah.
18. Philadelphia Dollar Newspaper, September 18, 1844, 3.
19. Jacob Rader Marcus, United States Jewry, 1776–1985 (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1989–) Vol. 2:203.
20. Michael F. Barnes, "Presentation on the Order," www.orderofthesecretmonitor.co.unk/News_27.html, accessed July 19, 2015.
21. New Orleans Daily Delta, April 14, 1846, 3.
22. Ibid.; (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, April 14, 1846, 2.
23. Ibid., April 15, 1846, 2.
24. New Orleans Daily Delta, April 17,1846, 3.
25. Baltimore American and Commercial Daily Advertiser, June 8, 1846, 2.
26. U.S. Census, 1870.

5

“We the undersigned”

Baltimore was a city on the make, a city whose mantra was “Death or Go-Ahead.” In the 1840s, it was the third largest city in America, outranking Boston and Charleston. With a population increasing by 20,000 every decade, Baltimore was challenging New York and Philadelphia for number one.[1]

Issachar’s first office at 111 Lexington[2] was in the heart of the Jewish district. To give himself credibility, he claimed he had been treating foot problems in Baltimore for the last three years. It was the beginning of a long series of lies he told about himself.[3]

Although he was the only chiropodist in Baltimore, Issachar was too ambitious to be content with merely cutting corns. Six months later, he moved to a new office at 24 Gay Street, inviting prospective patients to visit him at his “new operating rooms,” where he added dentistry to the services he offered.

His work “inserting, plugging, cleaning, extracting, filing, &c” teeth was “equal to any in the city,” he said.[4] He used “the latest improvements in the science” to maintain the beauty and preservation of teeth “at one third less than usual rates.” He cleansed and filled “carious teeth with gold, thereby arresting the progress of decay, and rendering them useful for life.” He also inserted “mineral teeth of a superior quality, with or without colored Gums.” Those inserts “so nearly resemble natural Teeth, both in appearance and usefulness,” that patients who favored him with their patronage would be entirely satisfied.[5]

Issachar assured “his friends and the public in general” he wasn’t giving up his chiropody practice. He would still be extracting “hard and soft corns, bunions [and] club nails penetrating the flesh, in five minutes.” No one need worry about the pain. He promised to remove a patient’s corns “without the least pain or blood.” Their corns, he assured them, “will never return.”[6]

Issachar’s “new operating rooms” sounded professional and dignified. Patients would not be treated in an ordinary room where shelf after shelf harbored patent medicines and various sundries. Patients would have their ailments attended to in a separate “operating room”—not just one, but “operating rooms,” one for their lower extremities and another for their topmost.

Issachar also came up with what would become his most convincing self-promoting logo: “references … and certificates from the first Surgeons and Physicians in the world” that could be seen at his office. It was a bold assertion for the teenage chiropodist.

In January 1847, Issachar went “on a professional tour” to Washington, where he was “happy to operate upon all” who could benefit from his experience and skill at his room at the posh Coleman’s Hotel on Pennsylvania Avenue. (President-elect James Polk had stayed there with his wife two years earlier.) The advertisement for his new venture contained the first of the many testimonials he was beginning to cite from prominent physicians:

> We the undersigned, having examined Dr. I. Zachariah, Jr.’s, method of curing corns, bunions, &c. we do not hesitated to recommend him to the public, and say that his method is a most rational one as well as effectual.[7]

It’s possible these physicians gave Issachar their endorsement, but there’s a nagging suspicion that, like his claiming he had been practicing in Baltimore for three years, he made them up. It stretches probability that the 19-year-old was able to corral these eminent physicians not only

into meeting as a group with him, but also into watching him perform corn cutting procedures that as physicians, they had no interest in and in fact looked down upon as degrading.

Issachar's citing endorsements from eminent physicians without their knowledge was nothing new. Drs. W. H. Handy, Charles Bell Gibson, and Nathan R. Smith, three of Issachar's endorsers, are cited in an advertisement for Reinhardt's Patent Glass Pad Double and Single Lever Truss.[8] Issachar sold that same truss in his office above Parker's Fancy Store between 4th and 6th on Pennsylvania Avenue a year later when he was back in Washington treating foot problems and pulling teeth.[9] Drs. Pierre Chatard's, Gibson's, and Smith's names were also cited as endorsing Baltimore dentist Thomas Badaraque.[10]

Issachar got the idea of fake celebrity endorsements from chiropodist John Eisenberg's *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot*.[11] Among Eisenberg's - made-up testimonies were those from France's Prince Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, Prussia's Ambassador to England, Lord Dufferin, "Lord in Waiting to her Majesty," the Duke of Wellington, and many others of Europe's eminent nobility. Eisenberg's fake endorsement marketing ploy was obvious. Issachar saw no reason he shouldn't do the same.

Eisenberg and other corn cutters claiming to have treated Europe's "A-list" elite weren't publicly challenged because those worthies couldn't be bothered—with one exception. When the Duke of Wellington was informed his name had been so used, he sued the corn cutter for his fraudulent endorsement.[12]

1. Sherry Olson, “Downwind Downstream, Downtown: The Environmental Legacy in Baltimore and Maryland,” Environmental History 12 (October 2007), 845–866.

2. Baltimore American Republic and Daily Clipper, June 4, 1846, 2

3. Ibid., June 4, 1846, 2. The three years he claimed to have been in Baltimore, he was living in Charleston and New Orleans. (Charleston) Southern Patriot, July 15, 1843, 3; (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, October 19, 1843, 3.

4. Baltimore American Republic and Daily Clipper, November 23, 1846, 3; De-cember 12, 1846, 3.

5. Baltimore Sun, December 3,1846, 3.

6. Baltimore American Republic and Daily Clipper, November 23, 1846, 3; De-cember 12, 1846, 3.

7. Washington (DC) Daily Union, January 13, 1847, 1. The four physicians were W. W. Handy, a professor of anatomy at the Baltimore Dental College (Baltimore City Directory, 1845, 166); Nathan R. Smith, dean and professor of surgery at the University of Maryland who had an office and infirmary on Lombard Street in Baltimore (Baltimore Sun, December 30, 1846, 3); and Charles Bell Gibson, who was a professor of physics at Washington University in Baltimore. Gibson extracted a bullet from General Winfield Scott at Lundy’s Lane during the War of 1812. During the Civil War, he was a surgeon in the Confederate army. Pierre Chatard was an obstetrician. He died two years after being cited in Issachar’s testimonial list (Eugene F. Cordell, Medical Annals of Baltimore (Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1903), 348). John Whitridge had a practice at 46 North Gay Street (Cordell, Medical Annals, 620). Obstetrician Ferdinand Chatard was the son of Pierre Chatard (Cordell, Medical Annals, 348.

8. American and Commercial Daily Advertiser, November 9, 1846, 4.

9. Washington (DC) Daily National Whig, December 3, 1847, 3; January 3, 1848, 3.

10. American and Commercial Daily Advertiser, April 12, 1847, 3. If there is any further need to doubt the credibility of these endorsements, there are noticeably different endorsements from some of these same doctors that Issachar collected in a book he kept of testimonials to his work (Dr. I Zacharie, Corns Operations on the Feet [privately published], 2 hereafter “Corns”). A copy is in the National Archives (RG 112 Records of the Office of the Surgeon General. Central Office Correspondence 1818–1946, Z (July 8, 1830–December 8, 1870), Box No. 113). The original is in the Shapell Museum. Zacharie published a later compilation titled Testimonials to I. Zacharie, Late Chiropodist General, United States Army (London: S. Firth and Ellis, 187–?). Dr. Gibson's statement is dated March 31, 1848, two years after the newspaper endorsement. The testimonial in the book is to “Dr. Zacharie” and quotes Gibson as stating, “We have seen Dr. Zacharie, the Chiropodist, operate, and approve of his method, which is scientific and free from inconvenience or pain” (Zacharie, Corns, 3). In 1848, Issachar was still calling himself Dr. I. Zachariah Jr. He didn’t drop the “Jr.” and change the surname to Zacharie until the late 1850s. It is hardly believable that Dr. Gibson would have given him two testimonials. The name change was an obvious instance of backdating. Issachar resorted to the same sham for another of his books.

11. Eisenberg, Surgical and Practical Observations.

12. Editorial, “The Peerage and Its Corns,” The Spectator 22 (1849), 299.

6

“A humble individual”

Issachar was emboldened when the testimonials he cited from Baltimore’s eminent physicians went unchallenged. Why not claim an endorsement from one of the world’s most famous physicians, especially since he was dead. Who was there to refute him?

A month after he cited the Baltimore endorsements, Issachar quoted an endorsement from Dr. Astley Paston Cooper that he dated June 27, 1837:

> This is to certify, that I. Zacharie studied the profession of Chiropodist under me, and from this day I consider him fully competent to perform the duty of a Chiropodist upon all who may favor him with their patronage.
>
> Given in the city of London, under my hand and seal, this twenty-seventh day of June, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty-seven.[1]

Sir Astley Paston Cooper had been England’s preeminent surgeon and anatomist, famous for breakthrough procedures in vascular and hernia surgeries. Born in Norfolk to a prominent family, his father sent him to London when he was 16 to study medicine under London’s best surgeons. A gifted student, he was appointed demonstrator, and a few years later, lecturer of anatomy at St. Thomas’ Hospital. Cooper was said to have mastered anatomy first by dissecting pets he stole from neighbors and then on the stolen corpses of those same neighbors. As his surgical practice grew, he organized a network of body snatchers to steal corpses to dissect.

Cooper was so highly regarded that he was the physician called upon to remove a tumor from the head of King George IV. The operation was a success. In return, the King made him a baron. He was subsequently appointed sergeant-surgeon to the King and later to Queen Victoria.[2] Cooper’s fame was such that several streets in British cities were named after him, e.g., Astley Cooper Place in Norfolk; Astley Road and Paston Road in Hempstead, as were newly described diseases (e.g., Cooper’s testis [neuralgia of the testicles] and Cooper’s neuralgia [neuralgia of the breast]).

An endorsement from Sir Astley Paston Cooper stating Zacharie had been one of his pupils would have given him serious gravitas in the medical community. But Cooper’s endorsement was fiction. Had Cooper been Issachar’s mentor, Issachar would have been no more than 12 when Cooper wrote the testimonial Issachar attributed to him. In the early 1800s, some children from working families did go to work when they were five or six,[3] but those children were employed as servants, factory workers, miners, and street sweepers. After Charles Dickens’ father was imprisoned for failing to pay a debt, Dickens was sent to work, but not as an apprentice to a posh physician. Dickens worked in a rat-infested shoe-polish factory blacking boots.[4]

Apprentices spent several years with their mentors, not several weeks or months, and surgeons did not take on apprentices for free. Some charged hundreds of British pounds to take on an apprentice. Only the sons of men with money could afford to have their sons apprenticed to a prominent surgeon like Cooper. And no medically trained surgeon would ever have tutored anyone in what the medical profession considered as unworthy of their time as the treatment of corns and bunions. None of that is really relevant. In 1837, when Issachar was 10, he was living in Philadelphia. In 1846, when he boasted of Cooper’s personal endorsement, Cooper had been dead for five years. Who was going to take the time or had the interest to challenge him?

Dr. Zacharie wasn't the only chiropodist citing impressive testimonials in his advertisements to enhance his credibility. "It is a remarkable fact," the editor of the *Spectator* magazine bemoaned, "that every corn-cutter of any eminence who appears above the horizon can display testimonials from a number of Peers and other persons of distinction." Nearly all of them, it chafed, were fraudulent.[5]

How did Issachar Zacharie, who had little formal schooling and no medical training, come up with Dr. Cooper's name? He found it in advertisements for *Sir Astley Cooper's Corn Salve* that was sold in America's major cities, including Charleston, when Issachar first began his career. Like all such nostrums, it came with alleged testimonials from "distinguished physicians…. No one acquainted with the character of the distinguished Surgeon whose name it bears, can for a moment doubt the efficacy of SIR ASTLEY COOPER'S CORN SALVE [which] meets with the most favorable reception wherever its genuine virtues are known. In New York this salve is regarded by hundreds and hundreds and even by distinguished Physicians, as the only specific for corns; while in Boston, ample proof is already given by our citizens of its real value."[6] Those who preferred a poultice with an even more prestigious genealogy, one offering "miraculous cures" discovered in the Holy Land, had *Jew David's Plaster* for its "genuine virtues."[7] For skeptics who had no faith in salves, there was always the "positive cure for corns" used by Lowell, a Maryland man afflicted with painful corns on two of his toes. Determined to put an end to his affliction, he "went into a joiner's shop, took a mallet and chisel, and deliberately severed the two toes from the foot."[8]

Dr. Cooper never invented, sold, or knowingly lent his name to any corn salve. Issachar had no fear of contradiction for claiming to have been personally taught by Cooper or selling a salve with his name. The first advertisements for his eponymous salve did not appear until 1842, a year after Cooper died.

* * * * * * * *

If Issachar didn't learn his skills from Dr. Cooper, from whom did he learn them? Other historians trying to salvage Issachar's credibility speculate he was tutored by Dr. Valentine Mott or Dr. William Gibson, two American physicians who were actually mentored by Cooper.

Valentine Mott (1785–1865) worked under Dr. Cooper at his clinic from 1835 to 1841. He subsequently returned to the United States as a professor of surgery at the New York University Medical College from 1841 to 1850. Like his mentor, Dr. Mott pioneered many new procedures in vascular surgery, including successfully tying the carotid artery in one patient and cutting two inches from the deep jugular vein and reconnecting them, using a tincture of opium as his only anesthetic.[9] Cooper once said of Mott, "he has performed more of the great operations than any man living, or that ever did live."[10] Mott also pioneered the treatment of what today men using Viagra or Cialis are warned not to ignore—an erection lasting four hours or more. The medical emergency stems from the same ailment humorously called in Mott's day and still today "a fractured penis." Mott said when "the newly made bride" was "informed of the nature of the fracture, plaintively and innocently remarked, 'it never would have happened, if he had been at home.'"[11] The four-hour plus erection and the "fractured penis" both result from engorgement of the corpus cavernosum, the spongy erectile tissue in the penis. (Fracture is a misnomer since no bone or cartilage is ruptured.) These two areas become engorged with blood during sexual arousal, causing an erection. Viagra and Cialis work by inhibiting the enzymes that normally keep the blood from draining from the corpus callosum. If the blood does not drain, it can cause

serious damage to the penis. The treatment for both the drug-induced erection and the "fractured penis" is draining the blood. Now it is done with a needle drainage. In Mott's day, cold "discutient lotions" (lotions that drained internal fluids) were applied to the penis to cause drainage.

The reason some historians credit Zacharie as one of Mott's students is a testimonial, dated New York, August 1858, that Mott allegedly wrote on Zacharie's behalf:

> Dr. Zacharie was a pupil of Sir Astley Cooper of London, he has been regularly educated as a Surgeon.
> For the last twenty years he had given particular attention to the troubles and diseases of the feet, such as Corns, Bunions, and inverted nails
> "His treatment is founded on the strictest rules of science, such as all Surgeons will approve. I can recommend him to those who may be suffering from those maladies as the most expert and delicate operator I have ever seen."[12]

In appreciation for that testimonial, Issachar dedicated both editions of his book, *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot,* to Mott:

> I am indeed rejoiced that this tribute of my respect and admiration has been accepted by you, and that you consider the labours of a humble individual, upon a neglected branch of knowledge, not unworthy of your kind protection and consideration.[13]

Mott's endorsement, backdated to 1844, appears in two editions of Issachar's *Surgical and Practical Observations*. He plagiarized the first edition, published in 1860, almost verbatim from John Eisenberg's 1845 text. By dating Mott's endorsement a year earlier, Issachar claimed Eisenberg had copied him instead of the other way around. In Issachar's *Corns, Operations on the Feet* certificate book, Mott's testimonial is dated 1858. In 1844, Issachar was still living in the South. He published a second text with the same title in 1876. This time, he stole the entire text from an American, C. H. Cleaveland, whose text, *Causes and Cures of Diseases of the Feet,* was published in 1862.[14] Valentine Mott was never Issachar's mentor.

Zacharie wasn't even creative enough to write the dedication himself. Instead, he cribbed it verbatim from Eisenberg's dedication to Dr. Marshall Hall, even to the point of the signature: "I am, sir, Your obliged and humble servant." The only difference was that Zacharie erased Eisenberg's name and replaced it with his own.

Zacharie learned about Mott the same way he learned about Cooper—from advertisements using his name on countless products and service without Mott's awareness or approval. *Gold Medal Cognac Brandy* carried a fake endorsement: "highly recommended by Dr. Valentine Mott, the acknowledged head of the medical profession."[15] *Charles' London Cordial Gin* falsely quoted Dr. Valentine Mott of New York as it being "far preferable to even Pure Holland Gin, and is the best article of its kind I have ever seen."[16] Another ad for *Charles' London Cordial* had an endorsement from both Cooper and Mott: "Recommended By the Late Sir Astley Cooper, Of London, And Dr. Valentine Mott, Of New York, The acknowledged Heads of the Profession in Either Hemisphere."[17] *Ayer's Cherry Pectoral*, a patent medicine, stated "Dr. Valentine Mott, the widely celebrated Professor of Surgery in the Medical College, New York City," said it gave him "pleasure to certify the value and efficacy of Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, which I consider peculiarly adapted to cure diseases of the throat and lungs."[18]

The irony of these endorsements for gin and cordials is that Mott was an avowed teetotaler: "It is my full conviction that the pernicious practice of even temperate drinking," he declared, "cannot be too severely reprobated."[19] Mott's name was even used to sell cleaning products like *Lyon's Magnetic Powder and Magnetic Pills*, "guaranteed to clear a dwelling of bed bugs, cockroaches, rats and mice."[20]

Dr. William Gibson (1788–1868), the other of Cooper's American pupils Issachar cited, was

considered the best lecturer in America in his day and was renowned for his prodigious memory.[21] Gibson's testimonial was similarly a fake.

With all the suspicions about Zacharie's testimonials from Astley Paston Cooper, Valentine Mott, and the other physicians he cited, how much faith can we have that any of his testimonials are authentic? Are the testimonies he recorded in *Corns*, his certificate book, from some of the most famous politicians and other luminaries in America any more truthful? It turns out they are, which is why the man is such an anomaly. He was as skilled as the false medical endorsements he cited said he was.

* * * * * * * *

In a letter Zacharie wrote to President Lincoln in 1863, he said it had been his "good fortune to have secured the friendship of many of our most distinguished statesmen, commencing in my boyhood with the great Henry Clay…."[22] Mentioning his having "secured" Clay's friendship would have more than impressed Lincoln. Senator, congressman, speaker of the House, secretary of state (1825–1829), and three-time presidential candidate (in 1824, 1832, and 1844), Clay was Lincoln's "ideal of a great man."[23]

Clay wrote two endorsements for Issachar. The first, dated January 29, 1848, took "great pleasure in saying Dr. Zacharie operated on me for Corns in Washington with perfect comfort, and to my entire satisfaction, and I derived great and immediate benefit from the exercise of his skill and judgement." The second, dated May 22, 1849, and written from Ashland, Clay's Lexington, Kentucky, plantation, stated, "Since January, 1848, when Dr. Zacharie operated on my feet, there has been no return of my Corns, and I have been completely exempt from them, and my feet always comfortable."[24]

"That commendation naturally opened many doors to the young chiropodist," writes Jonathan Sarna in his and Benjamin Shapell's landmark *Lincoln and the Jews*.[25] Within the year, Zacharie had additional testimonies from Alabama Senator Dixon H. Lewis ("Dr. Zacharie has surprised me by extracting two Corns and one nail from my smallest toe without a particle of pain," February 29, 1848),[26] Michigan Senator Lewis Cass ("Dr. Zacharie has operated upon my feet with great skill, affording immediate relief without causing the slightest pain," September 12,1848),[27] Missouri Senator Thomas Hart Benton ("Dr. Zacharie has operated on several Corns on my feet with the most perfect comfort to myself," September 24, 1848),[28] Supreme Court Justice R. C. Grier ("I take pleasure in testifying to the skill of Dr. Zacharie, having experienced great relief from his opeations,"September 1848)[29] and John C. Calhoun, former vice president, secretary of state, and South Carolina senator ("I take pleasure in saying Dr. Zacharie extracted my Corns without the slightest pain, and to my entire satisfaction," November 1848).[30]

Professor Hugh Holmes Maguire's testimony ("I have had two Corns removed by Dr. Zacharie … the method is new and I believe will provide a radical cure"), however, is implausible. Maguire's statement is dated November 1, 1848. The professor would have been 13 years old at the time![31] Another testimony from Judge J. Harlan, dated May 17, 1849, is equally fishy. His honor would have been a 16-year-old boy when he "derived much benefit from his [Issachar's] labors."[32]

Advertisements in the *Washington Daily Whig* and the *Daily National Intelligencer* corroborate that Zacharie was living in Washington when those testimonials were dated.[33] Either they were backdated or dated incorrectly, or Zacharie made some of them up. Historian Charles

M. Segal was certain they were all authentic. His reasoning was that many of the people whose testimonials appear in Issachar's *Certificate Book* were still alive when they allegedly wrote them and they would have denied making those statements if they knew of them.[34] That presumes the people whose testimonials were in the book knew they were in it or cared. Valentine Mott would certainly have known his name was being used to sell nostrums, but unlike the Duke of Wellington, he did not take legal action to have his fake endorsements removed.

The only way to be really sure any of Issachar's endorsement were authentic is to compare the handwriting and signatures in his book with the handwriting and signatures of those cited from other sources. I was able to do this for Henry Clay and Samuel D. Lecompten.[35] I did not have access to the handwritten version of Issachar's original certificate book, now in the Shapell Collection, but samples are reproduced in Sarna and Shapell's *Lincoln and the Jews.* Based on those handwriting samples and signatures, those endorsements are without question authentic.

This leads to at least two intriguing questions. How did Zacharie approach Henry Clay and the other prominent politicians in the first place? They did not travel in the same social circles. Did Zacharie just walk up to them in Washington, introduce himself, and say he would be more than happy to relieve them of any corns or other foot ailments free of charge? And why did Clay write him a second testimonial? Did someone question Clay's endorsement and Zacharie wrote to him for a second to prove its authenticity? It's improbable Clay wrote them without prompting from Zacharie. But even with endorsements from Washington's elite, there still weren't enough patients for Zacharie to remain in Washington.

1. Zacharie also cited Cooper's fake endorsement in The Daily Union, January 13, 1847, 1; February 18,1847, 3; March 5, 1847, 4; Zacharie, Corns, 2.

2. Sir Leslie Stephen and Sir Sidney Lee (eds.), Dictionary of National Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1921–1922), Vol. IV, 1062–1064.

3. See, e.g., Gary P. Zola, We Called Him Rabbi: Abraham Lincoln and American Jewry, A Documentary History (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2014), 403.

4. Joyce Carroll Oats, Soul at the White Heat (New York: Harper Collins, 2016), 62.

5. Editorial, "The Peerage and Its Corns" The Spectator 22 (1849), 299.

6. Hartford (Connecticut) Times, February 11, 1843, 4.

7. New Hampshire Sentinel, Mary 17, 1841, 4.

8. Baltimore Sun, June 6, 1843, 2.

9. I. M. Rutkow, "Valentine Mott (1785–1865), the Father of American Vascular Surgery; A Historical Perspective," Surgery 85 (April 1979), 441–450.

10. "Obituary: Death of Dr. Valentine Mott," New York Times, April 27, 1865, 4.

11. Valentine Mott, "The Fractured Penis of Laceration of the Corpus Cavernosum Penis, Commonly Called Fracture of the Penis," Transactions of the New York Academy of Medicine 1 (1848), 99.

12. Mott quoted in Zacharie, Corns, 2.

13. I. Zacharie, Surgical and Practical Observations on the Disease of the Human Foot (New York: Charles D. Norton, 1860); (London: Adams Brothers, 1876).

14. Eisenberg, Surgical and Practical Observations.

15. Columbia (South Carolina) Daily Phoenix, November 23, 1865, 1.

16. Washington (DC) National Republican, January 25, 1862, 1.

17. Charleston (South Carolina) Courier, February 15, 1862, 3; Daily (Columbus) Ohio Statesman, May 25, 1861, 4.

18. Richmond (Virginia) Daily Dispatch, November 24, 1852, 4.

19. Quoted by Daniel Dorchester, Latest Drink Sophistries versus Total Abstinence (Boston: Frank Wood, 1883), 43; H., "The Pathology of Drunkenness or the Physical effects of Alcoholic Drinks, with Drawings of the Drunkard's Stomach," Botanico-Medical Recorder, 11 (1843), 115.

20. Richmond (Virginia) Daily Dispatch, May 22, 1852, 2.

21. St. Louis Clinical Record 3 (1877), 158.

22. The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress (ABL LOC). Copies of Issachar's correspondence with Lincoln at the Library of Congress are online at "The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress," https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/malquery.html.

23. Quoted in David Von Drehle, Rise to Greatness: Abraham Lincoln and America's Most Perilous Year (New York: Henry Holt Co., 2012), 165.

24. Zacharie, Corns, 5. Clay's statement also appears in a shorter version of Issachar's book, Testimonials To I. Zacharie. Late Chiropodist General, United States Army (London: S. Firth and Ellis, 187–?), 8.

25. Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), 128.

26. Corns, 6; Testimonials, 9.

27. Corns, 5–6; Testimonials, 8.

28. Corns, 6; Testimonials, 9.

29. Corns, 6; Testimonials, 9.

30. Corns, 6; Testimonials, 9. Issachar's Corns also contains testimonials that year from Dr. Wm Gibson, dated March 31, 1848; Professor Hugh M. Maguire, November 1, 1848; and Dr. Thomas Hammond, October 27, 1848.

31. Corns, 3.

32. Ibid., 6–7.

33. Washington (DC) Daily National Whig, January 4, 1848, 2; Washington (DC) Daily National Intelligencer, April 8, 1848, 1.

34. Charles M. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie: Lincoln's Chiropodist," Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society, 43 (December 1953), 73.

35. "This will assure those who may desire an operation upon their feet for Corns, that Dr. I. Zacharie has performed an operation upon mine with much success; he extracted one or two for me about one year ago, which gave me immediate relief at the time, and I have not been troubled since then." Sam'l D. Lecomptem [sic]. No date. Corns, 12.

7

California

Issachar was living with his family at 402 N. Street in Baltimore, cutting corns and marketing "Dr. Zacharia's Celebrated Corn Elixir," when his second son, Samuel Purdy, was born in 1848.

With so many testimonials from so many eminent personages, Issachar should have had a thriving practice, but it was not thriving enough for his ambition. There were stories of men making fortunes overnight on the other side of the continent. He wanted his share of the pie.

In January 1848, two years after California became part of the United States, gold was discovered at Sutter's Mill in northern California. The discovery ignited gold-rush fever across much of the world. Thousands came from England, France, Holland, Eastern Europe, and as far away as Australia to make their fortunes. San Francisco's harbor wasn't large enough to accommodate the schooners, ships, brigs, and other vessels bringing passengers and cargoes from abroad. Shipments had to remain aboard for days because there were not enough places on shore for storage.

"A most singular state of things prevails here … without precedent in the history of the world," wrote a newly arrived "intelligent merchant." "All we heard in the States about the gold mines is fully confirmed here. There is gold in abundance. All who go to the mines do well—some return with fortunes; new discoveries are made every day. The millennium, so far as plenty of gold is concerned, cannot be far off. That this mining region, so extensive and so rich, and traveled over by Indians for hundreds of years, should have remained a secret is certainly astonishing."[1]

Although many Jews came to dig in the gold fields, most, including Issachar, had no intention of moiling for gold in the muck. They were not besotted with what lay under the earth. They came to do what they knew best—to get gold by selling the axes, shovels, pans, crockery, shirts, pants, hats, shoes, and other essentials miners needed in their quest for riches.

Some like the "intelligent merchant" loaded their wagons and headed for the mine fields. "Everything is selling very high at retail," the "intelligent merchant" beamed. Flour was $4 a pound, $800 a barrel. Shoes could be had for $50 a pair; pants for $40. "A paltry launch of a few tons of flour or other items earns $1200 or $1500 in a few days." Anything with a steam engine capable of transporting goods inland was a fortune in itself. One merchant offered $8,000 for a leaky launch that might sell for $100 or $150 in the East and had buyers begging him to take their money.[2] Other entrepreneurs went into business as hoteliers, livery stablers, saloon keepers, pharmacists, bathhouse owners, booksellers, jewelers, watchmakers, theater owners, or any other kind of business that catered to miners who came back from the fields with and without their pouches and nuggets of gold.

Most of the newly arriving Jews settled in San Francisco, the Gold Rush's commercial center. A newspaper described them as a "distinct class of dealers in boots and clothing" who had "almost a monopoly of the business."[3] Others set up shops in Sacramento, the gateway to the northern mines, or Stockton, the starting point for the southern diggings. Most of the newcomers, Jewish or otherwise, were unmarried men or men who left their families behind until they could get financially settled. Once they got themselves habituated, they sent for or returned to their homes to bring their wives and children, siblings, and parents.

* * * * * * * *

In a room above Lew Franklin's wood-framed store on Jackson Street near Kearny, where just hours before Franklin had been weighing and paying for gold dust, 50 Jewish men and 18-year-old Mrs. Hanna Solomon Keesing held an impromptu Yom Kippur service on September 26, 1849. It was the first Jewish service on the Pacific coast.[4] A few days later, a steamer arrived with news that the "49 Service," the holiest day in the Jewish calendar, had been observed on the wrong day.[5]

Soon after arriving in San Francisco in 1850, August Helbing, a single-minded, energetic - German-Jewish immigrant, founded the Eureka Benevolent Society, the first of many Jewish - self-help organizations. Within a few years, so many Jews had headed west that there were Jewish benevolent societies in Nevada and Montana, before there was even one in Delaware.[6] Helbing's purpose in starting a benevolent society was to provide San Francisco's Jews with a

> suitable ways of spending our evenings. Gambling resorts and theatres, the only refuge then existing in 'Frisco to spend an evening, had no attraction for us. We passed the time back of our stores and often times were disgusted and sick from the loneliness of our surroundings. Besides, our services were in active demand; every steamer brought a number of co-religionists, and they did not always come provided with means. In fact, some came penniless, having invested their all in a passage to the Coast.[7]

The Eureka Benevolent Society and America's other Jewish benevolent societies were committed to helping indigent Jews. They were not overly religious. The one thing they insisted upon was Jewish burial. In a very real sense, writes historian Jacob Marcus, "it was often the cemetery that motivated Jews settling in new communities to bond together and kept Judaism alive. Once a congregation was formed, one of their members became the *shochet* (ritual slaughterer), *mohel* (ritual circumciser) and *malame*d (teacher). The next step was to buy an old church building and convert it into a syna-gogue."[8]

Helbing's own story is worth telling for no other reason than to show that while they were mainly shopkeepers, California's enterprising Jews were no pushovers. "When I was young," Helbing recalled. I was "as strong as a lion. I had taken two prizes as an athlete in Munich, and had gone to America in spirit of adventure."

Helbing and a friend had made their way across Panama, bought passage for California, and then waited in their stateroom for their steamer to head up to San Francisco. While they were waiting, another passenger who had bought a ticket at the head office in New York for the same room as Helbing claimed the room was his. Helbing refused to leave. The man sought out the purser. The purser told Helbing he had to vacate immediately. Helbing still refused. The purser summoned the captain. The captain tried to persuade Helbing to leave. When Helbing still refused, the captain threatened to have him bodily removed. Helbing wasn't intimidated. He drew a pistol from his belt, stuck it in the captain's face, and vowed he would kill the first man who tried to enter his room. "I had paid for it and had a right to its possession. But right or no right, I would keep this room or die." The captain backed down. Not eager for bloodshed, his own or his crew's, he found accommodation for the other passenger.

Later that night, despite a drizzling rain, Helbing went out on deck for some air. Cuddled up in a corner, shivering with cold and wet, a man and his wife were holding their little child, keeping him as warm as they could. The family were Jews from Australia who had paid for their passage but couldn't get a room on board. Helbing brought them back to his room. He and his friend gave them their beds and went back on deck where they slept rolled in blankets.[9] The woman was Mrs. Hugh Simon, the first Jewish woman in California from Australia.

Issachar and his brother Eleazar docked in San Francisco in late 1849 or early 1850.[10] Like

Helbing, they came by way of Panama. Long before there was a canal across the isthmus, steamers leaving East Coast ports docked at Colon, Panama's port city on the Atlantic. From there, Issachar and Eleazar trekked to the Pacific by flatboat and pack mules, through tropical jungles and mosquito-infested swamps, risking yellow fever and malaria, all the while on the lookout for local bandits. At Gorgona, where they rested, they spent a sleepless night nervously watching natives honing their machetes. From Gorgona, they slogged their way to Panama City on the Pacific coast, where they boarded a steamer to San Francisco.[11]

* * * * * * * *

On June 14, 1850, less than a year after the first Yom Kippur service, the *Daily Alta California* reported "that one of the most solemn and impressive ceremonies of the Hebrew faith was performed yesterday at the Albion House."[12] The solemn and impressive ceremony was the first *bris* (ritual circumcision) on the Pacific coast.

In Judaism, circumcisions are a symbol of the Biblical covenant Abraham made with God. By tradition, all Jewish ritual circumcisions take place on the eighth day of life. The *mohel* (the person performing the ritual circumcision) was the only Jew in San Francisco with any skill with a knife—Dr. Issachar Zachariah.[13]

The baby was the eight-day-old son of Barnett and Hannah Keesing, the couple who had taken part in the first Yom Kippur service.[14] The Keesings were originally from New Zealand. Whereas most of the gold seekers from around the world came alone, most of the Australian and New Zealander men came with their wives.[15] The Keesings owned a combined boarding house and saloon at the corner of Jackson and Dupont Streets,[16] where they "respectfully invited (the public) to call and taste a glass. A reduction in price will be made when taken by the battle." This was down the street from where the first Yom Kippur service had been held. Downstairs, they sold malt, spirituous liquors, and beer, "drawn from a beer engine, the only one is San Francisco." The bris took place in a room upstairs. Keesing later became a wealthy real estate investor, selling prefabricated wood homes he imported from Australia.

* * * * * * * *

Issachar and Eleazar did not stay in San Francisco for long. There was too much competition. They decided to head 80 miles away to Stockton, which was also booming from the gold trade. In early 1849, Stockton was an outpost with one or two log cabins. A few months later, its harbor was packed with brigs, baroques, and schooners.[17]

In 1850, Issachar and Eleazar opened a small six by 10-foot clothing store on El Dorado Street.[18] They chose it because of its low rent and their willingness to endure whatever inconveniences it entailed to keep down overhead. They dispensed with fancy fixtures. They didn't hire clerks, working long, tiring hours themselves. They bought stock and sold it off as quickly as they could, with little profit. But their reputation for bargain prices brought customers to their door, and the profit from their "cheap store" accumulated. Once their business took off, they stocked more costly items.

Stockton was no bucolic hamlet. It was a rough and violent mining town. Home invasions and burglaries were commonplace.[19] A clothing dealer on Center Street near Issachar's store was robbed of $500 in cash and $200 in clothing. A servant boy walking across a bridge was choked by "two hombres, for the two dollars in his pocket."[20] The *Daily Alta California* groaned that Stockton had become "the rendezvous of a gang of desperate men who fear neither God nor the

law."[21] "In defiance of weak, and badly administered civil laws," Stockton turned to "the more sure and just code of Lynch law."[22] Twelve minutes after a man shot another in a bowling alley, Stockton's vigilante committee tried, convicted, and hanged him.

* * * * * * * *

In a relatively short time after settling in Stockton, Issachar was one of its leading Jewish citizens and the community's *mohel*. He continued performing circumcisions in Stockton until early 1852, when Abraham Abrahmsohn, "peddler, tailor, miner and matza baker" took over the job.[23] Abrahamson had been a *mohel* in Germany. "Through this religious profession," he writes, he "had access to the richest and most prominent families" who didn't balk at his charging $50 (the equivalent of $1,600 today) for a circumcision. "I had much to do and in about half a year had laid by a profit of 800 dollars [equivalent to $26,000 today]."[24]

Issachar's and Eleazar's clothing store proved to be its own gold mine. From an initial investment of $50, Issachar realized a profit of $21,500 (equivalent to $700,000 today) in less than six months. Now wealthy, he bought a home at the corner of Grant and Park Streets and planted a flower garden and orchard.[25] Flush with financial success, he left his brother Eleazar in charge of their store and brought his wife and children from Philadelphia and sent for his parents in Charleston.

In the fall of 1851, Issachar became the founding president of Stockton's Hebrew Benevolent Society.[26] Weeks later, he headed a committee to ask Captain Charles Weber, Stockton's founder, to donate an area to bury their dead. Weber generously gave them a 100-square-foot block on what was then the edge of the city. The committee built a fence around the perimeter and planted cypress trees on the grounds. In 1854, Weber formally deeded the cemetery to I. Zacharie and the other trustees of Stockton's Hebrew Benevolent Society.[27] "The Jews have stolen a march on the Christians," the *Daily Alta California* told its readers. "They have provided a cemetery for their dead, which is enclosed with a strong, solid fence, and is in every way a credit and an honor to them. It is situated near the Calaverns. We are told that our cemetery is unenclosed and the swine root up the interred bodies."[28]

Issachar's and Mary Ann's first daughter was born in 1852.[29] They named her Amelia, after Issachar's mother. Grandmother Amelia stayed with the family only one more year. In failing health, she and Issachar's father went back east to live with their daughter Jane and her husband, Abraham Backer, in Savannah, Georgia.[30] Leaving his brother Elly,[31] as the family affectionately called Eleazar, to look after their store and his family, Issachar accompanied his parents back to Savannah, remaining long enough for his name, along with his father's, to be listed among the new members of Congregation Mikveh Israel in Savannah.[32]

Issachar's mother died in December 1856. Despite having left Stockton three years earlier, Issachar's family had become such a fixture in the city that Julius Eckman's newly launched *The Weekly Gleaner as a Voice to Israel* (1858), California's first Jewish-based magazine, printed two obituaries about her.

The longer and first notice informed readers that it had "a sad duty to perform in announcing the death of Mrs. Amelia Zachariah wife [who] departed this life at Savannah, Ga., surrounded by her family, with whom but a short stay was allowed her after her return from California. Mrs. Zachariah," it continued, "was the only daughter of the Rev. Eliezer Cohen, who for thirty years was cantor at the Hebrew congregation of Chatham England. The early religious impressions received in youth, were the faithful companions and supporters of our deceased friend in her

age." The obituary went on to say she was a devoted wife who refrained from work on the Sabbath and holy days and was very frail in her last days before she left for Savannah. The second, briefer obituary stated that Amelia, a former Stockton resident, died in Savannah on December 26, 1856.[33]

Back in California, in August 1853, Issachar was elected grand marshal of the newly formed Masonic Grand Lodge in San Francisco. *The Ark*, the Masonic newspaper reporting the installation, informed its fellow Masons that it had "no knowledge of any of the officers except the Grand Master [who] is known as a most energetic, accomplished and efficient Brother, and under his administration the Order must prosper."[34] By then, Issachar was a pillar of the community, sending flowers from his garden, reputed to be the most beautiful garden in the Stockton area, to the city's various social gatherings. School children were allowed to have their picnics on Issachar's grounds, and Stockton's residents were generously invited to visit the garden. Those who cared to could buy peaches at $3 each from the orchard he had planted four years before.[35] Issachar's and Mary Ann's second daughter, Clara Louise, was born in 1854.[36]

Merchandizing had made Issachar a rich man, but he began to miss the kind of social life of a bigger city than Stockton. After a fire destroyed his and many of the other stores on El Dorado Street,[37] Issachar moved his family to San Francisco, where he resumed his chiropody practice and became more involved in the Masons. After he was elected the first "grand Master of Masons in California," he became one of the principal founders of the "Order of the Secret Monitor," an appendant order of Freemasonry, one of the many Masonic orders that didn't involve elaborate ceremonies.[38]

Issachar's chiropody office in San Francisco was located at 148 Montgomery Street. Had he thought of it, he could have advertised himself as not just the only chiropodist in all of San Francisco, but the only chiropodist west of the Mississippi.[39] His advertisements were little changed from his earlier pitches offering to show his certificate book, "containing certificates from many of the most eminent men in the United Sates" to "all who may think proper to examine the same…. His success for the last fifteen years has been such as to warrant him in promising to all who may confide to his expertise…. His charges are quite moderate—trifling, indeed, compared with the relief and satisfaction he affords the sufferer."[40]

Eventually even San Francisco lost its allure, or perhaps an incident left Issachar so humiliated that he felt he had to leave. In November 1856, thieves burgled his apartment while he was asleep and stole all his clothes. With no clothes of his own, he wore one of Mary Ann's dresses to shop for a shirt, trousers and boots. Hoping to avoid being noticed by leaving as soon as the stores opened, he was seen in a clothing store dressed "in the latest style of female attire." He could forgive the man who stole his clothes, he was overheard telling the salesman, but if he found him, he would "lick the rascal that carried off his boots."[41]

1. New Orleans Weekly Delta, May 14,1849, 4; Brooklyn (New York) Daily Eagle, May 21, 1849, 2.
2. Ibid.
3. Philadelphia Dollar Newspaper, June 25, 1851, 2; Boston Courier, April 21, 1851, 2.
4. K. M. Nesfield, "The Jew from a Gentile Standpoint," Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine 25 (April 1895), 414.
5. Martin A. Meyer, Western Jewry. An Account of the Achievements of the Jews and Judaism in California (San Francisco: -Emanu-el, 1916), 46.
6. Gustav Adolf Danziger, "The Jew in San Francisco. The Last Half Century," Overland Monthly and Out West Magazine 25 (April 1895), 385.
7. Jacob Voorsanger, The Chronicles of Emanu-el (San Francisco: Geo. Spaulding Co, 1900), 17; Myer, Jews in California, 46.
8. Marcus, Western Jewry, 2, 197.
9. Danziger, "The Jew in San Francisco," 385.
10. The 1850 U.S. Census lists Issachar (Issica Zackriah), age 25, living at his father-in-law's home with his wife, her three sisters, Fanny, 17, Frances, 12, Lavernia, 7, and Issachar and Mary's two children, Charles, 4, and Samuel, 2.
11. Danziger, "The Jew in San Francisco," 385. The other route, more costly and slower, but safer and more comfortable, was by sailing around Cape Horn. Slower steam-ers could take as long as six months. Clipper ships, the "ocean greyhounds" built for speed, could make the trip in three months.
12. Daily Alta California, June 14, 1850, 2.
13. Ibid.
14. Rochester Daily Democrat, July 25, 1850, 2.
15. Ava F. Kahn, and Adam M. Mendelsohn (eds.), Transnational Traditions: New Perspective on American Jewish History (Detroit: Wayne State University, 2014), ch. 2.
16. Charles Proctor Kimball, The San Francisco City Directory (San Francisco: Journal of Commerce Press, 1850), 66; Daily Alta California, January 30, 1850, 3.
17. Stockton California History 1846 to 1900, http://www.wrightrealtors.com/stockton/stockton_history.htm, accessed July 20, 2015.
18. The Stockton Directory and Emigrant's Guide to the Southern Mines (Stockton: San Joaquin Republican, 1852), 19.
19. Sacramento Steamer, October 31, 1851, 3; San Francisco Daily Placer Times and Transcript, August, 23, 1854, 2.
20. San Francisco Weekly Pacific News, February 15, 1851, 3.
21. Daily Alta California, March 1, 1852, 7.
22. Elkton, Maryland Cecil Whig, April 26, 1851, 1.
23. Abraham Abrahamsohn, An Interesting Account of the Travels of Abraham Abrahamsohn to America, reprinted in Ava F. Kahn (ed.), Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush. A Documentary History, 1849–1880 (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 79.
24. Ibid.
25. George H. Tinkham, History of San Joaquin Country California (Los Angeles, CA: Historic Record Co., 1923).
26. In 1855, it became Temple Israel, an Ashkenazi Congregation (Alexander Iser, The California Hebrew and English Almanac for the Year 5612, Corresponding with the years 1851–1852 (San Francisco: Alexander Iser, 1851).
27. Mrs. David "Bea" Schwartz, The Oldest Jewish Cemetery in the West, Stock, California (http://www.wsjhistory.com/oldest_jewish_cemetery.htm, accessed September 10, 2015; I. J. Benjamin, Three Years in America, 1859–1862 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1956), Three Years, Vol. 2, 64.
28. Daily Alta California, December 4, 1851, 2.
29. U.S. 1870 Census.
30. Jane, Issachar's sister, was 16 when she married Abraham Backer, 24, a merchant from Columbus, Georgia, in 1848. Charleston Courier, March 13, 1848, 2; 1860 U.S. Census.
31. Eleazar was a permanent trustee of Stockton's short-lived Sephardic congregation, Shaar Hashamayim, the "Polish synagogue." Norton B. Stern, and William M. Kramer, "Sephardic Leadership of Early California Jewish Life," Western States Jewish History 17 (April 1985), 227.
32. Saul Jacob Rubin, Third to None. The Saga of Savannah Jewry, 1733–1983 (Savannah, GA: Self-published, 2013), 129.
33. "Obituary," The Weekly Gleaner as a Voice to Israel (January—1857), n.p.; History of San Joaquin Country, 55. Jonathan's whereabouts for the next few years aren't known, other than his being listed in the Savannah Georgia voter records for 1856–1896. In the 1859 state and the 1860 federal census, he is listed as living in Savannah with his married daughter and other members of the Backer family.
34. The Ark, and Old Fellows' Western Magazine: A Monthly 10 (August 1853), 257. The Ark listed his name as "I. Zachariah, Stockton."
35. An Illustrated History of San Joa-quin County (Chicago: Lewis Pub Co., 1890), 64.
36. U.S. 1870 Census.
37. San Francisco Daily Placer Times and Transcript, February 22, 1855, 2.
38. It was a "side degree" that any Freemason who had received it could confer on anyone else. Masonic Standard, November

3, 1900, 19; Michael F. Barnes, Presentation on the Order; Albert C. Mackey, Encyclopedia of Freemasonry and Its Kindred Sciences, http://www.phoenixmasonry.org/mackeys_encyclopedia/s.htm.

39. Charles E. Krausz, A Fast Pace Forward: Chronicles of American Podiatry (Philadelphia, PA: Pennsylvania College of Podiatric Medicine, 1987), 19.

40. Harris, Bogardus, and Labatt, San Francisco City Directory: For the Year Commencing October 1856 (San Francisco: Whitton, Towne & Co., 1856), 7; San Francisco Bulletin, May 2, 1856, 3.

41. Sacramento Daily Union, November 12, 1856, 3; San Joaquin Republican, November, 15, 1856, 2.

8

“Prince of chiropodists”

Back in New York in 1857, Issachar waited a year to set up shop as a chiropodist and instead opened a grocery at 129 Eighth Ave., while Elly went into business as a perfumer at 278½ Hudson.[1] A grocery store was not what we think of today. Issachar did not sell fruits and vegetables. A grocery store in mid–19th century was a general merchandise store. Issachar sold the same items that had made him rich in Stockton—cloth, pins and needles, ribbons, buttons, shoes, and other dry goods, patent medicines, and liquor.[2] A year later, he bought a three-story brick house at 760 Broadway between Eighth and Ninth streets (the site is now a Loft department store) and resumed his profession, “curing bunions and enlargements of the great toe” from his office and upstairs home.[3] His next door neighbors were Hegeman, Clark & Co. Druggists, whose Cod Liver Oil was “recommended by the most eminent physicians,” and a tailor shop.[4]

Broadway was New York City’s main artery, a bustling, hustling thoroughfare lined with wholesale and retail businesses. “There is no street in London that can be declared superior, or even equal, all things considered to Broadway,” wrote Charles Mackay, an English writer who visited the city in 1858. “It is a street *sui generis*.” In his mind, it was truly American. There was no “uniformity in the design of its long lines of buildings … each man builds exactly as he pleases … the total absence of plan and method … seems to be inevitable in a country where every man is a portion of the government and of the sovereignty, and considers himself bound to consult nobody’s taste but his own.”[5]

Early in the morning, horse-drawn carts and wagons brought food and other goods from the country to those hotels and markets along Broadway while the street was still navigable before the shops opened. Once the dawn hours faded and day took hold, the sidewalks swarmed with peddlers, financiers, and beggars. Newsboys and newsgirls, most of them Irish, peddled their papers on every corner and at the entrance of the main hotels. French, German, and Jewish dry goods jobbers, merchants, tobacconists, and other businessmen huddled together on six-cent - horse-drawn omnibuses on their way to work. By the early 1850s, those horse-drawn omnibuses were carrying over a hundred thousand passengers a day,[6] leaving tons of manure in their wake that had to be removed, stored, and disposed of. Around 9 a.m., professional men, lawyers, doctors, theatrical managers, and clergymen made their way to their offices and places of business. On an average weekday, fifteen thousand omnibuses and personal horse-drawn carriages rumbled across the Broadway and Fulton intersection.[7]

Further into the day, women in bustling crinolines clogged the streets. “As regards the mere volume and circumference of hoop or crinoline,” Charles Mackay chuckled, “the ladies of London and Paris are, to those of New York, but as butterflies compared with canary birds.”[8] The *New York Tribune* was less sanguine about the fashion. “There is not only a craze for crinoline here, but crinoline itself is crazy—huge, unwieldly, preposterous, and offensive,”[9] forcing gallant men in a hurry to zigzag around them, carefully stepping off the sidewalk onto the manure-laden road to pass.

Visiting the city from Cincinnati for the first time, Rabbi Isaac Wise mused, “the great

characteristic of New York … is business. People, it appears, care less for wealth, or the enjoyment thereof, than they do for a position in the commercial world. Everybody aspires to the high position of being one of the greatest merchants, bankers, manufactures or shippers. The highest compliment you can bestow on a gentleman is to tell him you never saw an establishment so extensive and well managed as his own."[10] A hundred and fifty years later, listening to Jewish stand-up comic Jackie Mason, you'd think he was cribbing his routine from Rabbi Wise.

The city's great industry was making and selling clothes. Tens of thousands of New York's Jews worked as tailors, milliners, shirt makers, collar makers, embroiderers, and seamstresses. By 1860, New York was producing 40 percent of all the garments in America,[11] many of which were sent to Southern plantations to clothe slaves.

Broadway's "business palaces" were its magnificent hotels. When the rich and famous came to New York, they stayed at John Jacob Astor's 309 room six-story Astor House at 223 Broadway, the "wonder of strangers" when it opened in 1836.[12] Henry Clay, Daniel Webster, and John Calhoun were regular guests. Webster said, "he would stay at no other hotel." William Seward lived there for 30 years. Lincoln was a guest there in February 1860, when he came to New York to give his Cooper Union speech, and again a year later, in February 1861, on his way to Washington for his inauguration.[13]

Although still in the Bowery district, the swanky hotels in the "sunshine" part of the city were far above the "shadow" of Lower "Mannahatta," as Walt Whitman called the lower Bowery section. The lower Bowery was where New York's worst overcrowded slums were located. It was where drunks, derelicts, prostitutes, and German and Irish working-class immigrants eked out existence.[14] It was also where native-born and immigrant gangs battled for turf. In 1857, the Dead Rabbits gang from neighboring Five Points and the "Bowery B'hoys" mixed it up and splattered blood at the corner of Bayard and Bowery streets in what came to be called the "Dead Rabbit Riot," one of the Bowery's more vicious street fights.[15]

During the day, the Bowery was alive with the sights and sounds and smells of shoppers prowling for bargains on Chatham Street, the center for the city's second-hand goods trade. "Asked to name the street in New York where the greatest number of dirty shirts were bought and sold, chances are ten to one you would name Chatham," said a New Yorker.[16] With an underlying antipathy, later turned into self-deprecation by Jewish comedians, the same New Yorker described Chatham's typical Jewish shopkeeper. He is "a great artist, especially in coats. Step into the nearest clothing-store in Chatham street and slip on a coat—any coat—and we'll wager our wedding-suit it is a 'splendid fit.' There is no such thing as an ill-fitting coat in Chatham Street. Every coat there fits everybody."[17]

Jewish merchants selling or buying used clothing for resale had street stalls cheek by jowl next to fruit peddlers and food sellers and merchants hawking trinkets, tools, and every portable item that could possibly be sold or traded. A reporter for the *Christian Register* who praised Broadway's Jewish merchants for closing their shops on their Sabbath was dismayed at the "poorer and less educated portion of the race" who "avenge this ecclesiastically enforced reticence by keeping open their places of business on Sunday as we walk through Chatham street (in the Bowery)."[18]

At sundown, the stalls all closed. The lower Bowery was a dangerous place after dark. Men who had to travel downtown at night always carried guns.

* * * * * * * *

Unlike in San Francisco, Issachar wasn't the only chiropodist in New York, and not the only chiropodist on Broadway, for that matter. Further down the street at 516 Broadway, directly opposite the St. Nicholas Hotel, chiropodists Littlefield and Westervelt offered the same services and "provided a separate entrance and rooms for ladies." Further up the street at 821 Broadway near 12th, "Madame Berhard, Chiropodist" offered to remove corns, bunions, and nails "at a moderate charge."[19] At fashionable 74 Fifth Avenue, Issachar faced competition from "Dr. Schlosser," "chiropodist to his Majesty the King of Bavaria and many of the principal sovereigns and dignitaries of Europe."[20]

Issachar was no slouch when it came to crafting for himself what *New York Times* columnist David Brooks calls "résumé virtues," the skills one brings to the marketplace.[21] Issachar's fabrications had started with fake testimonials from Drs. Astley Paston Cooper and Valentine Mott and likely the Baltimore physicians he named in his earlier testimonials. He had lied about those associations. Why not about attaching the M.D. medical degree to his name? Anyone could call himself "Dr." There was no licensing requirement at the time for using that title. An M.D. after a name, on the other hand, was a title with prestige, backed by a university education.

Ironically, warning potential clients to be wary of "imposters who have from time to time, deceived the public," Issachar did just that. He tacked M.D. after his name and claimed he'd been awarded the degree from the Academy of Medicine in Havana, Cuba.[22] Making up bogus degrees from a foreign university is nothing new today. It is so common that the Federal Trade Commission has a booklet to help identify such fake degrees.[23] In Issachar's day, there was no Federal Trade Commission.

Issachar's claiming to have earned a degree from a Cuban university was ludicrous, but no one called him out on it. A degree from a foreign university has some plausibility if the person speaks the language of the country where that university is located. Issachar didn't speak or understand Spanish. He had never been to Cuba. Had he applied, he would not have been accepted. Havana's only medical school at San Jeronimo University, founded in 1842, only offered medical training and a medical degree after a preliminary four years of study in math, physics, chemistry, and other subjects.[24] By his own admission, Issachar said he had had very little formal education.[25] Issachar claimed he graduated in 1847 from the Cuban Academy of Medicine,[26] but the academy did not exist in 1847. It wasn't founded until 1861.[27]

No one could ever accuse Issachar of modesty. Once settled in his new office, he boasted how for the last 15 years as a "corn operator," he had earned the trust of everyone who had relied on his skill. Patients were welcomed at his office. If they preferred, he treated them in the privacy of their homes. His fee, he stated in his advertisements, was "quite moderate—trifling in deed, compared with the relief and satisfaction he affords the sufferer." He was also "happy" to look after their feet on a yearly contract.[28]

Despite these fabrications, Issachar's chiropodist skills were undeniable. The *New York Atlas* editorialized that New York's "professors of chiropody" were society's patrons and the best of these "Benefactors of the Human Race" was Dr. Zacharie of 760 Broadway, "the most successful [corn] operator of his class" the city had ever known. "We have tried him to our satisfaction and relief, [and]we would say to the army of sufferers from corns and bunions—go do likewise."[29] The *New York Atlas* was a Sunday-only newspaper with a circulation of 3,500, second only to the 9,000-copy Sunday edition of the *New York Herald*. Issachar beamed at the accolade and reprinted it in his certificate book.[30]

William Cullen Bryant, poet and editor of the *New York Evening Post*, was especially effusive in praising Issachar. “An indefatigable walker,” Bryant “tramped” three miles every morning along the Hudson River from his home to his office in downtown Manhattan and three miles back at night. He kept up that journey for 50 years, not to mention his afternoon strolls. Walt Whitman recalled munching on bread and sausage with Bryant as they strolled through Flatbush. On one particularly long outing, Bryant walked 40 miles.[31]

Bryant had mixed feelings about Jews. Jews were “noble” and spiritual, had strong family ties, and a “disposition to triumph by intellect rather than violence,” he said, but they also had an “unquenchable lust for lucre” and were like snakes “in search of prey.”[32] But when it came to his feet, Bryant wasn’t aware or didn’t care that Issachar was Jewish. All he cared about was Issachar’s guarantee he could relieve his troublesome corns, bunions, and ingrown toenails “in five minutes, without pain, so that the boot can be worn immediately without the least inconvenience to the patient.”

Bryant was so satisfied and impressed with Issachar’s skill that he wrote several articles on chiropody and became one of the Jewish chiropodist’s most ardent boosters. “Treatment of diseases of the feet,” Bryant editorialized, demanded “as delicate a hand, as nice a judgment, and as much anatomical knowledge, as that of diseases of the eye,”[33] Dr. Zacharie at 760 Broadway was “one of the best practitioners of the profession” he had ever seen. “He has no secrets or nostrums, depending entirely for success upon his knowledge of the structure of the human foot and the consummate dexterity of his operations. He coaxes out a corn by solicitations so gentle you feel absolutely refreshed while the operation is going on…. If you have a diseased nail, he will peel it from the toe with as much expedition as he might peel an orange and without drawing blood or giving pain.”[34] Dr. Zacharie should be seen by everyone suffering from “all that torture and annoyance which those afflicted with corns are condemned to suffer.” Dr. Zacharie is “the prince of chiropodists.”[35]

Zacharie in middle age, "A prince of chiropodists" (courtesy the collection of Robert Marcus).

A journalist for the Washington *Constitution* brought a friend to see Issachar about a toenail that was causing him pain and was similarly impressed. The toenail wasn't the problem. It was a corn growing under it. The only way to relieve the pain, Issachar explained, was to remove the nail to get at the corn underneath.

The patient blanched at the anticipated pain. The only way the corn could be removed from beneath the nail, he thought, was if Dr. Zacharie ripped the nail out with forceps. When Issachar assured him he could remove the nail without pulling it out, the corn-sufferer still hesitated, but held out his foot.

Issachar was as good as his promise. As the trembling patient looked away, he dissected the nail from the toe and removed the corn in less than five minutes. Minutes later, the patient walked out of Issachar's office, thanking him profusely for taking care of his corn so painlessly.[36]

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Issachar could have been satisfied with the praise he had earned by his adroit skill, but he had a deep longing for public recognition beyond kudos from Bryant and other appreciative patients. He longed to be respected by men he respected. Fudging (a euphemism for lying) about one's background was no different in Issachar's day than it is today. According to "HireRight.com," about a third of job applicants lie on their résumés. The most common lies concern education and job titles.

Not being challenged about his fake medical testimonials and medical degree emboldened Issachar even more. He felt he had no reason to fear being held to account for his next elaborate fabrication, a full-length book about problems affecting the feet and how chiropodists such as himself treated them. The long-winded title of his 96-page opus was *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot, With Instructions for Their Treatment. To Which Is Added Advice on the Management of the Hand. Illustrations with Six Colored Plates,* By I. Zacharie, Surgeon Chiropodist.[37]

When the book came out in 1860, Issachar was so well-known in New York that notices for the book simply advertised it as "Zacharie on the Foot." The *New York Tribune* told its readers, "among the books upon our table we find a small, neatly bound volume entitled *Zacharie on the Foot*, which contains a surgical and practical treatise on the diseases of the human foot and the proper remedies for their cure."[38]

William Bryant captioned his review of Issachar's book "The Poetry of the Foot." One would scarcely look into a book bearing this prosaic title for anything like poetry or entertaining reading material:

> "Yet Mr. Zacharie manages to combine both with his 'surgical and practical observations. Of course, it is to the latter that the little volume, with its handsomely colored illustrations, is chiefly devoted.
>
> "Mr. Zacharie gives a lucid account of the diseases to which the foot is subject, and maintains that the chiropodist is as necessary and important a member of the great body of men who have devoted their lives to the healing art, as the dentist. Fortunately, diseases of the foot are not as common as disease of the teeth, and thus there will fewer interested in the book than would otherwise be the case; but all those who haves suffered from their feet will be anxious to see what an experienced and successful chiropodist like Dr. Zacharie has to say on the matter. For others we extract the following chapter on THE POETRY OF THE FEET."

The excerpts included several passages from Shakespeare's plays.[39]

What would Bryant's reaction have been had he known Issachar had copied, almost word for word, Lewis Durlacher's 1845 book, *A Treatise on Corns, Bunions, the Diseases of Nails, and the General Management of the Feet*?[40] Even his title and dedication were copied from John

Eisenberg's book, *Surgical and Practical Observations on the Diseases of the Human Foot*, also published in 1845.[41] Many years later, when Issachar published a second edition of his book in 1876, his title page read "New York, 1844—revised London 1876." Issachar deliberately misdated the first edition to leave the impression Durlacher and Eisenberg had copied him, rather than the opposite.[42] Issachar also backdated the fake testimonial from Dr. Valentine Mott dated 1858 in the 1860 version to 1844, but he made a careless mistake. The second edition, with the altered 1844 date, was dedicated to "Valentine Mott…. Emeritus Professor of Operatic Surgery." Mott didn't become "emeritus" until 1849.

SURGICAL AND PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

ON THE

Diseases of the Human Foot,

WITH

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THEIR TREATMENT.

Illustrated with Twenty-Seven Plates.

BY I. ZACHARIE,

SURGEON ORTHOPÆDIST,

Late Chiropodist-General, United States Army.

NEW-YORK, 1844.

REVISED. LONDON, 1876.

Title page of Zacharie's book. Note the back-dated 1844 notation.

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Issachar's early goal in life had been to accumulate wealth. Now that he had it, he set his sights on climbing New York's social ladder. Social advancement was not easy. "American society rigidly observed the principle that it took at least three generations to produce a gentleman, the minimum prerequisite for acceptance into higher society."[43] One of his first efforts in social advancement was changing his surname from Zachariah to Zacharie[44] and jettisoning his "Jr." suffix.

A name is a person's identity. When Issachar changed his from Zachariah to Zacharie, it was not a minor change. For Issachar, it meant a new identity, a way of reinventing himself. His new name reflected the person he wanted other people to be thinking about when they spoke about him. It may also have been a business decision. By the 1850s, more than a million Germans, Jews, and gentiles had immigrated to the United States. Zachariah was a Jewish surname; Zacharie was German.[45] The image of the German-Jew in the 1850s was success. By then, there was a widespread conviction in America that someone with a German-Jewish name "would not disappoint."[46] Jewish community life in America derived much of its vibrance from the streets. Although Jews sold to gentiles more often than they sold to Jews, Jews preferred to buy and sell to other Jews. Networking, to use a modern term, was inherently a way of sustaining in-group connectedness and cohesion.[47] Changing his name from the Sephardic Zachariah to the Ashkenazi Zacharie was a way to encourage the now-predominantly German Jewish immigrants to patronize his business.

Dropping the "jr." suffix was similarly psychological and pragmatic. A "jr." implies much more than simple descent. It implies certain attributes. A "jr." is not just someone younger than the person he is named after. It implies someone lacking experience, someone in a father's shadow. Author Henry James hated being a "junior." He felt the name robbed him of his own identity; it made him feel diminished.[48]

Albert Arnold Gore, Jr., the 45th vice president of the United States, held onto his "junior" suffix when he ran for the House of Representatives and the Senate, but when he first campaigned for president, Gore dropped the "Jr." from his name because it called attention to his youthfulness. Despite jettisoning his own suffix, Gore juniored his first-born son. "Chatterbox" journalist Timothy Noah found Gore's naming his son "jr." "hard to understand, since Gore must have personally experienced the diminishment that comes from being a Junior."[49] Issachar Zacharie was not someone to let himself feel diminished in his own eyes or anyone else's.

Holding on to his "jr." would also have identified him as Sephardic. Ashkenazis do not name their children after living relatives. A name like Dr. Zacharie, Jr., would have labeled him Sephardic. Dr. Zacharie without "the jr." was Ashkenazi. Despite abandoning his public Sephardic name, privately, Issachar held on to the Sephardic naming custom of not giving children traditional Ashkenazi Jewish names. When Issachar's and Mary Ann's fifth daughter was born in New York in 1858, they gave her the very un–Jewish name of Victoria Mariposa. Mariposa was the name of a gold mine on the river near Stockton where a lump of gold weighting a 130 pounds had been found.[50]

Acceptance into New York society also required conspicuous consumption. Issachar had to demonstrate his wealth. He had to be known as a somebody, someone who lived in luxury, gave lavish parties, and dressed extravagantly for his new social status to be visible. Issachar began dressing ostentatiously, wearing a "dazzling diamond breast pin."[51]

Mary Ann was no longer expected to be a housewife, cleaning the house, cooking and serving meals, and washing and ironing clothes. To be taken seriously by upper class society, the Zacharies had to have servants to do the household work. Mary Ann had to be a woman of domestic leisure. Soon after moving into his new home, Issachar placed a series of advertisements beginning with a "servant girl of all work." When he could not find someone "for all work," his next advertisements were for waiters, waitresses and cooks, "for a private family," and a nursemaid, "who understands the care of children," and a woman who could wash, iron and sew the family's clothes at her own residence. Applicants had to be "nice" and "clean,"[52] with a "kind and obliging disposition." None need apply unless they "understand their business." Those hired would be paid "the best of wages."[53]

When Issachar began hosting parties for New York's prominent elite, none of the cooks he'd hired satisfied him. Supposing foreign born cooks would be more up to the job, his next advertisement for a cook stipulated she should be "an English or German woman." When none of the women who applied seemed suitable, Issachar dropped the nationality requirement, although someone English or German was preferable. The most important qualifications were that she be "a good cook," "well recommended,"[54] someone "who understands cooking in all its branches, such as meats (and) pastry."[55]

Issachar was very demanding and not easily satisfied. Even if the food were cooked to perfection, Issachar's reputation as a gracious, elegant host would be slighted if the food he offered his guests was not served with aplomb. None of the waiters, "colored," "English" or "German" who applied seemed competent. Frustrated at their inexperience, Issachar's next advertisements clearly stipulated the prospective candidate had to "understand his business." He had to be able take full charge of parlors and dining room," including "how to make fires." Issachar was taking no chances. The applicant had to be "well recommended."[56]

Young boys hired to do odd jobs were just as hard to keep. In February 1859, Issachar was looking to hire "a smart, active colored boy from 13 to 18 to attend door and make himself generally useful." "Generally useful" meant "nice," "tidy," and willing to pick up around his office, as well as watching who came through the front door.[57]

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Hiring a "Colored Woman; one who is a good cook" meant he did not keep kosher. Issachar was not a practicing Jew. He was married to a Christian, and his children were presumably raised as Christians (with one exception, they would all marry Christians). He ignored the constraints and rituals of Jewish belief, but not its identity or solidarity. Whatever else, he considered himself a Jew. As such, he maintained an abiding interest in what was happening in the Jewish world. In the days before television and radio, when transportation between cities was measured in days, not hours, when news from Europe could take weeks to come to America, newspapers and periodicals were the only way people could learn what was happening in their communities across the country and the world. In 1858, an incident far off in Italy horrified the Jewish world.

Acting on Catholic canon law, Italian police had forcibly removed Edgardo Mortara, a six-year-old Jewish boy, from his parents in the Italian city of Bologna and placed him in a convent to be raised as a Catholic. The abduction was based on his nursemaid's testimony that she had secretly baptized the boy when he was one year old and sick, and in the nursemaid's belief, he was about to die.

The kidnapping galvanized Jews across America. A mass meeting of over three thousand Jews was held at Mozart Hall in New York to protest the outrage. An appeal was sent to President

James Buchanan to intervene. The do-nothing president declined, saying he had no authority to intervene in the affairs of another country. In 1859, a Jewish delegation headed by Sir Moses Montefiore unsuccessfully met with Pope Pius IX to arrange the return of the boy to his family. Years later, Mortara became a missionary. Despite his Catholic identity, he still remembered his mother and attended her funeral in 1895.[58]

Issachar could read about what was happening in the United States and Europe in New York's 13 daily English language newspapers[59] and its various weekly and monthly periodicals. But the best way to keep abreast of momentous events like the Mortara case was through New York's Jewish newspaper, *The Jewish Messenger*. In 1858, the secular Dr. Zacharie took out a subscription.[60]

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4. New York Evangelist, January 8,1857, 5; New York Herald, January 7, 1858, 6.
5. Charles Mackay, Life and Liberty in America (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1859), 16–17. The New York Times editorialized that a New Yorker who returned after a five-year absence would hardly recognize the changes "in the business character of Broadway," the city's backbone.
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32. Robert Michael and Philip Rosen, Dictionary of Antisemitism: From the Earliest Times to the Present (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007), 75.
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35. Ibid., December 5, 1859, 2.

36. Washington (DC) Constitution, January 8, 1861, 3.
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58. Gotthard Deutsch, "Mortara Case," Jewish Encyclopedia (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1905), Vol. 9, 36.
59. New York Commercial Advertiser, The Evening Post, New York Herald, New York Journal of Commerce, New York Daily Era, New York Daily News, New York Journal, New York Transcript, The Sun, The New York Times, and the New York Tribune.
60. "Payments," The Jewish Messenger, October 8, 1858, 62. The Jewish Messenger began publication in 1857 as a semimonthly newspaper and quickly became a weekly. Edited by Samuel Myer Isaacs, it covered topics concerning Jews in America and Europe. It was anti–Reform in religious issues, and politically, strongly abolitionist.

9

The Mystic Cords of Memory

Washington was enjoying a balmy spring during the first days of April 1861. Temperatures were in the 60s and 70s. The magnolia trees were just about to blossom. It should have been another pleasant season in the nation's capital, but instead, it was in turmoil. Reacting to the election of the "Black Republican" Abraham Lincoln in November 1860, seven Southern states[1] had declared themselves separated from the United States and had formed a new nation, the Confederate States of America.

President-elect Abraham Lincoln declared no state had the right to secede. No government, he said, provided for its own demise. During his inauguration speech, he had stated that as president, he had an obligation to "hold, occupy, and possess (the) property, and places belonging to the government, and to collect the duties and imposts, but beyond what may been necessary for these objects … there will be no invasion of any state—no use of force against, or among the people anywhere."[2]

Speaking directly to the South, Lincoln said, "in your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war." Lincoln closed his address with memorable words: "We are not enemies, but friends. We must not be enemies. Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of the Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."[3]

When Issachar woke on the morning of April 12, 1861, the better angels had taken flight. America was at war with itself. The new Confederacy had demanded the surrender of Fort Sumter, in Charleston Harbor. When that demand was refused, at 4:30 a.m., the "friends" became "enemies." General Pierre Gustave Toutant Beauregard, commanding the Confederate battery at Charleston, gave the signal to open fire. Moments later, a ten-inch mortar exploded above Fort Sumter. Confederate batteries then began pounding the fort into rubble. Major Robert Anderson, commanding officer at Fort Sumter, ordered his men to return fire, but the fort's guns did little damage to the opposing batteries. After 33 hours of back-and-forth Union and Confederate cannonade, with more than 4,000 shells being fired, Anderson surrendered the fort on April 14, 1861.

The following day, Lincoln called on each loyal state's militias to provide 75,000 volunteers to suppress the insurrection. "The insurgents [had] committed the flagrant act of civil war" by firing on the fort, said Lincoln, severing "hope of immediate conciliation."[4] Each state was given a quota of men to militarize. New York was charged with providing 17 regiments (approximately 13,000 men). Enlistments were to last for only three months, long enough, Lincoln believed, to restore the Union. That in turn resulted in four more Southern states declaring their independence from the Union and throwing in with the Confederacy.[5]

* * * * * * * *

At the start of the war, and for its duration, Issachar's father, his brother Eleazar, his sisters and their families were all living in the South and were as Southern in their views as their gentile

neighbors. Southern Jews had made comfortable lives for themselves. Most had some kind of small business, but there were also Jews who were politicians and civic leaders, delegates to state conventions, chairmen of local political parties, active members of local Chambers of Commerce and various social and civic organizations, and members of Congress. Despite an undercurrent of anti–Semitism prevalent wherever they lived, the South's Jews regarded themselves as Southerners who were Jewish, not just Jews who lived in the South.

Speaking to a crowd of Jews and Christians at the dedication for Beth Elohim in 1841, Charleston's Rabbi Gustavus Poznanski had expressed a widely held sentiment among Charleston's Jews. "This synagogue is our temple," he told the crowd, "this city (is) our Jerusalem, this happy land our Palestine. And as our fathers defended with their lives that temple, that city and that land, so will our sons defend this temple, this city and this land."[6] Those sentiments were as true in 1861 as they were in 1841.

In late 1860, Issachar's father and his brother Eleazar had moved from Savannah back to Charleston. In January 1861, they both enlisted in the Charleston Home Guard in anticipation of imminent civil war.[7] Jonathan was almost 70 years old at the time. Enlisting in the guard was a pure act of Southern patriotism. As a British or Polish citizen, and at an age "not liable to ordinary militia duty," he was exempt from service. But like many Jews who had spent much of their lives in the South, Jonathan felt the same patriotic devotion as those who were born there.

The Home Guard was a mainly Jewish voluntary police force of 30 mostly elderly men, several with white hair and whiskers, uniformed in long overcoats of homespun gray. It was captained by Myer Jacobs. M. Erlich was the guard's sergeant. Other members included J. Cohen, S. Cohen, C. Hyman, L. Rich, M. Rich, J. Triest, J. Volaski, J Wetherhahn, M. Wetherhahn, and E(leazar) and J(onathan) Zachariah. Jacobs was subsequently raised to the rank of colonel, but he died a few months later in November 1861.[8]

Some members of the Home Guard were Charleston's "oldest and wealthiest citizens, merchants, physicians, clergymen, lawyers, down to the humblest individuals in our community." All were "animated by the single motive of patriotism." When the war erupted, they all pledged to remain in the guard until the "young men on active duty shall return to their homes, and no further call shall be made upon them for service out of the city." One of General Beauregard's batteries pounding Fort Sumter into submission was commanded by Jewish Lieutenant Isaac Valentine.[9] After the fort surrendered, Anderson's garrison was ferried aboard the *Isabel* to a federal fleet outside the harbor. The *Isabel* was owned by one-time immigrant German peddler and now Charleston's shipping tycoon Moses Cohen Mordecai, who named it after his mother.[10] In December 1861, after the Charleston Home Guard was merged into the Regiment of Reserves,[11] Jonathan returned to Savannah to live with his daughters and their families. As a 30-year-old, Eleazar was subject to the draft but never seems to have served in the regular Confederate army.

Jews, it has been said, are like everyone else, only more so.[12] Jews in the South sincerely believed in the South's deeply held principle of states' rights. They did not question whether slavery was right or wrong; they simply accepted it as part of the Southern way of life. Southern Jews fought to preserve the South's customs and institutions, including its caste system, with the same patriotic fervor as gentile Southerners. They wore the same uniforms. They served as privates and officers. They dug latrines, drove wagons, did picket duty, killed and died for their commitment to the South in the same percentages as gentiles.[13] Rabbi Max Michelbacher of Beth Ahabah Synagogue in Richmond, the Confederacy's capital, published a prayer for the

Confederacy's soldiers that began with the *Sh'ma*, the watchword of the Jewish faith and the oldest prayer in Judaism. It is the only prayer specifically commanded in the Bible (*Deuteronomy* 6:4–9) to be recited in the morning after one gets up and at night before one goes to sleep.[14]

Southern women as a whole, Jewish and gentile, were just as resolute and vocal in backing the Confederate cause. Phoebe Yates Levy Pember, a member of an elite Jewish family in Charleston, recalled how the "women of the South had been openly and violently rebellious from the moment they thought their states' rights touched…. They were the first to rebel—the last to succumb."[15] In Richmond, Catherine Moses told her son Ezekiel "she would not own a son who would not fight for his home and country."[16] Before the war, Southern women would never have imagined themselves doing tasks they readily committed themselves to in support of the war effort. Throughout the South, they rolled up their ruffled sleeves and roughened their hands making cartridges, rolling bandages, sewing uniforms, knitting socks and gloves, and assembling sandbag fortifications. They formed their own women's auxiliaries and organized clothing collections, solicited donations for families of soldiers, cared for wounded soldiers in their homes, and did whatever else they could for the cause. Some Northern generals believed their efforts in support of the Confederacy prolonged the war.[17] In New Orleans, teenager Clara Solomon railed at how Northerners were "raging an unholy and unrighteous war against us." In November 1861, just after leaving services at the Sephardic Dispersed of Judah, Clara and her friends and families and thousands of others cheered as the "grand review" of local soldiers marched down Canal Street. Clara beamed with pride at seeing her cousin, Samuel Myers, F Company, 4th Louisiana, at the head of his company imagining them pitching into the Yankees and giving them "a sound thrashing."[18]

Northern Jews were not under the same pressures to conform. Like other Northerners, they held different views of slavery. Three of the North's best-known Orthodox rabbis, Morris Raphall in New York, Isaac Leeser in Philadelphia, and Reform Rabbi Isaac Meyer Wise in Cincinnati, the editor of *The Israelite*, preached slavery was not a sin.[19] Rabbis David Einhorn and Abraham B. Arnold in Baltimore, Sabato Morais in Philadelphia, and Liebman Adler in Chicago preached against slavery. Prominent Jews who did not openly condemn slavery were singled out as Christ killers by fire-breathing abolitionists. The abolitionist editor of the *Liberator*, William Lloyd Garrison, viciously attacked Mordecai Manuel Noah (1785–1851), calling him a "miscreant Jew," a "Shylock," an "enemy of Christ and Liberty," and "the lineal descendant of the monsters who nailed Jesus to the cross."[20] Isaac Meyer Wise in turn vilified abolitionists, calling them warmongers. It wasn't Lincoln's election, he said, that threatened the destruction of the Union—it was Lincoln's and his supporters' "irrepressible conflict doctrine."[21]

As the editor of the *Jewish Messenge*r, Myers Samuel Isaacs had the largest forum. Isaacs was against slavery but refrained from publishing letters for or against the institution. Isaacs insisted America's religious leaders should keep religion out of politics. His *Jewish Messenger* largely avoided political commentary not involving Jewish issues, but after Fort Sumter was shelled, on April 26, 1861, Isaacs wrote an editorial urging all Jews to "stand by the flag." Shreveport Louisiana's Jewish congregation responded to Isaac's editorial with a resolution rejecting Isaac's exhortation and wrote Isaacs that it was discontinuing its subscription to the J*ewish Messenger* and all Northern papers opposed to "our holy cause." Isaacs chuckled when he read the rebuke. Only one of Shreveport's Jews subscribed to the *Messenger*, and he hadn't paid his bill for two years.[22] Later on in the war, Isaac Meyer Wise did a complete 180 degree turn in his admiration

for Lincoln, even to the point of maintaining Lincoln was a Jew. In a eulogy he delivered after the assassination, Wise told his congregants, “Abraham Lincoln believed himself to be bone from our bone and flesh from our flesh. Wise said Lincoln supposed himself to be of Hebrew parentage. He said so in my presence. And, indeed, he preserved numerous features of the Hebrew race, both in countenance and character.”[23] When asked about Lincoln’s Judaism, his son Robert answered it was the first he had heard about it.[24]

1. South Carolina (December 20, 1860), Mississippi (January 9, 1861), Florida (January 10, 1861), Alabama (January 11, 1861), Georgia (January 19, 1861), Louisiana (January 26, 1861), and Texas (February 1, 1861).

2. Roy Basler (ed.), Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1953), Vol. 4, 254, 330.

3. Basler, Collected Works, 4:271. Lincoln refused to use the term "Confederacy," since that would give it some semblance of legitimacy.

4. Ibid., 5, 241.

5. Virginia (April 17, 1861), Arkansas (May 6, 1861), North Carolina (May 20, 1861), and Tennessee (June 8, 1861).

6. Quoted in Rosen, Jewish Confeder-ates, 1.

7. Charleston Courier, January 11, 1861; May 2, 1861; Charleston Mercury, November 29, 1861, 2.

8. Charleston Mercury, January 12, 1861, 2; "Charleston Under Arms," Atlantic Monthly, August 1861.

9. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 393, n121. Valentine was killed in action in June 1862, as was Rabbi Poznanaski's son, Gustavus, Jr. Charleston Mercury, June 21, 1862, 2).

10. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 2, 9.

11. Charleston Courier, December 11, 1861, 1.

12. Edward S. Shapiro, We Are Many (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2005), 171; Amos Oz and Fania Oz-Salzberger, Jews and Words (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012), 147.

13. The number of Jews who served in the Confederate army is estimated at 2,000 to 3,000. Jews serving in the Union army are estimated at 7,000. Simon Wolf, The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen (New York: Brentano, 1895); Simonhoff, Jewish Participants, 21–28.

14. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 382. The words are "Sh'ma Yisra'el, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad" ("Hear, Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is One").

15. Marcie Ferris Cohen and Mark I. Greenberg, Jewish Roots in Southern Soil (Waltham MA: Brandeis University, 2006), 114.

16. Ibid.

17. M. I. Greenberg, "Becoming Southern: The Jews of Savannah, Georgia, 1830–70," American Jewish History 86 (March 1998), 68.

18. Elliott Ashkenazi, The Civil War Diary of Clara Solomon (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1995), 264.

19. For Northern and Southern rabbis on the slavery issue, see Korn, American Jewry, 15–55.

20. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 38; Jonathan D. Sarna (ed.), Jews and the Civil War: A Reader (New York: New York University Press, 2011), 231.

21. On Wise's views of slavery and abolition, see Sefton D. Temkin, "Isaac Mayer Wise and the Civil War," in Sarna and Mendelson, Jews and the Civil War, 161–180. Two weeks after Lincoln was elected in 1860, Wise said, the "the people of the United States just committed one of the greatest blunders a nation can commit." The Israelite, November 30, 1860, reprinted in Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 201.

22. Jewish Messenger, June 7, 1861, 172.

23. Funeral Address By Rabbi Isaac M Wise, Delivered at Lodge Street Temple, Cincinnati Ohio, April 19, 1865, Jewish-American History Foundation, http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/lincoln_eulogy.html, accessed 12/1/2017.

24. Isaac Markens, "Lincoln and the Jews," Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society 17 (1909), 109.

10

“A chiropodist of marvelous skill”

On Monday, April 15, 1861, the same day Lincoln called for volunteers, New York City’s wealthiest businessmen and most influential citizens met on Pine Street to organize a huge mass meeting in support of the Union, to take place the following Saturday “We are either for the country or for its enemies,” the Chamber of Commerce’s president declared.[1]

A day later, after New York State’s Legislature voted to call out its state militias, Colonel Marshall Lefferts, the commanding officer of the 7th militia, one of the city’s oldest and best-known militia units, sent word to his men to prepare to leave for Washington. The 7th militia was known as the “Silk Stocking Regiment” and the “Blue Bloods” because it was made up of so many of the city’s social elite, men whose surnames were Vanderbilt, Tiffany, Van Buren, Fish, and Hamilton. On Friday, April 19, the 1,050-man militia gathered at the armory in Tompkins Market and mustered into federal service as the 7th New York Militia Regiment.

At 4 p.m., Issachar Zacharie looked on as the “Blue Bloods” marched past his office at 760 Broadway toward the ferry that would take them across the Hudson River to the train depot and on to Washington. Perhaps he recognized several of the men marching by. The day before they left, he had advertised “he was willing to give the country the benefit of his professional services,” offering to “relieve” all the men in the 7th Regiment and all men enlisting in every other New York volunteer regiment of their corns and bunions “gratis” if they visited his office between 4 and 9 p.m.[2]

The same day the “Blue Bloods” were mustered, the first blood of the Civil War was shed. The 6th Massachusetts Volunteer Militia had been the first state militia to answer Lincoln’s call for volunteers. The unit was changing trains in Baltimore on its way to Washington when it was attacked by a jeering mob of secessionists. At first, the mob threw bricks. Then someone fired at the soldiers. The soldiers fired back. When the mêlée ended, four militia men and nine of their assailants were dead, and many more were wounded.

Word of the mêlée quickly spread across the nation. Tempers flared as both sides accused the other of provoking the riot.[3] In New York City, all businesses closed at 2 p.m. Many of the merchants gathered for a scheduled meeting or had at least one representative there. The organizers of the rally had intended it to show that “the chief representatives of [the city’s] wealth and influence” supported the war effort.[4]

New York City and its boroughs would eventually send 22 infantry regiments of about one thousand men each to war. The most colorful regiments were the Zouaves, known for their distinctive dark blue jackets with red trim, red sashes with blue trim, baggy red pantaloons, and yellow tasseled red fezs. The 11th New York Infantry, composed of firemen from around the city, was organized by Colonel Elmer Ellsworth, a personal friend of President Lincoln, and was popularly called “Ellsworth’s Zouaves” and the “Fire Zou Zous.” Another Zouave unit, the 6th New York Volunteers, popularly known as “Billy Wilson’s Zouaves,” was manned by gang members and criminals from the Bowery.

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By the second year of the Civil War, the North was reeling from setback after setback.

Everyone had envisioned a short war. Both sides had believed it would be over by Christmas. Northerners had been confident their superior manpower and industrial strength would bring the South to its knees and the country would be reunited in short order. The North had four times the population as the South. It had an overwhelming advantage in money. It had more industrial muscle. Its factories turned out more guns and heavy weaponry, more boots and shoes, more cloth for uniforms and tents. It had more trains and more ships. It could move more troops and supplies and transport them faster to wherever they were needed. It had a navy that hemmed in the South's major ports. The South believed it had the upper hand. It had the better military leaders. It had men who had grown up with guns and riding horses. It had shorter supply lines. For the South, it would be a defensive war.

In the first two years of the war, the South was not only holding out, but it was also beating the North. The war was turning into a bloodbath. Thousands of husbands and sons had been killed or maimed. There was no end in sight. Despite all its advantages, the North was losing. As more and more dispiriting news about the war sapped Northern morale, Issachar left New York for Washington, confident he could help the war effort.

Issachar believed the Army of the Potomac had what Lincoln called the "slows" because its soldiers were plagued by corns and bunions. Dr. Zacharie, said the *Indiana State Sentinel*, had "patriotically determined to dedicate his services to the Army of the Union."[5] If he could persuade the government to create a chiropody corps, with Issachar as its commander, he would not only be helping the war effort, but it would also be the opportunity for him to gain a recognition he craved apart from his reputation as a chiropodist.

Issachar knew he faced an uphill battle. A chiropody corps was completely new to the army. To make it happen, he would have to convince President Lincoln, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, Surgeon General William Hammond, and the generals in the field of its desirability and effectiveness. Issachar was not naïve. He couldn't just walk into the offices of those leaders. He had to have letters of introduction and endorsements from influential people, people who were well known and highly respected. And Issachar knew who to approach first to give him that entrée.

Bryant was not just one of Issachar's appreciative patients who had written a glowing editorial about him, but he was also a personal acquaintance of Lincoln's. Bryant had introduced Lincoln at his February 27, 1860, speech at Cooper Union in New York, the speech that had launched his bid for the presidency. Since then, he and Lincoln had frequently written to one another, and Bryant was a frequent visitor at the Lincoln White House.[6]

On August 21, 1862, Issachar met with Bryant and told him of his idea to help the war effort by creating a chiropody corps "to inspect the feet of the men and keep them in order for marching." The "indefatigable walker" didn't need any convincing. He was more than willing to endorse Issachar's plan. He knew firsthand (in his case, first foot) how proficient Issachar was at removing corns and bunions and other foot ailments. An army was said to march on its stomach. Bryant knew that before that army sat down to eat, its feet brought it to the campfire. Bryant concurred when Issachar outlined his idea for a "Corps of Chiropodists" with himself as its "Chief." He wrote two letters of introduction on Issachar's behalf, one to Lincoln and another to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton.

Bryant's letter "To Mr. Lincoln" was brief and to the point: "The bearer of this note, Dr. I. Zacharie, a chiropodist of marvelous skill, as I have had occasion to experience, has desired I would say to you what I know of him. He is a regularly educated surgeon, whose operations on the feet are performed with a nicety and delicacy, which is truly surprising. If you or any of your

family are incommoded with any disease whatever of the feet, he will be happy to give proof of his skill."[7]

Bryant's letter to Secretary Stanton introduced Issachar and urged him to consider his idea of a corps of chiropodists, headed by Dr. Zacharie, "to inspect the feet of soldiers and keep them in order for marching." "A soldier who cannot march," he said, "is a useless incumbrance." Bryant assured Stanton that Dr. Zacharie's skill in this branch "is truly astonishing."[8]

After handing Issachar those letters, Bryant also wrote a long editorial, "Chiropody in the Army," outlining the reasons the army ought to establish a chiropody corps. It was hardly a new idea in the history of war, Bryant explained. Prussia's Frederick the Great had made a chiropody corps part of his army, and in no small way, it had led to its effectiveness. A reliable source, he said, had informed him that some Rebel commanders had chiropodists on staff to keep their men in marching order (this was not true). "The remarkable rapidity of some of the manoeuvres by which they have effected so much," he speculated, "is in a degree owing to this cause."[9]

Citing Napoleon's maxim "a general whose forces are inferior in number to the enemy, should do his best to make up for the difference in numbers by being able to march swiftly," Bryant protested "men should not hobble on corns nor limp with bunions, club nails and distorted joints, nor drag themselves along on swelled feet." In a not-so-subtle word of support for Issachar in his upcoming meetings with Lincoln and Stanton, Bryant commented how "only the professional chiropodist" (meaning Issachar) was competent to treat diseases of the feet. "Performed rudely and imperfectly," he warned, possibly from experience with other chiropodists, "the operation often does more mischief than it prevents."[10]

Bryant's article caught the attention of other newspapers across the North, which assumed the proposed chiropody corps had already been approved. The *Buffalo New York Commercial* informed its readers, "the Government is about to introduce chiropody in the army, and to have the feet of the men regularly inspected, and, if necessary, operated upon. This practice is adopted in some of the European armies."[11]

Four days after the *Post*'s article, the *New York Herald* waded in with the same headline and support. "We understand several gentlemen, medical and surgical, of the highest eminence, have united in recommending to the government the organization of a corps of chiropodists, to inspect the feet of the men and keep them in order for marching."[12] The *Boston Daily Advertiser* noted, "during the recent movements in Virginia many of our troops were injured in the feet by severe marching over rough roads—the shoes of many of them being of poor quality."[13]

"It has occurred to us," James Gordon Bennett, the New York *Herald's* influential editor/owner editorialized, "this branch of surgery might be introduced into the army with very positive utility, not only with an eye to the comfort of the soldier, but the efficiency of the service. There can be no greater hindrance to rapid marching, or to celerity of movements of every sort," he said, "than the pain, irritation and halting propensities arising from afflictions incident to the feet, and almost inseparable from army life and exposure." Also citing Frederick, the Great and Napoleon, the *Herald* commented, "careful attention to the condition of the feet of their soldiery was what made their armies formidable. Humane considerations, not less than the efficiency of the service recommend the introduction of this branch of surgery; and under an able and skillful head an organization of operators throughout the army might be perfected of the highest practical value and importance."[14] It was unusual praise from the normally acerbic newsman, better known for his mocking sarcasm than for genuine tribute.

Issachar could not have been more pleased. He clipped the article from the *Herald*, attached it

to a piece of his letterhead, and sent it to Secretary Stanton.[15] He sent another copy to Surgeon General Hammond, asking Hammond to give his idea of a chiropody corps his "favourable consideration."[16]

A week later, Issachar arranged meetings with George Opdyke, New York's Republican Mayor, and General Rufus F. Andrews, head of the New York Customs Office, to ask for their endorsements. Despite his view that slavery robbed "its victims of their dearest rights, and [sunk] them almost to a level with the brute creation," Opdyke had become wealthy manufacturing cheap slave clothing for plantation owners.[17] Had Issachar known Lincoln had no love for Opdyke (Opdyke had backed Salmon Chase, Lincoln's rival for nomination as president at the Republican National Convention in Chicago), he might have thought differently about asking for his endorsement.[18]

Unlike Opdyke, Andrews was a personal friend of Lincoln's and had supported his nomination at the 1860 Republican convention. Lincoln had rewarded him by appointing him Surveyor of the Port Office. After Lincoln's death, when Mary was distributing mementoes to Lincoln's personal friends, she gave Andrews the pen Lincoln had used to sign the Emancipation Proclamation.[19]

Both men agreed to support Issachar. Writing on mayoral letterhead, Opdyke recommended Dr. Zacharie "for your favorable consideration as the Chief of a Corps of Chiropodists, which, I learn, and I hope truly, is to be organized for the benefit of the country, by keeping in good marching condition, the feet of those who go forth to fight our battles." It was "unquestionably very important," he added, "all our soldiers, should be able at all times to command the use of their feet."[20]

Andrews' letter, dated a day after Opdyke's, was more personal. Addressing Lincoln as "His Excellency Abraham Lincoln, President," Andrews took "great pleasure in introducing to you my friend Dr. Zacharie." Dr. Zacharie, he went on, was coming to Washington "on a highly patriotic mission, which he will explain to you. If you can give him a hearing & examine his testimonials, I feel you will put him in the way of doing the country a good service in providing for the comfort of the soldier."[21]

Several days later, the *New York Times* also editorialized about the idea of "attaching a corps of chiropodists to the army" that had recently been broached in Washington. Issachar had not left the proverbial stone unturned. The *Times* could only have known about the idea from Issachar. Up until then, the only broaching in Washington was Issachar privately lobbying Secretary Stanton and Surgeon General Hammond. A chiropody corps, said the *Times*, would be "decidedly utilitarian" by relieving soldiers of much of the fatigue and suffering imposed on them from "military locomotion." The *Times* urged Washington to "let the idea receive prompt and strenuous attention."[22]

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Armed with his letters of introduction and Bennett's and Bryant's "Chiropody in the Army" editorials that he had already sent to Stanton and Hammond for their "favorable consideration," Issachar left for Washington in September to personally lobby for his cause.

Wartime Washington was nothing like the Washington of Issachar's early career. The city was as squalid as ever. Most of its streets were still unpaved, and none of them was lighted except Pennsylvania Avenue. Clouds of dust covered everything. There were still no streetcars and no sewage system. Animals still roamed the sewers rooting for garbage. The air still swarmed with

mosquitoes. The stench and squalor were not unlike his early years in Chatham. The main difference was Washington was under strict military rule. Mounted sentries were posted at every street corner. The city's hotels and boarding houses were full. Restaurants had long queues waiting for a table. Where Issachar managed to find a room isn't known.

Issachar's first visit was to Secretary of War Stanton. Edwin Masters Stanton, a short, stocky, full bearded man, did not suffer fools gladly. Initially, he had been no admirer of Lincoln. After the Battle of Bull Run (July 1861), he blamed the "imbecility of this administration … for the national disgrace."[23] As a private citizen, Masters' annual income had been about $50,000.[24] His sense of duty made him reluctantly agree to take over as Lincoln's Secretary of War in January 1862, at $8,000 a year, after his predecessor, Simon Cameron, was forced to resign because of corruption. Pennsylvania Congressman Thaddeus Stevens had joked there were limits to Cameron's honesty, saying he didn't think Cameron would steal a hot stove. When Cameron was told what Stevens had said about him, he demanded Stevens apologize. Stevens did. He said Cameron was not above stealing a red-hot stove.[25] Lincoln, no slouch when it came to a political jab, appreciated the wit.

Stanton was a workaholic, totally dedicated to his job. Within days of taking office, he wrote to the *New York Herald*'s assistant editor, Charles Dana, who had supported his appointment, "as soon as I can get the machinery of the office working, the rats cleared out, and the rat holes stopped we shall move."[26] Dana, he said, was "right in supposing my acceptance of the War office means 'thoroughness, earnestness, & no compromise.'" He would "not do the Lord's work deceitfully."[27]

Stanton was at the War Office promptly at 9 o'clock and left late at night. Fifteen-hour days were not unusual. Sometimes he didn't come home until early morning on the next day. When Stanton's carriage came into sight, the doorkeeper at the War Office leaned inside and said two words: "The Secretary." Nothing more had to be said. "Stragglers and loungers scurried to their desks." As he got out of his carriage, Stanton was beset with favor-seekers on the sidewalk. Sometimes he stopped and briefly chatted with a soldier or a needy-looking woman. Others were curtly told to wait in the reception room upstairs until called upon.[28]

Issachar waited with the rest of the visitors in the corner of Stanton's office on the second floor of the War Department until it was his turn. The room was stark. There were no carpets and no furniture other than the high, long desk that Stanton customarily stood behind facing the door. When Stanton came to work, it was to work, not entertain. Stanton gave no thought to privacy. Visitors bided their time until it was their turn and stepped up to his desk. Stanton did not like long-winded appeals. Visitors were told to state their business as briefly as possible and within the hearing of everyone in the room. When they finished, they received a prompt and final answer.

When it was finally his turn, Issachar handed him the letter Bryant had written on his behalf and reminded him about the clippings he had sent him. Stanton looked up at him through his thick eyeglasses. Issachar outlined his idea of creating an army corps of chiropodists to look after the feet of battlefield soldiers. Stanton heard him out but was non-committal. He saw some merit in the idea, but before giving Issachar a yes or no, Stanton sent him to confer with the country's foremost generals. Issachar would need their approval to move freely within Union lines.

Issachar wasted no time. Possibly with an introductory note from Stanton, a day or two later, on September 5, 1862, he met with "Little Napoleon," Major General George B. McClellan, the imperious commander of the Army of the Potomac. McClellan had a few foot problems of his

own and was more than happy to let Issachar take care of them when Issachar assured him it would hardly hurt at all. Clipping McClellan's corns, Issachar outlined his idea for a chiropody corps. The operation went well. Before leaving, he asked McClellan to write him a testimonial for his certificate book. McClellan saw no reason not to. Dr. Zacharie, he wrote, had relieved him of "all trouble with my feet" without the slightest pain and "I am sure that the exercise of similar skill would be productive of great benefit to our troops, and save them from much necessary pain."[29]

A day later, Issachar treated Major Generals Ambrose Burnside ("I take great pleasure in acknowledging a kind service of Dr. Zacharie, by relieving my feet from Corns … much suffering in the army would be avoided could a proper attention be given to this subject; besides, it would add to the efficiency of our soldiers"), Nathaniel Banks ("I acknowledge with infinite pleasure, the services which Dr. Zacharie has rendered … to my feet … attention to the feet of the solider is as important as other medical assistance which is furnished them"), and George Cadwallader ("Dr. Zacharie … has operated on my foot with much satisfaction … the efficiency of the army would be promoted by more attention to keeping the feet of the soldiers in good condition").[30]

Hearing about Issachar's visits to McClellan and the other generals, the *Boston Advertiser* jumped to the conclusion that a New York chiropodist had received authority from the War Department to cross the Potomac to Alexandria to inspect the feet of the troops. These men had just returned from continuous severe marching for two weeks over rough roads in Virginia. Because of the poor quality of their shoes, they had injured their feet and needed treatment.[31]

Other papers began building the story. The *Newport* (Rhode Island) *Mercury* told its readers, "Dr. Zacharia the Chiropodist, had been summoned to Washington to discuss the subject of Chiropody as applied to military pedestrianism," implying Stanton had been the one to ask Issachar about his proposal and not the other way around. The proposed chiropody corps, it opined, was "on a fair way to be accomplished."[32]

The *New York World* incorrectly reported Surgeon General Hammond fully supported the planned chiropody corps. It was obvious to Dr. Hammond, the *World* editorialized, one surgeon was not enough to take care of the army's foot soldiers. "If it is necessary to attend to the wounds of the soldiers after a battle, it is … even more necessary to attend to his marching capabilities anterior to the engagement. A chiropody corps of assistants specially educated to the care of the feet, in conjunction with or under the orders of Dr. Zacharie [would] be a direct benefit to the army, and will cause his name to come pleasantly into their memories when they contrast the subsequent with the anterior condition of their feet."[33]

Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper reported Secretary of War Stanton had sent Dr. Zacharie to Surgeon General Hammond to discuss "military pedestrianism," and they were now meeting on a daily basis. "No fitter man could be made available than this gentleman (Dr. Zacharie), should the matter [of a chiropody corps] be seriously entertained."[34]

1. Burrows and Wallace, Gotham, 868.
2. Brooklyn Evening Star, April 18, 1861, 1. The Evening Star added a footnote to the notice: “This is what we should call, ‘Patriotism striking out a feet [sic].’”
3. Abel, Ernest L. “Maryland-born James Ryder Randall Penned One of the Civil War’s Most Stirring Songs in Honor of His State,” America’s Civil War (July 1988), 78–82.
4. Burrows and Wallace, Gotham, 869.
5. Indiana State Sentinel, May 20, 1875, 6.
6. Gilbert H. Muller, Abraham Lincoln and William Cullen Bryant: Their Civil War (Palgrave Macmillan, Cham, Switzerland: 2017), 24.
7. Bryant to Lincoln (August 21, 1862), reproduced in Heritage Auction Gallery Heritage Auction Gallery, “Dr. John K. Lattimer Collection of Lincolniana” (Dallas, TX: 2008), No. 61022. The letter is now part of the Shapell Manuscript Collection and is reproduced in Sarna and Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), 130–131.
8. Bryant to Stanton (August 21, 1862). Parts of the letter are quoted in Sarna and Shapell, Lincoln, 129.
9. New York Evening Post, August 22, 1862, 2. Bryant possibly had in mind Confederate General Thomas “Stonewall” Jackson’s “foot cavalry,” renowned for the distances they covered in a day’s march. None of the Confederacy’s generals relied on a chiropodist in his command.
10. Ibid.
11. Buffalo (New York) Commercial, August 25, 1862, 2.
12. New York Herald, August 26, 1862, 4.
13. Boston Daily Advertiser, September 8, 1862, 2.
14. New York Herald, August 26, 1862, 4.
15. Zacharie to Stanton, August 26, 1862. Letters received files, August 27, 1862, Records of the War Department (RG 112), Office of the Surgeon General, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), Box 113.
16. Zacharie to Hammond, August 27, 1862. Ibid.
17. James L. Huston, The Panic of 1857 and the Coming of the Civil War (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1987), 91.
18. After the Convention, Opdyke had gone to Springfield in early 1861, to ask for a patronage job as collector of customs in New York. Lincoln turned him down. Opdyke went back to New York and won the mayoral election.
19. The Inland Printer, A Technical Journal Devoted to the Art of Printing 21 (April 1898–September 1898), 71.
20. Opdyke to Lincoln (August 28, 1862), Heritage Auctions Catalogue, “The John Lattimer Collection of Lincolniana, #6014, 2008.” A partial copy of the letter in Andrew’s handwriting is reproduced in Sarna and Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, 131.
21. Andrews to Abraham Lincoln, August 29, 1862, copy in Sarna and Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, 131.
22. New York Times, August 30, 1862, 3.
23. Alonzo Rothschild, Lincoln, Master of Men: A Study in Character (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1908), 227.
24. Stanton was a formidable defense lawyer. In 1859, Stanton got Dan Sickles off after he had murdered his adulterous wife by arguing Sickles had suffered from temporary insanity. It was the first time that defense was successfully used in the United States to exonerate someone about whose guilt there was no doubt.
25. Ernest B. Furgurson, Freedom Rising: Washington in the Civil War (New York: Vintage Books, 2004), 110.
26. Frank Abial Flower, Edwin McMasters Stanton: The Autocrat of Rebellion, Emancipation and Reconstruction (Akron, OH: Saalfield Publishing Co., 1905), 125.
27. Edwin McMasters Stanton to Charles Dana, January 24, 1862, Rosenbach Collection, www. http://civilwar.rosenbach.org/?p=3962, accessed October 24, 2017.
28. Benjamin Thomas and Harold M. Hyman, Stanton: Life and Times of Lincoln’s Secretary of War (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962).
29. McClellan testimonial, Zacharie, Corns, 6. While there is no record of McClellan’s doing or saying anything about Jews during the war, while he was travelling back from Germany in 1875, he wrote, “We have lots of Germans and Jews on board—but fortunately there are enough Christian gentiles to make it pleasant for us [so as to] enable us to be quite independent of the sons of Jacob.” “American Civil War Union General George McClellan's Anti-Semitic Letter,” Shapell Collection, http://www.shapell.org/manuscript/anti-semetic-civil-war-union-general-george-mcclellan, accessed January 3, 2016.
30. Burnside, Cadwalader and Banks testimonials, Corns, 7.
31. Boston Daily Advertiser, September 8, 1862, 2. Ordinarily, soldiers marched an average about two miles an hour a day. In forced marches, for 20 or at least 10 miles, they averaged three miles an hour. OR Series 1, Vol. 16, pt. 1, 56.
32. Newport (Rhode Island) Mercury, September 13, 1862, 2.
33. New York World, September 19, 1862, 2.
34. Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper, September 20, 1862, 4.

11

“Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet”

Issachar shook hands with Lincoln on September 20, 1862. The two men could not have been more different. At 53, Lincoln was more than 20 years older than Issachar and looked it. Lincoln was sinewy, rawboned, and 6 feet 4 inches in height. He had long pendulous arms that tapered to long bony hands, big even for his large frame. His size 14 feet were even proportionately larger than his hands. Issachar was about 5 feet 7 inches in height, portly, and normally proportioned for his size.

The only facial features they had in common was a relatively large nose. Both men had beards, but they were nothing alike. Lincoln’s beard was scraggly. Issachar’s mutton-chopped beard was neatly trimmed. “Fashionable whiskers” was how the *New York Herald* described Issachar’s facial hair.[1]

Lincoln had large floppy ears to go with his prominent nose. His eyes were deeply set; his eyebrows were bushy. He had high, prominent cheekbones. There was a large mole on the right side of his sallow, deeply furrowed face. An overly large Adam’s apple bulged from his throat. During one of his debates with Stephen Douglas years before, Douglas had accused Lincoln of being two-faced. Lincoln shot back that if he had another face, “would I be wearing this one?”[2] Issachar had a full round face, smooth skin, and the energetic look of youth. His ears weren’t overly large or small for his head. He had no moles or other distinguishing facial features, and his hair had begun to recede.[3]

They were also opposites when it came to what they wore. Lincoln dressed casually. He wasn’t slovenly, but he was careless about his clothes. Issachar was fastidious. He dressed nattily and sported a “dazzling diamond stick pin in his vest.”[4]

Entering Lincoln’s office, Issachar wasn’t impressed. The floor was covered with oil cloth. A large walnut table, laden with maps and books, occupied much of the room. There were two horsehair sofas, several wooden chairs, and a fireplace. When he came in, Lincoln was sitting at a dilapidated desk. As the tall lanky President rose from his chair and walked over to greet him, the chiropodist could not help noticing Lincoln walked with a loose, almost unsteady gait.[5]

After shaking hands and a few pleasantries, Issachar handed Lincoln the letter of introduction Bryant had written on his behalf and showed him the testimonials McClellan and the other generals had just written for him. Issachar said he had been informed Lincoln was having problems with his feet and was more than happy to relieve him of his discomfort.[6] Issachar didn’t broach his idea of a chiropody corps just yet. What better way to convince Lincoln of its potential value and his own skill than by a firsthand demonstration?

Lincoln didn’t pay much attention to his own appearance or his clothes, but he was very much mindful of his oversized feet. His bootmaker, Dr. Kahler, had a card Lincoln gave him to show John Hay, Lincoln’s secretary. “When this man comes,” the card read, “show him right in.” On one occasion, Dr. Kahler arrived in the middle of Lincoln’s cabinet meeting. After showing Hay the card, Hay led him into the room. Lincoln looked up and without pausing slipped off his boots and stepped on to a piece of paper Kahler had placed on the floor to trace the outlines of his feet. At another cabinet meeting, Lincoln told his cabinet the “state of their minds indicated they need

to be measured for new shoes."[7] Lincoln's corns were so bothersome that when he wasn't walking or riding or was at the Soldier's Home, his summer retreat, he wore soft goatskin slippers.[8]

* * * * * * * *

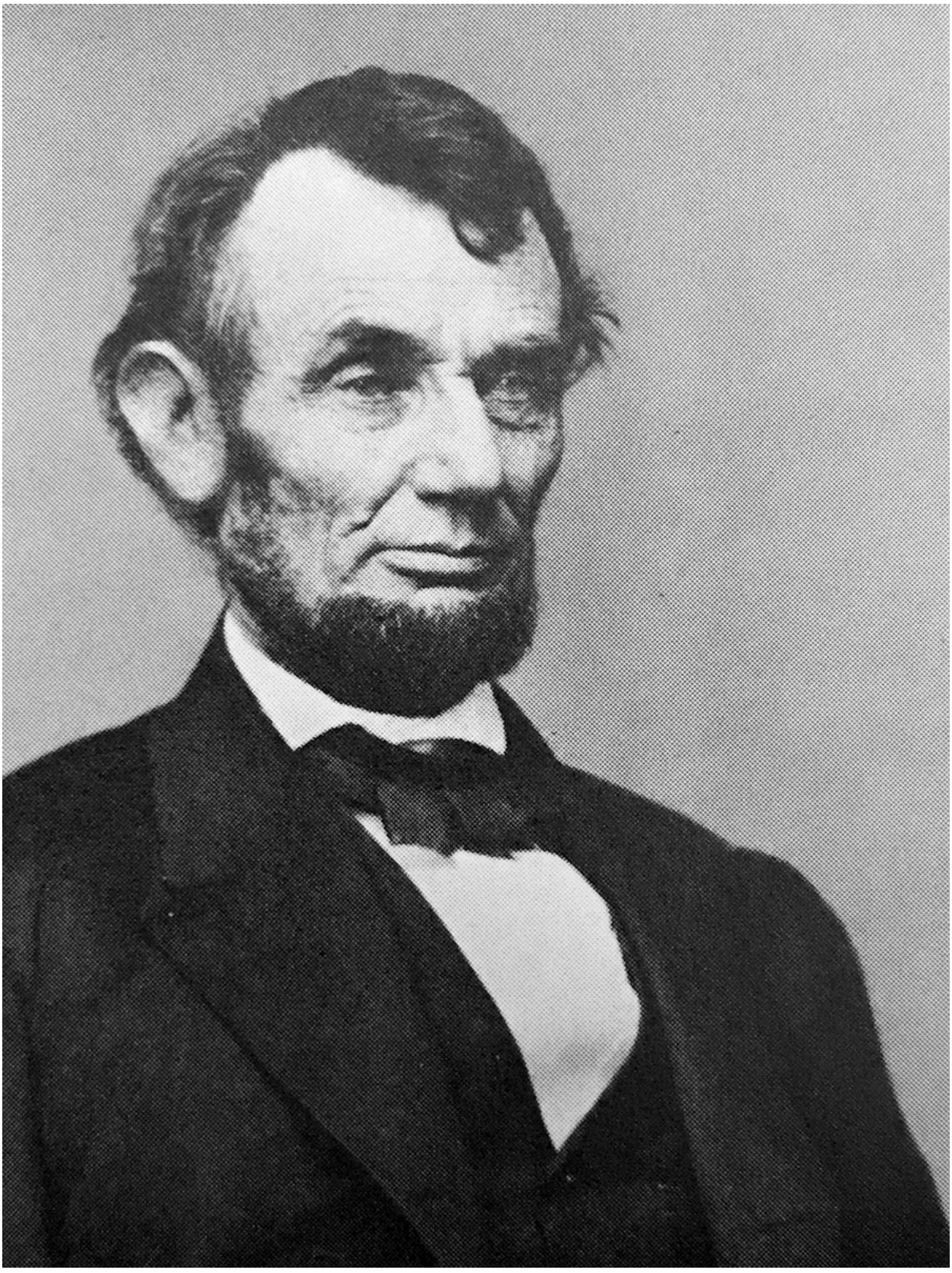
Assured by the testimonials Issachar had just handed him that he was not a charlatan, at least when treating foot problems were concerned, Lincoln sat down in his chair, removed his slippers, and stuck out a bare foot.[9] Issachar removed his jacket, seated himself in a chair opposite the president, took hold of the bony foot, and carefully examined it. Spreading Lincoln's toes apart, Issachar felt the thickened corns on the top of his toes and the bunion bump where Lincoln's big toe joined his foot. Then he opened his instrument bag, laid out his rasps and fine-grained sandpaper, dabbed Lincoln's corns with silver nitrate to harden them, and carefully scraped away the dead skin.

As Issachar packed up his equipment, he made his usual request for a testimonial. Lincoln saw no reason not to comply and wrote out a few words:

> Dr. Zacharie, has with great dexterity, taken some troublesome corns from my toes—He is now treating me, and I believe with success, for what plain people call backache. We shall see how it will end.
>
> Sep. 20, 1862 A. Lincoln[10]

It ended well. On September 22, 1862, five days after Lincoln announced his preliminary Emancipation Proclamation declaring slaves would officially be emancipated as of January 1, 1863,[11] Issachar was back at the White House treating Lincoln's back and wrist, along with his corns.[12] Before Issachar left, Lincoln wrote him another testimonial:

> Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with great success, and considerable addition to my comfort.
>
> Sept. 22, 1862 A. Lincoln[13]



Abraham Lincoln: "Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with great success, and considerable comfort." 1864 (courtesy Library of Congress).

After handing him the testimonial, Lincoln told him to come back the next day, and he would write him a letter endorsing his chiropody corps. The following day, September 23, 1863, Issachar had the promised testimonial. Lincoln had asked him to come back so Secretary of State William Seward could cosign it. Seward had no hesitation in lending his name to the proposal; Issachar had previously scraped away Seward's corns as well:

> Executive Mansion
> Washington, D.C. Sept. 23, 1862
>
> From numerous testimonials of the highest character, and from personal experience,[14] we approve the very great success of Dr. I. Zacharie in operating upon corns, bunions, and other troubles of the feet, by which instantaneous relief is afforded, and we desire the soldiers of our brave army may have the benefit of his surprising skill.
>
> Lincoln
> William H. Seward[15]

The next day, Issachar showed Lincoln's and Seward's endorsements to Secretary Stanton at the War Office. Stanton had more pressing issues on his mind than questioning something he considered trivial. He had questioned Lincoln's policies on other matters relating to the war, but he did not foresee any risk of allowing this foot doctor to travel within Union lines. Still, Stanton was not a man to act on impulse. He told Issachar to come back the next day. On September 24, 1862, Stanton issued Issachar an official pass.

> War Department
> Washington, D.C., Sept.24, 1862
>
> Dr. I. Zacharie has permission to pass within the lines of the United States forces around Washington and on the Potomac for the purpose of operating upon the feet of the soldiers for corns, bunions, & this pass to continue for thirty days.[16]

In November, General John Tucker, Assistant Secretary of War, extended the pass for another 60 days.[17]

Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton: "Dr. I. Zacharie has permission to pass within the lines of the Unites States forces around Washington and on the Potomac for the purpose of operating upon the feet of the soldiers for corns, bunions, & this pass to continue for thirty days." Ca. 1865 (courtesy Library of Congress).

September 25, 1862, the day after he received Stanton's pass, was the first day of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year. Zacharie's whereabouts during the Jewish holidays of Rosh Hashanah in September or Yom Kippur, a week later, are not known. In mid–October he left Washington for Fortress Monroe."

1. New York Herald, October 21, 1863, 6. The Herald described Issachar's nose as "splendid Roman."
2. Russell Freedman, Lincoln: A Photobiography (New York: Clarion Books, 1987), 1.
3. See Figure 1.
4. New York Herald, October 3, 1862, 2.
5. Corns and bunions can make the natu-ral gait (how a person walks) stiff and ungainly. Albert F. Blaisdell, Our Bodies and How We Live: An Elementary Text-Book of Physiology (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1891), 33.
6. Bryant had likely told Issachar that Lincoln was bothered by corns.
7. Peter Kahler, Indianapolis Star, February 10, 1924, 2.
8. The shoes can be seen at http://www.neatorama.com/2014/07/01/President-Abraham-Lincolns-Slippers/.
9. According to A. A. McQuesten, who sold shoes to Lincoln in Springfield, Lincoln did not wear socks (Ottawa [Kansas] Herald, September 4, 1902, 8.
10. Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shappell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015) reproduced the testimonial in Lincoln's own handwriting, 133.
11. Lincoln had informed his cabinet in July 1862, that he would be issuing a proclamation to free slaves. On Secretary Seward's advice, he held off making a formal announcement until after the Union victory at Antietam on September 17, 1862, which was considered decisive enough to give the proclamation the gravitas it needed.
12. Lincoln had hurt his back and wrist several days earlier.
13. The testimonial in Lincoln's own handwriting is reproduced in Sarna and Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, 133.
14. The New York Herald (October 3, 1862, 4) reported that Issachar had treated Seward and members of Lincoln's cabinet.
15. Congressional Series of the United States Public Documents, Volume 1627, 43rd Congress, House of Representatives (HR), Committee on War Claims, Report No. 817, 1.
16. HR Committee War Claims, 123.
17. The pass was renewed for 60 days on November 21, 1862, by General Tucker, Assistant Secretary of War (HR Committee War Claims, 123).

12

“Ode to Dr. Zacharie”

James Gordon Bennett, the *New York Herald* ’s editor, was a staunch supporter of the Union. But like many New Yorkers, he rejected abolition and supported slavery, which he deemed the “natural position of the Southern colored races.”[1] Abolitionist William Goodell called the *Herald* a “pestilent sheet” and denounced its editor as a traitorous secession sympathizer.[2]

Bennett was a pioneering newspaperman. He had emigrated to the United States from Scotland and still spoke with a broad Scottish accent. He had a long narrow head, a firm jaw, a prominent aquiline nose, a perpetual squint, and a giant-sized ego. He founded the *Herald* in 1835 and turned it into the most widely read and influential newspaper in America. Bennett’s *Herald* pioneered many of the features that are now the stock-in-trade of modern-day news media, including a sports section, interviews, photos, banner headlines, weather reports, gossip, and paid ads. The *New York Times*’ motto, “All the News Fit to Print,” writes *Times* columnist Ted Widmer, was almost certainly a riposte for the *Herald’s* willingness to print anything.[3] New York diarist George Templeton Strong wasn’t a fan of Bennett’s gossipy and often vitriolic editorials. Strong opined that Bennett had “done more than any living man to debase American journalism.”[4]

Bennett was no fan of Lincoln. Prior to Lincoln’s 1860 election, Bennett called him an “illiterate Western boor” “without education and refinement,” in short, a “vulgar village politician.”[5] On April 14, 1861, after a mob almost destroyed his paper’s offices, Bennett clipped his talons for the time being. As a gesture of goodwill, he assured Lincoln that hereafter the *Herald* would be “unconditionally for the radical suppression of the Rebellion by force of arms.” Never one to back down completely, Bennett held out a wilted olive branch. As a further gesture of goodwill, he offered his playboy son’s yacht for government service.[6]

Lincoln was more than aware of Bennett’s influence on public opinion and courted his amity. On those occasions when Bennett’s editorials had been favorable, Lincoln wrote him personal notes thanking him for his “able support.”[7] Lincoln had never seen a yacht, let alone known anyone who owned one. But he was astute enough to accept the olive branch, wilted or not. In return, he arranged a desirable commission in the navy for Bennett’s son. Lincoln also quashed a congressional investigation into the *Herald’*s leaking of his annual message to Congress. (Lincoln’s wife had been charmed by one of Bennett’s employees and had let him make an advance copy.)

Bennett may not have been a “secession sympathizer,” but he was less than a staunch Lincoln supporter. When he could, he gleefully stepped on Lincoln’s toes with a sharp pun. In October 1862, Bennett ragged that Lincoln’s proposed Emancipation Proclamation had had something to do with the corns on his feet that Dr. Zacharie was treating. Learning of Issachar’s testimonials from Lincoln and Seward, Bennett wrote a long editorial he titled, “The Head and Feet of the Nation.”[8]

It is a true but trite maxim great events are determined by insignificant causes. It is no less trite and true that the most important decisions of the mind are often controlled by small but aggravating ailments of the body. Tight boots have been the origin of many a family quarrel which has unhappily resulted in divorce. From evidence before us, “we are inclined to believe that many of the haps and mishaps of the nation, during this war, maybe traced to a matter no greater than the corns and bunions which

have afflicted the feet of our leaders.[9]

The President, for one, hadn't been able to resist abolitionists' badgering for emancipation, said Bennet, because of his aching feet. "How could the President put his foot down firmly," Bennet mocked, "when he was troubled with corns?" Had Dr. Zacharie doctored him earlier, Lincoln might never have thought of it.[10]

Bennett mused that foot ailments were also responsible for the "personal animosities and ill-timed bickerings among the members of Lincoln's Cabinet." Undoubtedly their animosities and bickerings were caused "by the honorable Secretaries inadvertently treading upon each other's bunions under the council board."[11]

The reason some of the country's generals hadn't moved their men more quickly into battle was also because of the army's corns, a sarcastic swipe at Issachar's chiropody corps. "It would seem, therefore, that all our past troubles have originated not so much with the head as with the feet of the nation. Dr. Zacharie has shown us precisely where the shoe pinches and he now proposes [referring to Issachar's chiropody corps], to remove the difficulty."[12]

Bennett ended his lampoon by saying now that the nation's leading statesmen and generals had certified they had been completely cured of their corns and bunions, the war should be over before January 1, 1863. "If this expectation be disappointed, we shall certainly suggest someone be found to operate upon the heads of our rulers, and to remove the corns, bunions and proud flesh from their brains, as Dr. Zacharie has from their feet."[13]

Lincoln was not at all offended by Bennett's jabs. Just the opposite. Lincoln liked a good joke, even at his own expense. Visitors could always tell when he was about to regale them with a humorous anecdote. Just before a jest, a half-suppressed smile appeared on his face in anticipation of the pleasure his visitors would have upon hearing it.[14] One newspaper claimed some of Lincoln's off-color stories were smutty jokes Issachar had told him.[15]

The same month as Bennett's "Head and Feet" editorial appeared, *Vanity Fair* magazine paid tribute to Issachar in a humorous, although a less biting, take on his newly acquired notoriety, calling upon the "U.S.A. Chiropodist, to keep the toe-joints of our gallant boys in good repair."

ODE TO DR. ZACHARIE

King of Chiropodists, salaam!
Thy skill provides a sovereign bin
For every toe cornuted,
Boots shone bright when thou was born
To bless a shoe-pinched world forlorn,
And tenderly of toughest horn
Believe the tender-footed.

Our soldiers for the South en route
Are cursed with corns that sharply shoot
As SHARP'S sharp-shoot rifle;
And, as their way they slowly pick,
Too often, goaded to the quick,
Find words suggested by old Nick
Quite difficult to stifle…

When first thou didst arrive in town,
The gracious Abe his foot put down,
A foot of full ten inches,
And in his roman manner said:
"Zacharie, old fellow, go ahead!
Let soldiers' corns be re-mo-ved
Whenever the shoe pinches.

And now, O man of dexterous fist!

Thou're U.S.A. Chiropodist,
And drawest pay and ration:
Millions of toe-joints are they care,
Oh! keep them all in good repair,
That they our galltant boys may bear
To Treason's castigation."[16]

The poem was unsigned but is believed to have been written by William Cullen Bryant. A month before, a shorter poem appeared in *Vanity Fair* calling Zacharie the "MOTHER GOOSE OF MILITARY CORNS: Zacharie, Zacharie dock/The knobs our soldiers that balk;/Dispose of their bunyons/That crop out like onions,/Obstructing their freedom of walk."[17]

* * * * * * * *

While *Vanity Fair* was calling upon the "U.S.A. Chiropodist" to keep "the toe-joints of our gallant boys in good repair," Issachar had already left Washington for just that purpose. With Secretary of War Stanton's pass in hand, Issachar was on his way to Fortress Monroe, on the tip of the Virginia Peninsula, 80 miles from Richmond. The fort guarded the lower Chesapeake Bay and was a major base for launching Union operations.

Issachar's mission did not go unnoticed and was widely reported, even by Southern papers.[18] The *Philadelphia Public Ledger* informed its readers Dr. Zacharie had gone to Fortress Monroe "to examine the feet of the soldiers, and remove any corns, bunions, etc. He brings testimonials from a large number of the commanding officers in our army, President Lincoln heading the list."[19] The *Ledger* knew about Issachar's mission to Fort Monroe because Issachar had had a broadside printed informing the rank and file at the fortress he had been authorized by the Secretary of War to treat their foot problems:

"All Soldiers Having CORNS BUNIONS OR BAD NAILS Upon their feet, can have them CURED without pain, by the undersigned, who is with you, UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE SECTARY OF WAR. You will therefore have your feet EXAMINED, So as to keep them in good working order and FREE FROM PAIN. I. ZACHARIE, M.D., Surgeon Chiropodist."[20]

Fortress Monroe's commanding officer was 63-year-old "shoot him on the spot" General John Adams Dix.[21] Before the war, he had been President Buchanan's Secretary of the Treasury. At the beginning of the war, he had sent a telegram to treasury agents in New Orleans telling them, "if any one attempts to haul down the American flag, shoot him on the spot." The telegram was intercepted by a Confederate telegraph operator who forwarded it to Confederate authorities in Louisiana. They in turn leaked it to the press.

Within days, Dix's order appeared in newspapers throughout the North and the South, making Dix one of the North's first heroes and the South's first villains. From then on, he was "shoot him on the spot" General Dix in the Northern news media.[22] Dix was one of the 5,000 men whose feet Issachar treated at the fort, "to the entire satisfaction of all," said Dix.[23]

As with all things involving Issachar, his motives for heading a chiropody corps with himself as its commanding officer were never solely altruistic. As a commissioned officer, his expenses would have been paid for by the government and he would have received a salary. As a volunteer, he was not entitled to either a military uniform or salary.

Issachar had Stanton's permission to pass through Union lines, but he was still only a civilian with no official commission. Years later, relying on the same duplicity he'd used to give himself a medical education and degree, Issachar would claim Stanton had in fact commissioned him before he went to Fortress Monroe and petitioned Congress' Committee on War to pay him retroactively for his work. In 1862, he could not make that claim because Stanton was still alive

and certainly would have been outraged had he done so. In any case, he could not have been commissioned as a military surgeon because such appointments were under the purview of the Surgeon General, Dr. William Hammond.[24] Issachar had written to Hammond before going to Fortress Monroe, asking him to authorize that commission. Hammond refused.[25]

Thirty-four-year-old William Alexander Hammond was a large man with a brusque and authoritative voice that expressed an underlying "arrogant and pompous" demeanor. He is best known for organizing the Army Medical Museum (now the National Museum of Health and Medicine. originally located in Washington and relocated to Silver Springs, Maryland). Hammond also initiated what would become the *Medical and Surgical History of the War of the Rebellion*, a compendium of reports by physicians treating the war wounded.

Before being appointed Surgeon General in April 1862, he had shown an aptitude for organizing hospitals and sanitary stations. His peers respected his ability, but he was not well liked. Officers more senior in rank resented that he was appointed instead of them.[26] Hammond's banning of calomel and tartar emetic, two mercurial medicines many army surgeons had long relied on as part of their drug treatments, made him even more unpopular with many of his colleagues.

Like many physicians, Hammond had a low opinion of nonmedically trained "corn cutters."[27] Issachar had previously sent Hammond the newspaper clippings endorsing his chiropody corps, but Hammond was not impressed. Even had he seriously considered the idea, Hammond may also have read a *New York Times* report that Dr. Zacharie was organizing his own department of a corps of chiropodists for the army with 25 assistants. Organizing a separate department without his approval, if true, was undermining Hammond's authority, and Hammond resented Issachar's going over his head to Stanton for a pass to treat the men at Fortress Monroe.

Hammond had not been Stanton's choice for Surgeon General. After his appointment, Hammond attempted to make the medical department independent of the War Department in constructing hospitals and transporting supplies. Other efforts to free his department from Stanton's oversight strained his relationship with Stanton even more. Hammond was not about to sanction a commission for Dr. Zacharie, knowing as he did that Stanton had allowed Issachar to go to Fortress Monroe without consulting him.

Two years later, in August 1864, facing court martial for taking bribes to buy inferior blankets for the army,[28] Hammond claimed he was the victim of a Jewish conspiracy. One of the reasons he'd been charged, he said, was because he had refused to sanction the commission of "the Jew corn doctor, Zacharie."[29] The *Medical Times and Gazette* accused Issachar of forging the letters about Hammond's mismanagement that had led to his dismissal.[30]

Hammond's blaming a Jew for his troubles was nothing new. As often happened in times of national crisis, Jews were dogged by accusations of corruption and illegal profiteering in the war effort. Jewish manufacturers were accused of providing inferior clothing, tents, hats, blankets, and whatever else that could be attributed at their factories and businesses. Animosities barely dormant before the crisis rose to the surface. "The tribe of gold speculators" who "create distrust of the government" are "'exclusively hooked-nosed wretches,' speculating on disasters. A battle lost to our army is chuckled over by them, as it puts money in their purse."[31] Horace Greeley, editor of the *New York Tribune*, labeled Jews, "the most persistent and cunning contrabandits."[32]

1. Quoted in Harold Holzer, Lincoln and the Power of the Press (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014), 27.
2. David Von Drehle, Rise to Greatness: Abraham Lincoln and America's Most Perilous Year (New York: Picador, 2013), 298.
3. Ted Widmer, "Yacht for Sale," New York Times, April 21, 2011, 16.
4. George Templeton Strong, quoted by Widmer, "Yacht for Sale."
5. New York Herald, May 22, 1860, 7; May 23, 1860, 6.
6. Von Drehle, Rise to Greatness, 298.
7. Ibid.
8. New York Herald, October 3, 1862, 2.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Markens, "Lincoln," 138.
15. Daily (Columbus) Ohio Statesman, September 29, 1864, 2.
16. "Ode to Dr. Zacharie," Vanity Fair, October 1862, 190.
17. Ibid., October 18, 1862, 186.
18. Yorkville (South Carolina) Enquirer (October 29, 1862, 2) reported that the War Department "had engaged Dr. Zacharie" and described him as "a celebrated chiropodist of New York."
19. Philadelphia Public Ledger, October 11, 1862, 1; New York Times, September 28, 1862, 4.
20. The original broadside is reproduced in Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 58, and Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), 137.
21. In 1866, President Johnson appointed Dix U.S. Minister to France. He was elected governor of New York in 1873, but lost election as mayor of New York three years later. Fort Dix in New Jersey is named after him.
22. Two years later in September 1864, Dix wrote a letter of introduction on Issachar's behalf to General John G. Foster, stating that Issachar was on his way to Savannah to visit family. "Any favor you can extend to him will be appreciated." Brown University, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/collections/id_572/?selected_facets=genre_aat%3Anotes&view=list.
23. Zacharie, Corns, 8; HR Committee on War Claims, 124.
24. William A. Hammond, A Statement of the Causes which led to the Dismissal of Surgeon-General William A. Hammond from the Army (New York: Hammond, 1864), 52.
25. Ibid.
26. Margaret Leech, Reveille in Washington (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1941), 267–268; Frank R. Freemon, Gangrene and Glory (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2001), 143.
27. Hammond, Statement, 52.
28. Peter Adams, Politics, Faith and the Making of American Judaism (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2014), 40. To meet demand for blankets, uniforms, and similar necessities, textile mills began cutting corners, turning out material made from shoddy, compressed fibers swept up from shop floors. Shoes, overcoats, and blankets made from such materials disintegrated into rags with days of use. Some blankets were so thin a finger could poke through them.
29. Hammond, Statement, 52; The Medical Times and Gazette, December 31, 1864, 706.
30. The Medical Times and Gazette, December 31, 1864, 706.
31. Quoted by Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 275; Frederick Cople Jaher, A Scapegoat in the New Wilderness. The Origins and Rise of Anti-Semitism in America (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 225.
32. New York Tribune, October 7, 1861, 6.

13

“My own chiropodist is a Jew”

In the ancient city of Jerusalem, between Keren Hayesod and King David streets, writes historian Jonathan Sarna, professor of American Jewish history at Brandeis University, is a crooked street called Abraham Lincoln Street. Most Jerusalemites have no idea of why a street in their city is named after the American President. If asked, Sarna said, they simply shake their heads or shrug.[1]

Sarna is not the first scholar to unveil Lincoln’s unusual relationship with America’s (and Israel’s) Jews, one that had all been but forgotten until his and Benjamin Shapell’s groundbreaking book *Lincoln and the Jews* and Gary Zola’s *We Called Him Rabbi* made us once again aware of Lincoln’s unique relationship with this country’s Jews.

Unlike many Americans at the time, Lincoln considered Jews as equals and advocated for them on numerous occasions. Three months after issuing his Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln met with Henry Wentworh Monk, a Zionistic Protestant from Canada. Monk had come to Washington in March 1863 to lobby Lincoln to emancipate persecuted Jews in Russia, Turkey, and Prussia and to help restore them to their homeland in Palestine. Monk was Zionistic only in the sense that he believed that Christ’s second coming would only occur after the Jews were back in Palestine, with Jerusalem as the capital “of a reunited Christendom.”[2]

It is a “noble dream … one shared by many Americans,” said Lincoln. “I myself have a high regard for the Jews. My own chiropodist is a Jew.” He “has so many times ‘put me upon my feet,’” he quipped, “that I would have no objection to giving his countrymen ‘a leg up.’”[3]

Lincoln’s passing comment about his chiropodist is the only known instance in which he described Issachar as Jewish. Lincoln’s attitude toward Jews in general had begun forming over the course of his earlier years in Illinois. Before he met Issachar, Lincoln called Abraham Jonas, an Illinois lawyer and state legislator, as “one of my most valued friends.”[4]

Abraham Jonas was a slender man with black eyes and hair and a dark complexion. He’d immigrated to the United States from England in 1819 after his brother, who had previously settled in Cincinnati, wrote there were great opportunities in what was then the western frontier. After his wife, the daughter of Rabbi Gerson Seixas (the first rabbi born in America), died in 1825, Jonas left Cincinnati. Sometime later, he opened a carriage business in Williamstown, Kentucky, and remarried. After he joined the Masons, he became active in Whig politics and moved once again, this time to Quincy, Illinois, where he studied law and served in the Illinois state legislature.

Lincoln met Jonas in 1843, when they were serving in the Illinois state legislature. Despite their different backgrounds, the two men found they had the same humor and wit in common, in addition to their similar Whig political views. When Lincoln debated Stephen Douglas in Quincy, Illinois, in the fall of 1858, for the U.S. Senate, Jonas was the local chairman of Lincoln’s supporters.

Lincoln was seriously thinking about quitting politics for good after he lost that election and would have, had Jonas not strongly encouraged him to go after the nomination for president of the newly formed Republican Party. Once Lincoln made up his mind to make a bid for the nomination, Jonas worked tirelessly to garner support for him at the party’s convention in May

1860 in Chicago.[5] Lincoln was grateful for Jonas' support before and during the 1860 election. In 1861, he appointed Jonas postmaster in Quincy. Jonas worked as postmaster until his death in 1864. Despite Jonas' steadfast loyalty to Lincoln and the Union, four of his sons sympathized with the South and served in the Confederate army. When Jonas' health began to fail, Lincoln secured a parole for Jonas' son Charles from his prisoner-of-war camp on Johnson's Island, Lake Erie. Charles reached Quincy just in time to be with his father when he died.[6] Several years later, Lincoln's Jewish foot doctor was not only another of his "most valued friends," but he was also "the most favored family visitor at the White House."[7] Quite possibly, Lincoln had come to regard Jonas and Issachar as American Jewry personified.[8]

Lincoln's close friendships with Jonas and Issachar were unusual in an age when Jews were considered outsiders at best and were frequently maligned by politicians and the press. In no small measure, Lincoln's efforts to overturn an exclusionary clause in the early years of the Civil War stipulating a military chaplain had to be "a regular ordained minister of some Christian denomination" was due to his earlier friendship with Jonas and the Jews of Springfield.[9]

1. Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), xii.

2. Yoskowitz distinguishes between “Zionistic,” the 19th-century sentiment favoring the return of Jews to the Holy Land, and “Zionism,” the late 19th- and early 20th-century idea of Jewish statehood. Herbert A. Yoskowitz, “British Zionistic Writings Revisited,” European Judaism 13 (1979), 45.

3. Quoted in Richard S. Lambert, For the Time Is at Hand (Toronto: Andrew Melrose, 1947), 82.

4. Abraham Lincoln to Abraham Jonas, Springfield, February 4, 1860, in Basler, Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln, Vol. 3, 516. On Lincoln’s relationship to Jonas, see Markens, “Lincoln,” 123–128.

5. Markens, “Lincoln,” 127; Korn, American Jewry, 194.

6. Charles later wrote a letter thanking him for letting him be at his father’s side “in time to be recognized and welcomed by him.” A few days later, Lincoln appointed Jonas’ wife to serve out his unexpired term as postmaster (Markens, “Lincoln,” 127–128).

7. New York World, September 24, 1864, 4.

8. Segal, “Isachar Zacharie,” 71.

9. The chaplaincy controversy is detailed in Korn, American Jewry, 56–97; Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 72–90; Sarna and Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, 103–11.

Part Three

Spy and Diplomat

14

The General Prohibition

On the eve of the war, New Orleans was one of the world's major port cities and the South's main hub for exporting cotton from the upper Mississippi and surrounding areas. Over 30 different steamship lines docked in its harbor at one time. Cotton and other exports leaving the port were valued at over $108 million; imports came in at over $21 million. Such was its financial muscle that several foreign countries had embassies and banks in the city.[1]

Because of its strategic and economic importance, New Orleans was one of the first port cities to be blockaded as part of the Union's "Anaconda Plan," aimed at strangling trade in and out of the Confederacy's port cities. The blockade succeeded in ending virtually all foreign trade with the Confederacy. Business in the city collapsed. Stores and offices closed. Commercial banks shipped their gold and silver farther into the Confederacy's interior as a precautionary measure against possible invasion. Warehouses bursting with cotton and sugar that hadn't made it out of the city before the blockade were set on fire rather than allowing the products to be confiscated if the city fell. Thousands of unemployed workmen wandered listlessly through the streets. Many of the poor died of starvation.[2]

Confederate military strategists had believed any Union attack against the city would come from further up the Mississippi and not from the mouth of the Mississippi. Two masonry gun batteries, Fort Jackson with its 74 heavy guns and Fort St. Phillip with its 52 canons, guarded the entrance to the city 70 miles downriver, along with gunboats in the river itself. Eight hulks, joined by a heavy chain, obstructed naval passage further up the river.

On April 18, 1862, 43 Union ships commanded by Admiral David G. Farragut's Gulf Expeditionary Force began pounding Forts Jackson and St. Phillip day and night with mortar, while crew men in smaller boats braved shells raining down on them from the fortress to cut a gap in the chain spanning the river. By April 24, Farragut's 17 warships had broken through New Orleans' defenses. After brief resistance from within the city, New Orleans surrendered.

* * * * * * * *

On May 1, 1862, a 2,500-man occupying force headed by Major General Benjamin Butler took military command of the Confederacy's largest city. Butler was one of Lincoln's many "political generals," men given high rank not because of any military training, but because of their political connections. Lincoln disliked him intensely. Butler is "as full of poison gas as a dead dog,"[3] he said. But Lincoln needed support from the men who supported Butler.

A portly 5-feet 4-inches in height, Butler was both cross-eyed and burdened with a drooping left eyelid, a defect he had from birth. Mark Twain described him as "dismally and drearily homely … the forward part of his skull looks raised like a water-blister."[4]

Determined not to brook any resistance from longtime residents who were overwhelmingly still loyal to the Confederacy and considered traitors, Butler reacted swiftly and mercilessly to quell any public support for the Confederacy. Within days of his taking command of New Orleans, he executed William B. Mumford on June 7, 1862, for hauling down the Stars and Stripes at the New Orleans mint. It was not officially a hanging offense, but Butler was mindful of General Dix's "shoot him on the spot" comment about anyone taking down the flag. The

sentence was carried out on the grounds where Mumford had committed the offense.[5]

New Orleans' socially prominent women, however, remained defiant. Confident their "armor of gender would protect them,"[6] they openly showed their disdain for Butler and his occupying army. They crossed to the other side when passing federal soldiers on the street, they got off streetcars when soldiers got on, they left services when officers came to church, and on occasion, spat in the faces of federal officers.[7] When one of them emptied a slop jar on Admiral David Farragut as he was passing below a window, Butler said enough was enough. On May 15, 1862, he issued his infamous "woman's order": "Hereafter when any female shall, by word, gesture, or movement, insult to show contempt for any Union officer or soldier of the United States, she shall be regarded and held liable to be treated as a woman of the town plying her avocation (prostitution)."[8]

Butler's order outraged the South. Southern newspapers began calling him "Beast Butler," and teenager Clara Solomon wished "he could only have as many ropes around his neck as there are ladies in the city & each have a pull."[9] But his order put an end to the insults women publicly made against Union soldiers.[10] No Southern woman would remotely allow herself to be considered "a woman of the town."

Having prohibited public displays of disloyalty on the part of New Orleans' women, Butler was determined to root out disloyalty within his department. Boasting that "in six months New Orleans should be a Union City or—a home of the Alligator," in June, he ordered all public officials in occupied Louisiana to take an oath of loyalty to the Union or resign. If any citizens or foreigners wanted to use the courts, they also had to take the oath.

Next to New Orleans' uppity women on Butler's enemies list were the city's Jews. Butler had a "special penchant for attacking Jews," writes historian Eli Evans.[11] While he and his brother were lining their pockets, Butler accused "army contractors, principally Jews," of making "fortunes by the war." Jews, he said, were the Confederacy's most effective supporters. An Associated Press journalist in New Orleans shared Butler's venom for Jews, calling for all of them in the South to be "exterminated."[12] Butler was especially outraged by Eugenia Levy Phillips. She was so truculent that Butler sent her off to Ship Island in the Gulf of Mexico.

"I do not call you a common woman of the town," he said as she was being taken away, "but an uncommon vulgar one."

Eugenia shot back that Ship Island had "one advantage over the city … you will not be there."[13] Eugenia spent three months in the summer of 1862 in the mosquito-infested prison. For some unknown reason, Butler pardoned her. Possibly it was through the influence of a family friend with important political connections.[14] Given the option of remaining in New Orleans if she took the oath of allegiance to the United States, Eugenia and her husband refused and left by boat for Mobile, Alabama, along with other Southern loyalists who refused to swear allegiance to the United States.[15]

Butler's animosity toward Eugenia was due to her intransigence, but it was also a reflection of Butler's animus toward Jews.[16] The "most active agents and most efficient supporters" of the foreign merchants speculating in cotton, he said, were "mostly Jews."[17] New Orleans' "army contractors, principally Jews," were making "fortunes by the war."[18] If it were up to him, he would "suck the blood of every Jew, and detain every Jew" as long as he could.[19]

Meanwhile, Butler was creating havoc in Seward's State Department. In July 1862, Congress

passed the Second Confiscation Act providing for the confiscation of property of those "aiding, countenancing or abetting" the Rebellion. In one incident, Butler seized $800,000 from the Dutch Consulate in New Orleans, claiming the money was intended for the Confederacy (the money was later returned). Butler was also involved in numerous disputes with the consuls of Britain, Belgium, France, and other countries. Butler made no secret of his disdain for the foreign "whipper-snappers" whose offices, he contended, were "asylums" for aiding the Confederacy.[20]

Lincoln said his ultimate goal throughout the war was "the speedy restoration of our Union." Secession had not been as popular in Louisiana as it had been in other parts of the lower South. The state had strong economic trading ties to the North. Although its cotton oligarchy resented the tariffs imposed by the North on imports, Louisiana's sugar planters had supported tariffs to make them competitive with sugar producers in Cuba and Brazil. Because of its economic interests, Lincoln believed Louisiana was the most susceptible of the seceded states to being coaxed back into the Union. From the moment New Orleans was captured in April 1862, he was optimistic Louisiana could be lured back into the Union if New Orleans' military and civil leaders now in charge were able to organize a loyal state government. If that could be accomplished, it would set the pattern for the return of the seceded states to the Union.

Based on Congress' Confiscation Act passed in July 1862, in September 1862, Butler required all citizens in New Orleans and lower Louisiana who had not renewed their allegiance, or had any allegiance or sympathy to the "so-called Confederate States" to take the oath by October 1. Those who refused to take the oath were ordered to report to the Provost Marshall and list all their property. The Provost Marshall would record their assets and give them a certificate of registration identifying them as "an enemy of the United States." Those not registering were subject to a fine and/or imprisonment at hard labor and confiscation of all their property. "Oath offices" were swamped by thousands of secessionists who took the oath, which they considered mainly words, so as not to lose their property. About 4,000 came to the oath office to record their property, but refused to take the oath and were branded "registered enemies."

In early October 1862, Lincoln urged Butler to arrange elections in Louisiana's two congressional districts under Union control.[21] Lincoln was annoyed to learn nothing had been done about the elections he demanded and handed the job to General Shepley, the military governor of Louisiana's occupied parishes.[22] The election was held on December 2, 1862. Although the election was highly controversial, the elected representatives, Michael Hahn and Benjamin Flanders, eventually took their seat in the House of Representatives in February.

On December 5, 1862, Butler ordered all "registered enemies" to report on or before December 10 to the Provost Marshal, who would arrange for their exile across enemy lines. Those leaving were only allowed to take their personal clothing and not more than $50.[23]

By then, Lincoln was attentive to Seward's warning him that Butler's treatment of New Orleans' foreign community threatened European neutrality, and he was annoyed at constant complaints from its residents over Butler's hard-fisted administration. In November, he decided Butler had to go and chose General Nathaniel P. Banks as his replacement. Butler was relieved on December 17 before the order expelling "registered enemies" could be fully implemented, but Banks later enforced it.

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Issachar had been disappointed his treatment of men at Fortress Monroe had not received the recognition he so earnestly sought. Ever the opportunist, when he heard Lincoln was about to

replace Butler with General Nathaniel P. Banks as military commander of the Department of the Gulf, Issachar believed he could gain that recognition if he could persuade Banks to take him with him to New Orleans in some official capacity.

On November 16, 1862, a week after Banks' announced appointment, Issachar wrote Banks a hasty letter from Philadelphia. "I can be of more service to you than I first imagined," he said. He would like to meet him in private in New York at his headquarters at the Astor Hotel or at Banks' home to explain.[24]

When Banks received Issachar's letter, he was curious. Dr. Zacharie had to have had something in mind besides tending to the military's feet, something of considerable personal benefit to Banks. Banks was aware Issachar had Lincoln's ear and was savvy enough to listen to what Issachar had to say. What Issachar told him isn't known, but possibly he said if Banks would allow him to accompany him to New Orleans, he would be an asset in softening the city's Jewish population's attitude toward the incoming military commander. If nothing else, Issachar said he would be at hand to treat the feet of federal soldiers stationed in the area. Banks was not opposed to what Issachar was offering, but Issachar was a civilian and a British citizen as well. He would need official approval to go to New Orleans from someone higher up.

That was not going to be a problem. Issachar wasted no time. He left New York for Washington and met with Lincoln. From his previous time in New Orleans, Issachar was aware of New Orleans' relatively large Jewish population (about 8,000 at the start of the war) and its Southern loyalties. Lincoln was also well aware of New Orleans' sizable Jewish population. A year earlier, Abraham Jonas, his "trusted friend," had written him he had "a very large family connection in the south," including six children in New Orleans, and "a host of other near relatives."[25] If Louisiana were to be lured back into the Union, New Orleans would be key to readmission. Lincoln would need all the support he could muster. Issachar likely promised he could make that happen. At the very least, he could be his eyes and ears in the city. Lincoln told Issachar he had no hesitation about sending him to New Orleans, but like Banks, given Issachar's British citizenship, Lincoln said such permission should come from Secretary of State Seward.

Issachar immediately sent a note to Seward. "I have just seen the President," he said. I "am satisfied that if you will speak a Kinde word for Me to Day, that I will obtain what I desire that is to accan pay [accompany] Gnl. Banks, in Some Capacity So as to Render Some Service to the Geverment."[26]

Seward sent a note with "a Kinde word" about Dr. Zacharie back to Lincoln, saying he had no objection to Zacharie going to New Orleans with Banks. The next day, November 25, 1862, Lincoln wrote Banks: "Dr. Zacharie, whom you know as well as I do, wishes to go with you on your expedition. I think he might be of service to you, first, in his peculiar profession, and secondly, as a means of access to his countrymen who are quite numerous."[27] He was ordering Banks to take Issachar. It was not even a request. It was merely a *permission* "excepting his case from a general prohibition which I understand to exist."[28]

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The "general prohibition" Lincoln was referring to was General Ulysses S. Grant's orders restricting the movements of Jews south from any point under his command in the Department of the Tennessee.[29]

One of the reasons the South had felt confident about going to war was its cotton. Secessionists anticipated New England's textile mills and its dependent industries would be ruined without Southern cotton. On May 21, 1861, the Confederate Congress prohibited cotton

sales to the North. Secessionists were confident Britain and France would support Southern independence militarily because their economies were dependent on Southern cotton. Were it not for slave-produced cotton, the South would not have had the wealth and confidence to go to war.

Confidence was inspiring, but it could not arm men, clothe them, keep them warm in winter, or treat their wounds and diseases. The Confederacy never had enough of any war materiel. What it did have was thousands and thousands of bales of cotton stored in southern warehouses. Cotton itself was of no practical use to the Confederacy since it had no industry to turn it into clothes or blankets, but "white-gold" cotton could be traded for real gold and silver. With gold and silver, blockade runners could buy guns and ammunition from Britain, and quinine, surgical supplies, and other war materiel could be obtained from northern traders passing across the lines.

While the South could not have waged war for long without trading for cotton, the federal government was torn between totally restricting and allowing the South to export some of its cotton. At the start of the war, the government allowed merchants in the border states like Kentucky, which had remained in the Union, to continue to trade for cotton to discourage them from joining the secessionists. As cotton shortages in the North became dire, pressure from mill owners grew, and with the possibility of foreign intervention ever present, Lincoln loosened restrictions for trading for cotton in occupied parts of the Confederacy. Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase instructed generals to "let commerce follow the flag" and permit "all possible facilities" for shipping cotton.[30]

After New Orleans and Memphis were captured in early 1862, trading for and shipping large amounts of cotton became feasible. Profits were enormous. "So gigantic has grown this species of transaction of late, and so profitable, that many persons heretofore, not overly wealthy, have been enabled to purchase steamboats and carry on a trade entirely upon their own responsibility."[31]

Generals Grant and William Tecumseh Sherman took a grim view of the government's allowing trading with the enemy. They did not perceive or care about the grand strategy of keeping Europe out of the war. Grant, Sherman, and other generals fumed that cotton buyers were providing gold to the rebels to buy guns and other supplies from England and medicine and other contraband in return for cotton. For Grant, unprincipled cotton traders were undermining the war effort.

By "unprincipled" traders, Grant and many others meant Jewish traders. For men like Grant, who was born and raised in rural America and whose only familiarity with Jews was through the Bible or Jewish peddlers, the predisposition to believe the stereotype of the unscrupulous Jew was pervasive. Grant was "captive to old attitudes" about Jews.[32] Reflexive anti–Semitism that had always been lurking below the surface in America became more overt. Judah Benjamin, Confederate President Jefferson Davis' Secretary of State, was the poster boy for barbs about Jewish corruption and betrayal.[33]

The prejudice against Jews ran so deeply that "Jew" was used indiscriminately to refer to anyone engaged in the cotton trade.[34] "Jews," Grant bristled, "seem to be a privileged class that can travel anywhere. They will land at any wood yard or landing on the river and make their way through the country."[35] General Sherman, Grant's second-in-command, shared his dire views about unscrupulous ubiquitous Jews. Sherman groused to General John Rawlins, Grant's adjutant general, that "swarms of Jews" were in Memphis trading with secessionists for cotton with gold. The "commercial enterprise of the Jews," he wrote Treasury Secretary Chase, was buying "a pound of Cotton behind our Army" and turning it into an enormous profit in Boston.

Sherman had a sullied view of Jews even before the war. When he was stationed in San Francisco in 1858, he wrote his wife Ellen, "the Christ killing Jews" were still "without pity, soul, heart or bowels of compassion."[36]

In December 1861, a naval officer patrolling the Ohio River warned that smuggling on the river was being carried out "as usual chiefly by Jews." By July 1862, Grant was convinced that smuggling was seriously undermining the war effort, and the main culprits were Jews, whom he said were "sharks, feeding upon the soldiers." They were a "nuisance" he planned to "abate."[37] On July 26, he telegraphed General J. T. Quimby to examine the baggage of all speculators coming South. Jews, he said, "*should receive special attention*" (italics mine).[38] Although Grant would later protest he wasn't anti–Semitic, calling Jews "sharks" and a "nuisance" was clearly so.

In November, Grant ordered train conductors to remove all Jews from their trains travelling south in his department because they were such "*an intolerable nuisance the department must be purged [of] them*" (italics mine).[39]

Issachar had been ready to travel south to New Orleans, but Grant's order effectively prevented him from doing so by rail. Lincoln would later deny knowing anything about Grant's restricting Jews from rail transport, but when he wrote Banks that Issachar would have been able to get to New Orleans in late November, except for "a general prohibition which I understand to exist,"[40] he was clearly aware of it.

Two weeks later, Grant again telegraphed orders "*the Israelites especially should be kept out*" [of his department][41] (italics mine). Two weeks later, in early December, he wrote to General Sherman, "my policy is to exclude them so far as practicable from the Dept."[42]

On December 17, 1862, he did just that. "General Orders No. 11" expelled all Jews from his jurisdiction:

> The Jews as a class, violating every regulation of trade … are hereby expelled from the department (of Tennessee which included Tennessee, Mississippi, Kentucky, and parts of southern Illinois) within twenty-four hours from the receipt of this order.

Anyone returning would be arrested and held in confinement until an opportunity occurs of sending them out as prisoners.[43]

Historians have offered diverse explanations for Grant's sweeping order banishing all Jews from his department. Excuses vary from pressure from Washington to capture Vicksburg quickly because the administration needed an important victory to offset defeats in the east to outrage he felt at his father, Jesse Grant, who had appeared at his headquarters, asking for a permit on behalf of the Mack brothers, Jewish clothing manufacturers, to buy cotton confiscated in occupied Union territory. The Mack brothers were major suppliers of uniforms for the Union Army.[44]

Grant's General Orders No. 11 touched off a firestorm. Lincoln and congressmen were besieged with telegrams, letters, and delegations from individuals and their congressmen protesting the inhuman order, a gross violation of the constitution. Cesar Kaskel, one of the Paducah Kentucky Jews who was forced to leave his home, wrote to Lincoln that he and the other Jews were "good and loyal citizens of the United States and residents of this town, for many years engaged in legitimate business as merchants." If the fiat were not retracted, it would brand Jews "as outlaws before the whole world."[45]

Paducah's Jewish delegation arrived in Washington on January 3, 1863. Issachar was undoubtedly aware, as were most of Washington's Jews, of Grant's sweeping order and the

reason Paducah's Jews were coming to see Lincoln. While Issachar was waiting in Washington for the pass that would allow him to travel through Grant's jurisdiction, like Jews everywhere in America, he was stunned by Grant's anti–Jewish expulsion order. Issachar was aware Grant had prohibited Jews from boarding trains passing through his department, effectively keeping him from going to New Orleans. He had heard rumors that a delegation of Jews had come to Washington to protest and had read about Grant's banishment order in the *Jewish Messenger*, to which Issachar subscribed. But if Issachar brought it up with Lincoln, there is no record of any such correspondence or conversation.

Carrying letters of introduction from several of Cincinnati's Jewish leaders, and with ex-Ohio Republican Congressman John Addison Gurley, who was still vice president of Paducah's pro–Lincoln Union League Club, at his side, Kaskel apprised Lincoln of the dire plight of Paducah's Jews as a consequence of Grant's order.

Lincoln assured Kaskel the neither he nor General Henry Halleck, Grant's superior, were aware that Grant has issued such an absurd order. He vowed he would not allow "a citizen in any wise be wronged on account of his place of birth or religious confession."[46]

An apocryphal exchange is said to have occurred during that meeting, with Lincoln asking Kaskel and the others with him, "And so the children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan?"

"Yes," replied Kaskel, "and that is why we have come unto Father Abraham's bosom, asking protection."

"And this protection they shall have at once," Lincoln allegedly replied.[47]

That same day General Halleck sent Grant a telegram: "General Orders, No. 11, issued by you December 17, [which] it expels all Jews from your department … will be immediately revoked."[48]

The following day, Halleck's adjutant, Col. John C. Kelton, on his own wrote Grant, that in his own opinion, Lincoln had no objection to his expelling traders and Jew peddlers. Had "peddler" been inserted after Jew, "I do not suppose any exception would have been taken to the order."[49] Several days later, Halleck wrote Grant stating that had the order been enforced, Grant would have had to expel all Jewish soldiers and officers in his department as well.[50]

Three days after receiving Halleck's order to rescind and two days after receiving Kelton's wire, Grant issued a new directive revoking General Orders No. 11.[51] Issachar was now free to travel south in Union occupied territories.

Grant's expelling Jews from his lines remained a sore spot among them for many years and was used as an argument against electing him President. Grant did his best to make amends towards America's Jews, and he was filled with remorse over what even his wife called his "obnoxious order"[52] to his death, so much so he omitted any reference to it in his memoirs.[53] In 1907, journalist Isaac Markens wrote Grant's son, Frederick, about the omission. Frederick wrote back that when his father was writing his memoirs, he asked him if he were going to refer to Orders No. 11. Grant replied that it "was a matter long past and best not referred to."[54]

1. Elisabeth J. Doyle, “Greenbacks, Car Tickets, and the Pot of Gold,” Civil War History 5 (December 1959), 348; Daniel W. Howe, What Hath God Wrought, The Transformation of America 1815–1848 (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 671–700.
2. Doyle, “Greenbacks,” 348.
3. Mark Scroggins, Hannibal: The Life of Abraham Lincoln’s First Vice President (Latham, MD: 1994), 204.
4. Quoted in Darcy G. Richardson, Others (Lincoln, NE: I Universe, 2004), 1, 577.
5. Hans Louis Trefousse, Ben Butler (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1957), 114.
6. Drew Gilpin Faust, Mothers of Invention (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996), 198.
7. Ashkenazi, Solomon Diary, 355–356.
8. General Order No. 28, OR, Series 2, Vol. 15, 426.
9. Jewish teenager Clara Solomon wished Butler could have as many ropes around his neck as there were ladies in the city and that each could have a pull (Ashkenazi, Solomon Diary, 419).
10. Giselle Roberts, The Confederate Belle (University of Missouri Press, 2003), 138.
11. Eli N. Evans, Judah P. Benjamin (New York: Free Press, 1988, 167).
12. Ibid., 168.
13. Quoted by Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 291.
14. Ibid., 293.
15. After the war, the Phillipses moved back to Washington, where Philips resumed his law career. David T. Morgan, “Eugenia Levy Phillips: The Civil War Experiences of a Southern Jewish Woman,” in Samuel Proctor and Louis Schmier (eds.), Jews of the South (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), 95–106; Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 280–304.
16. Trefousse, Butler, 286.
17. OR, Series 3, Vol. 2, 690.
18. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 277.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. On wartime reconstruction, see Louis P. Masur, Lincoln’s Last Speech (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015).
22. Clifford L. Egan, “Friction in New Orleans: General Butler versus the Spanish Consul,” Louisiana History 9 (Winter 1968), 43–52.
23. New York Times, December 20, 1862, 4.
24. Zacharie to Banks, November 16, 1862, Banks Papers, Box 25.
25. Jonas to Lincoln, December 30, 1860, ABL LOC.
26. Zacharie to Seward, November 24, 1862, Seward Papers, University of Rochester, Rush Rhees Library (hereafter RRL).
27. Lincoln to Banks, November 25, 1862, Lincoln Manuscripts, Brown (University) Digital Repository, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:72350/
28. Ibid.
29. Grant to General Joseph Dana Webster, November 10, 1862, OR, Series 1, Vol. 17, pt. 2, Mississippi to the Tennessee rivers.
30. Quoted in Stephen V. Ash, “Civil War Exodus,” in Adam Mendelsohn (ed.), Jews and the Civil War; A Reader (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 363–384, 364.
31. New York Times, December 25, 1862, 2. On cotton profiteering, see Surdam, “Traders,” 302–304; Ludwell H. Johnson, “Northern Profit and Profiteers,” Civil War History 12 (June 1966), 101–115.
32. Brooks D. Simpson, Ulysses S. Grant. Triumph over Adversity, 1822–1865 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2000), 163.
33. Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson denounced Benjamin as a member of “that race who stoned the prophets and crucified the redeemer of the world.” New York Times, March 15, 1862; Jewish Messenger, March 21, 1862. Tennessee editor William “Parson” Brownlow called Benjamin the “little Jew of the bogus Confederacy” (New York Times, March 28, 1862). As the prejudice deepened, other members of the Confederate cabinet were denounced as Jews. General Butler pointed his finger at “Mr. [Christopher] Memminger [Confederate Treasury Secretary, and] Mr. [Stephen] Mallory [Confederate Secretary of the Navy] is also of the Jewish faith or nationality.” Quoted in Simonoff, Jewish Participants, 151). Neither was Jewish. Memminger was a German Lutheran; Mallory was Roman Catholic (Simonhoff, Jewish Participants, 151).
34. Barbara Straus Reed, “Jewish Press Coverage of an Anti-Semitic Act,” in David B. Sachsman, S. Kittrell Rushing, and Debra Reddin van Tuyll (eds.), The Civil War and the Press (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers), 326.
35. Ulysses S. Grant, The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant (hereafter PUSG), John Y. Simon (ed.) (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1967), 7, 50.
36. Sherman to Rawlins, OR series 1, Vol. 17, pt. 2, 140–141; M. A. Dewolfe Howe (ed.), Home Letters of General Sherman (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1909), 154; Sherman to Chase, August 11, 1862, in William Tecumseh Sherman, Memoirs of General W. T. Sherman (New York, Library of America, 1990), 286.
37. Corinth War Eagle, a soldier newspaper quoting Grant. PSUG, 7, 52.
38. Or., Ser. 1, Vol. 22, 479; PSUG, 7, 50.

39. Grant to Colonel Joseph Dana Webster, his superintendent of military railroads, November 10, 1862, PSUG, 6, 283.
40. Lincoln to Banks, November 25, 1862, RRL.
41. Grant to Major General Stephen A. Hurlbut, November 26, 1862, OR, Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 2, 330.
42. PSUG, 6, 394.
43. OR, Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 2, 424.
44. The Mack brothers were major suppliers of uniforms for the Union army. On Henry Mack, see Michael W. Rich, "'Henry Mack: An Important Figure in Nineteenth-century Jewish History," American Jewish Archives 47 (1995), 266–267, 273–274; The Israelite, December 13, 1861, reprinted in "Clothing for the Army of the Union," American Jewish Archives 13 (November 1961), 174–175.
45. Caesar Kaskel to Lincoln, December 29, 1862. The letter is reproduced in Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 106.
46. Markens, "Lincoln," 118.
47. Ibid.
48. Halleck to Grant, January 4, 1863, OR Series I, Vol. 17, pt. 2, 530.
49. Kelton to Grant, January 5, 1863; PSUG, 7, 54.
50. Halleck to Grant, January 21, 1863, PSUG, 7, 54n.
51. OR, Series 1, Vol. 17, pt. 2, 544. As soon as word that Lincoln had countermanded Grant's order expelling Jews from his department flashed through Washington, Lincoln's long- time friend and ally, Illinois Congressman Elihu Washburne, dashed off a note to Lincoln, saying he hoped that his order repealing Grant's edict expelling Jews from his district wasn't true. He personally considered it, he said, "the wisest order yet made by a Military Command." Washburne added that from his "own personal observation," it "was necessary." Washburne to Lincoln, January 7, 1863, OR, Series 1, Vol. 18, pt. 1, 544.
52. Julia Grant, The Personal Memoirs of Julia Dent Grant, John Y. Simon (ed.) (NY: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1975), 107.
53. Ulysses S. Grant, Personal Memoirs of U.S. Grant (New York: Charles I. Webster & Company, 1885).
54. Markens, "Lincoln," 122.

15

“Spare no expense”

General Banks arrived in New Orleans on December 14, 1862. The next day, he met with Butler and showed him his orders. The meeting was cordial. Butler had heard rumors he was to be replaced, and now the rumors had turned out to be true. They shook hands, chatted, and took leave of one another. On December 16, 1862, Banks formally took over as head of the Department of the Gulf.

Banks was immediately overwhelmed by civil administrative duties. Assessing taxes, fines, and punishments and managing charities, trade, regulation of churches, and confiscation of disloyal estates required his immediate attention. In addition to oversight of the ordinary affairs of a military department, he had inherited a political minefield from Butler’s administrations. One of his first tasks was to mollify the British, Dutch, and French consuls in New Orleans, whom Butler had suspected were acting on behalf of the Confederate government. Butler had nearly precipitated their foreign intervention in the war by denying them diplomatic immunity.

“Broken eggs cannot be mended,” said Lincoln about affairs in Louisiana.[1] But not all the eggs were broken. Lincoln was still hopeful Louisiana could be coaxed back into the Union. To that end, he had selected Banks to clean up Butler’s mess. In addition to wresting control of the Mississippi River from the secessionists, Lincoln was relying on Banks to make that happen. It was a daunting challenge. Banks would not only have to restore Unionist sentiment in the state, but he would also have to reconcile secessionists to the prospect of abandoning slavery. This was all the more difficult because much of the state was still controlled by slave-owning secessionists.

Just as daunting was the prospect of a Confederate counteroffensive to retake New Orleans. The city’s dismal defenses alarmed him. He had only a small force of “raw men.” Most were poorly armed and had never even handled a musket. He had no artillery. He didn’t have enough cavalry to reconnoiter Confederate-held territory surrounding the city, making it “impossible to obtain timely information of the movements of the enemy.” “I am depressed,” he wrote his wife Mary.[2]

Banks was more than aware of the resentment toward the government on the part of New Orleans’ upper-class white populace, whom Butler had stripped of their pride and property. “The dainty damsel carefully gathers up her skirts as she goes by a Union soldier, or wears a breast pin on which is gaudily painted the rebel flag; the strong man, standing on the corner of the street, mutters something about the damned Yankees; the mob, at dead of night, hurrah for Jeff Davis,” said one of those damned Yankees.[3]

“Assuming command here,” Banks wrote General Halleck in Washington, “I had but one of two courses before me, either to continue abuses” or “to reform its character.” I chose “the latter course.” “No government could stand the weight of abuses that existed here … no military operations could be successfully carried on with such a disturbed and excited community in the rear as that which I found here.” “A wise and conciliatory policy” might coax them back to the Union.[4] In place of Butler’s iron-fisted occupation, Banks offered an olive branch. He rescinded Butler’s infamous “woman’s order” branding insolent Confederate women as prostitutes. He released more than a hundred political prisoners. He reopened churches Butler had closed

because their pastors had refused to pray for the President of the United States. and he curtailed confiscating property of Confederate sympathizers. “Butler had stroked the cat from tail to head, and found her full of yawl and scratch.” Banks was “determined to stroke her from head to tail, and see if she would not hide her claws, and commence to purr.”[5] At the same time, he let it be known that he would not brook disorder. Those disturbing the peace would be “punished with the sharpest severity known to military law.” The *New York Herald*’s correspondent in New Orleans told his readers that General Banks received visitors with courtesy, but if they “imagined that the General would give these secessionists their own way they have discovered their mistake. He treats them all in a gentlemanly manner, but is as firm as a rock.”[6]

If Banks believed his conciliatory policies would soften loyalist sentiment for the Confederacy, he was mistaken. On January 4, while riding through the city. he passed a number of women whose grimacing faces openly indicated their antipathy. One of them was the same woman who had spat on Admiral Farragut.[7]

Banks also had to contend with a department rampant with corruption. Butler had condoned, participated, or been bribed to turn a blind eye to speculators openly trading with the enemy. All it took to bring cotton to New Orleans and ship it to Europe was “a little greasing,” said a Confederate agent engaged in the illegal trade.[8] Within days of taking over from Butler, Butler’s brother Andrew offered Banks $10,000 to look the other way: “Dear Sir: If you will allow our commercial program to be carried out as projected previously to your arrival in this Department, giving the same support and facilities as your predecessor (Butler), I am authorized on obtaining your assent to place at your disposal one hundred thousand dollars.”[9] Andrew is believed to have made $1–2 million from illegal cotton trading. When Butler came to New Orleans, his personal worth amounted to about $150,000. When he died in 1893, his estate was valued at more than $7,000,000, most of it derived while he was in New Orleans.[10]

“I never despaired of our country until I came here,” Banks wrote his wife about the bribe. “Thank God, I have no desire for dishonest gains.”[11] Banks’ ambitions were for power, not money. He may not have taken anything for himself from a “secret services fund,” but expenses paid from that fund that are suspicious.[12]

* * * * * * * *

Nathaniel Prentice Banks had an overriding ambition to make something of himself. He did not have a happy childhood. His family was poor. When his father wasn’t drinking, he was a foreman at a cotton mill in Lowell, Massachusetts. One of Banks’ early jobs was replacing empty bobbins with full ones at his father’s factory. His lingering moniker from those boyhood days was “Bobbin-boy.” Banks’ mother was emotionally detached.[13]

While still working in the mills, Banks attended school and later found time to edit several local newspapers, including one for mill workers. He also courted another factory worker, Mary Theodosia Palmer. Besides where they worked, they had another thing in common. Mary had also had a miserable childhood.[14]

Banks wrote her love letters. What he liked about her, he said, was her “sweet disposition,” her ambition “for improving herself,” her “taste for dress,” her “eyes!” and her “legs.”[15] After the mill closed, they both went to night school. Banks eventually obtained a law degree. After a lengthy courtship, Banks and Mary married in 1847. It had been, as Fred Astaire complained to Ginger Rogers in the movie *Swing Time*, a “fine romance with no kisses” because Mary disliked

kissing.[16] Still, theirs was a happy marriage. The couple had four children, three of whom made it into adulthood.

At 5-feet 8-inches in height (average for that era), Banks was a handsome man with gray eyes, generous hair, a walrus mustache, and a pleasant commanding voice. He had an infectious smile. His wife said she liked to see him smile because he did it so well.[17] He was very conscious of his appearance and liked to dress well, perhaps compensating for what was likely shabby childhood clothing. "Being long in body and short in legs, like (Stephen) Douglas and Napoleon, I need a dark coat and vest and light pants. I am to wear a mulberry or dahlia colored coat with velvet collar and pants of a certain color but light. I shall be pleased."[18]

Banks rarely lost his temper. Like many children of alcoholics, he tried to avoid confrontation. He maintained equanimity even under stress, but it took a toll on him at night and kept him awake with insomnia. He was courteous and affable, but distant, another characteristic of children of alcoholics. "He is not very communicative even to those men in his command," said his second-in-command in 1861. "Although always pleasant and courteous, he cannot be said to be a companionable person."[19]

After obtaining his law degree, he appeared in one or two cases. William Robinson, a contemporary, said he had no talent as a lawyer. His talent, said Robinson, was "histrionic." He decided he would be better off pursuing a political career. Banks, said Robinson, had "a genius for being looked at." What better talent could a rising politician have than that? He "was born for a talker…. Few men appear better on the political platform."[20]

After serving in the Massachusetts legislature, he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives, where he was catapulted into national prominence when he was elected speaker in 1856. Flush with success, he considered running for president in the Republican party's first bid for the Presidency, but decided the time was not right. Instead, he backed John C. Frémont, who lost to Democrat James Buchanan. When the Democrats also won control of the House of Representatives, Banks lost his job as speaker. He returned to Massachusetts and the next year campaigned for governor and was elected.

Three years later, Banks began seriously planning a bid for the Presidency. An article in the *Boston Journal* in March 1859, that was picked up by the *New York Times* said it had been reviewing the probabilities of all prominent candidates for a presidential nomination and had concluded "Governor Banks occupies a very strong position." New York Senator William Seward would probably garner most votes at the Republican convention on the first ballot, but it would not be enough to give him the nomination, leaving the way open for Banks.[21] In the months leading up to the 1860 Republican convention, the three names most often mentioned as frontrunners were Ohio Governor Salmon P. Chase, New York Senator William Seward, and Massachusetts Governor Nathaniel P. Banks.[22] By April 1860, however, support for Banks collapsed. After Lincoln clinched the nomination, Banks was touted as vice president, but the vote went to Maine Senator Hannibal Hamlin.

When the war broke out, Banks let Lincoln know he was immediately ready to serve. Banks, an influential New Englander, expected Lincoln would give him a cabinet post, but Lincoln let Vice President Hamlin pick the New England member. Hamlin chose Gideon Welles as secretary of the navy. Banks' name was then floated for a prominent military appointment. Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase felt that while Banks lacked military experience, "in my opinion [he would] make a very fine general."[23] Lincoln was amenable. Banks had reorganized Massachusetts' militia when he was governor, and that militia had been first to answer Lincoln's

call for volunteers and had battled its way through Baltimore to protect the capital.

Banks himself had no military training. He had never served a single day in the military. But he was an influential politico who could attract volunteers and money for the Union cause. In May 1861, Lincoln appointed him Major General of Volunteers. He was then the fourth highest ranking general in the Union army, even outranking General Ulysses Grant, until 1864.

Banks' lack of military training was apparent from the beginning. He blundered his way through battle after battle. He was totally outmaneuvered by the Confederacy's generals. Banks lost so many wagons, rifles, and other military supplies to General "Stonewall" Jackson's army that he literally became the Confederates' supply depot. Jackson's men nicknamed him "Commissary Banks." Despite embarrassing defeats on the battlefield, Banks had a well-deserved reputation as an organizer and a coalition builder. Lincoln decided the best place for someone with that ability would be the Gulf Department, replacing the divisive General Butler.

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As military commander of the Gulf Department, Banks needed to know if and when the Confederates might be planning an attack. New Orleans was still "hostile," despite the seeming calm. Southern loyalists could be a fifth column should Confederate forces launch an attack on the city. Banks could try to obtain such information from rumors in the city, but no one would willingly talk about what they knew to just anyone. Lincoln had sent him to the Gulf Department to wrest control of the Mississippi River from the Confederates. He also wanted to lure Louisiana back into the Union. To do that, Banks needed to know where the people stood in terms of their continued loyalty to the Confederacy and their opposition to the federal government. If Louisiana could be coaxed back into the Union, other Southern states might follow. Banks had been sent to New Orleans on assignment. But if he could engineer Louisiana's return, he believed he would gain the recognition he craved. Such recognition would pave the way to another bid for the Presidency. For that to happen, he needed information about opposition to reconciliation in New Orleans from someone he could rely on. Lincoln had assured him that Dr. Zacharie would be a valuable asset in that regard, especially among the city's influential Jewish population.

By 1860, New Orleans had the seventh largest Jewish population in the United States and the largest Jewish population in the South. About 8,000 of Issachar's "countrymen" lived in the city (out of a total population of about 169,000), and roughly the same number of Jews lived in towns and villages in rural Louisiana.[24] After the federal occupation, the Jewish population increased even more as many moved from the countryside to New Orleans to avoid being caught in the middle of the war, making New Orleans an even larger and more concentrated Jewish community.[25]

As a Jew, Zacharie would be able ingratiate himself with New Orleans' influential Jews and learn about any subversive activities they were aware of. In sending him to New Orleans, Lincoln assured Banks, Dr. Zacharie would be a valuable asset in that regard. Increasingly apprehensive about possible subversive activities in New Orleans, Banks was impatient for Issachar's arrival.

"Spare no expense" getting to New Orleans, Banks urged him. "Lose no time. Mingle freely with everyone, especially with your own countrymen." The letter, marked "confidential," contained his instructions. He was to "report public sentiment about present and probable future reactions to the Government" in the city, and "as far as possible, people in Mississippi, and the adjacent country." Banks wanted to know "What [do they] wish. How far [can] the Government comply with their desires? … Ascertain … as far as you can the plans of the public Enemy." Zacharie was to pay special attention to any information about the location and number of troops

in the surrounding area and “the extent of their supplies and ammunition, and the different organizations of which their army may be composed.” Banks cautioned him about the credibility of the information he uncovered. “Report fully the character of your informants, the relations which they hold to the Government of the United States, and its people” he cautioned, “so that a fair estimate may be placed upon the reliability and value” of their information. Banks ended his tall order by expressing his “entire confidence in your fidelity and success.”[26]

General Nathaniel P. Banks: "Mingle freely with everyone, especially your own countrymen." Ca. 1861 (courtesy Library of Congress).

Issachar had planned to leave for New Orleans shortly after Banks' departure, but he could not have foreseen Grant's prohibiting Jews from travelling anywhere in his department. Lincoln could have issued him a pass, but he hadn't. Grant was mounting his offensive against Vicksburg, and Lincoln did not want to make him resentful and lose focus.

While still in Washington, Issachar wasted no time in preparing for his assignment. Writing to Union loyalist William Kursheedt, one of the founders and president of New Orleans' Sephardic *Dispersed of Judah* congregation, Issachar asked him to send him a list of names along with "particulars as to parties" willing to "go beyond the lines as peddlers to gather information."[27]

Issachar got the idea of sending peddlers as spies from General Dix when Issachar was at Fortress Monroe. Dix had "an arrangement" with a man who had a pass from Confederate officials to peddle in and around Richmond. Dix didn't have a "secret-service fund" to pay him but was allowing him to "carry some articles for peddling" and to "bring back tobacco" to compensate him. The spy had crossed the lines in his wagon four times without arousing suspicion and brought back information about troop deployments and intended general troop movements.[28]

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Issachar arrived in New Orleans during the second week of January. A week earlier, he received Kursheedt's list of "all the particulars as to the parties for whom I aske permission to go beyond the lines." As soon as he had settled in at the St. Charles Hotel, New Orleans' poshest hotel, he began interviewing people on Kursheedt's list. Most of them, he felt, were unsuitable. One of them was a woman "expecting to be confined in a very short time." In other words, she was pregnant. "I find it very difficult to obtain the right kind of men to cross the lines for information," he told Banks. It would be foolhardy to send "wild reckless persons of doubtful character." Their reports would not be reliable.[29]

At the end of the month, Issachar sent General Banks a bill for his first two weeks. General Banks had told Issachar to "spare no expense." Issachar understood Banks was authorizing him not just to pay for information, but also his own expenses. The bill came to $700 (almost $14,000 in today's money). A $117 item was for Issachar's hotel bill at the St. Charles. Another $150 was for his personal secretary, Charles Johnson. A $100 went to someone named Lewis Bach. Another $300 was for "services of self to date." The remaining $90 was for unnamed "expenses" and "information."[30]

1. Lincoln to August Belmont, July 31, 1862, CW, Vol. 5, 350.
2. Banks to Mary Banks, January 15, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 5.
3. George H. Hepworth, Whip, Hoe, and Sword (Boston: Walker, Wise & Co., 1864), 90.
4. OR, Series 1, Vol. 15, 311; Vol. 27, 639; James G. Hollandsworth Jr., Pretense of Glory: The Life of General Nathaniel P. Banks (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1998), Pretense of Glory, 95–96.
5. George H. Hepworth, Whip, Hoe, and Sword: The Gulf-Department in '63 (Boston: Walker, Wise and Company, 1864), Whip, Hoe, and Sword, 27–28.
6. General Orders No. 114, December 21, 1862; OR Series 1, Vol. 15, 615; New York Herald, February 15, 1863, 1.
7. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 574.
8. John A. Stevenson to Confederate Secretary of War, George Randolph, November 10, 1862, OR, Series 1, Vol. 15, 862.
9. C. A. Weed and A. J. Butler to Banks, December 27, 1862, Banks Papers, Box 26. The handwritten bribe offer is reproduced in Robert Werlich, 'Beast' Butler (Washington, D.C.: Quaker Press, 1962), n.p.
10. Chester G. Hearn, When the Devil Came Down to Dixie (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1977), 6, 196.
11. Banks to Mary Banks, January 16, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
12. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 870, 1280–1281.
13. Ibid., 8.
14. Ibid.
15. Banks to Mary Banks, August 17, 1846, ibid., Box 5.
16. Mary Banks to Banks, November 9, 1869, Banks Papers, Box 4.
17. Mary Banks to Banks, March 16, 1863, ibid., Box 3.
18. Banks to Mary, January, 1868, http://hcaauctions.com/lot-10720.aspx.
19. General Alpheus Williams, quoted in R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 272.
20. William Stevens Robinson, "Warrington" Pen-Portraits: A Collection of Personal and Political (Boston: Mrs. W. S. Robinson, 1877), 438.
21. New York Times, March 14, 1859, 4.
22. E.g., Chicago Tribune, July 23, 1859, 1; Rock Island (Illinois) Argus, September 9, 1859, 2; (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, December 22, 1859, 2.
23. Ibid., 213.
24. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 28.
25. Elliott Ashkenazi, The Business of Jews (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 1988), 5–11.
26. Banks to Isaac [sic] Zacharie, January 1, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26. The letter was not in Banks' own handwriting, so the misspelling of Issachar's name as "Isaac" was not necessarily because Banks was not as yet on a first-name basis with Issachar.
27. Kursheedt to Zacharie, January 7, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
28. Dix to Halleck, October 21, 1862, OR Series 1, Vol. 18, 435.
29. Zacharie to Banks, January 11, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
30. Expense account, Zacharie to Banks, February 25, 1863, LOC, Banks Papers, Box 75. See Appendix 3 for this and Issachar's other expenses for February and March 1863.

16

Spymaster

Almost as soon as he was settled at the St. Charles Hotel, Issachar began chatting with local merchants, attending meetings, concerts, auctions, and public gatherings, and listening for tidbits about Confederate activities in the area and possible sympathizers in the city. His reports to Banks were peppered with observations.

A person in town from the Lafourche (a parish southwest of New Orleans), says….
'Tis reported that…
In conversation this evening…
Having passed most of the day among the retailers, they state…
Among mechanics and others…
On visiting the different auction houses this morning…
Last evening had an interview with a person who left Jackson (Mississippi) on Saturday the 10th.
Having passed most of the day visiting different establishments.
Had a long conversation with two merchants recently arrived here.
Passed the morning with a Rebel recently from Vicksburg…[1]

Whenever he could, Issachar tried to verify what he had heard. When he overheard rumors about Union troop movements, he tried to track down the leaks. On one occasion, he'd heard that several federal regiments, batteries, and a cavalry company had left to confront the Confederates at Franklin, Louisiana. Issachar was able to trace the source of that information to clerks in the Quartermaster Office.

Within weeks of coming to New Orleans Issachar wrote Banks, "I now know the whole 'ring' [of secessionists] with its ramifications."[2] Levy and Dietes, a firm in New Orleans, was sending two wagons of goods to Baton Rouge that they intended to take into enemy lines. He advised Banks to "have a watch kept on them."[3] A day later, Issachar's spies informed him that Levy and Dietes' wagons were headed for Confederate lines. If Banks could immediately contact the commanding officer in Baton Rouge, "he'll [be able to] overhaul them."[4] Boats leaving upriver "should be well watched." A Mr. Ziegler of Messer. Otta. and Co. was sending 50 sacks of salt and 50 barrels of flour to Baton Rouge. "Messrs. McKinzie and Williams, supposedly sutlers," are shipping 200 cases of shoes to Baton Rouge. "There is something wrong about these shipments and should be looked into."[5] "They are at this time throwing dust in the eyes of the commission and no person but a thorough businessman (meaning himself) can detect them."[6]

Issachar eventually found several men he believed were competent and trustworthy to send into Confederate territory as spies. "They know the State well," he told Banks. They had families and had been in business in New Orleans, but they had fallen on hard times because of the war. "I have known two of these men from my infancy." They "will not deceive me," he assured Banks. "They are under obligations to me for past favors."[7]

"Knowing them from infancy" implies the two men grew up with him in England. But if Issachar were using the term loosely, it was much more likely he knew them from his early days in Philadelphia or Charleston. What favors they owed him is anyone's guess. Issachar assured Banks "these are intelligent men." Their information "may be relied on with confidence." One whom he was sending to Mobile was "a very reliable educated man." "He is well acquainted there," he said. "If any person can obtain reliable information, he is the person."[8]

He and the other spies he was sending out had to have a cover, he told Banks. They had to "have some good excuse for [crossing enemy lines]." They had to be able to gather information "without the least shadow of suspicion."[9] A good cover would be to send them out as peddlers and traders. "Give them fifty to two and fifty dollars in merchandise for them to sell to cloak to their real object. The risk which these men run is very great."[10] If they were arrested as spies, they could be hanged.

Issachar was confident the information these spies would garner would be of immense value. It would also "inaugurate a system of usefulness which up to this time has been greatly disregarded by us, but which has been used with much success by our enemies."[11]

"And so," writes historian Bertram Korn, "instead of organizing a 'corps of corn doctors,' as he had originally intended as his effort to aid the war effort, Issachar had become the head of a network of secret agents."[12]

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At the end of his first two weeks in New Orleans, Issachar sent Banks a summary of his "observations about the city." Issachar peppered his report with accolades about Banks. His appointment here "is regarded with much favor." He was "spoken of by all, with all due respect. A very violent secessionist" told Issachar "he was d__d glad" Banks hadn't been sent here first. If he had, New Orleans "would have been a Union city."[13]

Issachar was not done stroking Banks' ego. New Orleans' Jewish population, he said, was also happy with the way he was governing the city. "Among Israelites, you are looked upon with a great deal of favor." Many of the things "you have already done" have been "a benefit to them all as a class." After the harsh treatment at the hands of General Butler, Banks' "kind actions" in time would encourage them to "embrace once again the Union cause."[14] Banks could not have been more pleased.

Everyone in high places seemed to have their own personal spies. A little more than a week after New Orleans fell into federal hands, Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase appointed George Denison the customs collector in New Orleans. As Chase's cousin and personal watchdog, Denison sent Chase weekly reports, "fully and without reserve, all that relates to persons and things not proper for the subject of official communcations."[15]

Two weeks after Issachar began interviewing potential spies, Denison duly reported that "a person here of the Jewish persuasion, an Israelite indeed named Dr. Zacharie who is said lately to have been a healer of corns and bunions, in New York," was in New Orleans as a "Confidential Agent, or Correspondent, of the President."[16] He wears a "flowered velvet" vest. His hair is "beautifully oiled." He perfumes himself with a distillate "sweeter than the winds that blow from Araby." The "vulgar little scoundrel takes bribes." An inveterate anti–Semite, Denison mistook Issachar's spy ring as just a way "to make money."[17]

Denison's accusations that Issachar was corrupt were the proverbial "pot calling the kettle black." Denison used his post as customs collector to liberally line his own pockets. Denison, said Thomas Durant, a contemporary was "a corrupt Treasury agent … pandering to Secretary Salmon Portland Chase via a flood of letters purporting to tell all from the Department of the Gulf, while he calmly gathered to himself numberless casks of fine cognac and palmed envelopes stuffed with promiscuous cash, flirting in the meantime with his patron's most virulent political foes."[18]

A month after Banks took over from Butler, Denison wrote to Butler, "the happiest day of my

life will be the day when a steamer arrives with you on board." Were he to return, Denison was certain everything would change for the better, including "a very disagreeable condition of things here." By "disagreeable condition," Denison meant "a host of speculators, Jews and camp followers" pouring into New Orleans. "I regard them as natural enemies. The whole crowd, and Dr. Zachary [sic] among them, with eager expectancy [are] like wolves about to seize their prey."[19]

The anti–Semitic tax collector didn't believe Issachar was sending spies into Confederate territory as disguised peddlers. Denison called Issachar a "humbug." When the "Israelite" asked him to issue a permit for a man named Simon, another of his "friends," to take $20,000 worth of goods to Baton Rouge for sale, Denison fumed, "Jews take to trade, as ducks to water."

Denison was willing to take "the risk of impairing the Doctor's efficiency as [a] government agent." He wouldn't issue Simon a trading permit without a written order from General Banks. Issachar explained the man had to look like a peddler "to conceal the real reason for being in Baton Rouge." Denison wouldn't budge. After Issachar came back with Banks' authorization, Denison reluctantly issued the permit, convinced that like himself, Issachar was going to personally profit from it.[20]

General George Foster Shepley, another of Butler's anti–Semitic loyalists, was equally contemptuous of Issachar. The "retired corn-doctor, Jew, is here as a spy." Dr. Zacharie, he griped, "is said to be directly under the appointment of the President, but [is] the intimate associate and confidential advisor of Banks." Shepley was Louisiana's military governor. No less corrupt than Denison, when he wasn't occupied with his military duties, he found time to engage in illicit trading for Southern cotton. Shepley was embittered that Issachar's agents were looking for information "that would tell" against his former boss. "The Christ killers," he said, "have it all their own way."[21]

Denison and Shepley weren't Issachar's only detractors. Based on a letter a clerk in Banks' office sent him, a Boston merchant, Joseph H. Hill, wrote Banks that "to prevent your reputation from being injured by one, in whom I think you place confidence," he was alerting him to "a person who spends considerable time in your office, Zachery [sic], I think is the name."

"This Mr. Z." was overheard offering an agent for a company that owned a steamer that had been seized by the government to get it released "for the sum of one thousand dollars, two hundred to be paid down—the balance when the job should be consummated." The agent had rejected Issachar's attempted bribe, although he would gladly have paid that amount, Hill said, had the fine been officially levied. A day or so later, when the agent was in General Banks' office waiting to talk to him about the seizures, Stephen Hunter, the clerk in Banks' office, wrote Hill he had overheard Issachar repeating his bribe.[22] A month later, Hill sent a more detailed letter to Banks elaborating the details of alleged bribe, adding he would prefer his name not be used in any follow-up unless it was strictly necessary.[23]

Issachar's most ambitious efforts as a spymaster was a deception involving William G. Betterton, a New Orleans grocer, commission agent, and suspected Confederate agent. Issachar had heard rumors that Betterton was sending supplies across government lines. After gaining Banks' approval for what amounted to a sting operation, Issachar approached Betterton with a proposition.

For a payment of $4,000 and a 25 percent share of the profits, plus his expenses, Issachar promised to go to Washington and "use my influence" with "government authorities" to get their "permission to ship one or more loads of goods through the Federal lines into the Confederacy"

and bring back cotton and naval stores.

Betterton would be responsible and would keep an account of all the goods they would send and receive. Betterton's "friend who has permission or a contract with the Confederate authorities to export cotton and naval stores" would make all the arrangements inside Confederate lines. Betterton would provide protection for him and any others who went with him. Betterton and his "friend" would divide "the remaining seventy-five percent interest in profits." If it becomes necessary for the parties interested on the Confederate side to visit New Orleans, "they shall have every facility so far as is my power and influence for safe and unmolested return."[24]

Betterton was well aware of Issachar's reputation as Banks' agent. Even Confederate newspapers were regularly reporting on his public life and activities: The "spy department" in New Orleans was headquartered at the St. Charles Hotel. "The chief spy is from Washington City. He was formerly Lincoln's corn-doctor. It is currently reported that he has succeeded in converting many of the Hebrew persuasion to his views, and makes good use of them in executing his plans. The authorities (Confederate) cannot be too careful of such persons."[25]

Betterton had also heard rumors that Issachar was bribing officials. Government officials were notorious for taking bribes. Still, Betterton was leery of duplicity. To remove any doubt of Issachar's sincerity, Betterton told Issachar he wanted their agreement in writing. The agreement, dated March 7, 1863, described each of their roles and compensation in the smuggling operation.

Betterton had good reason not to trust any verbal agreements with government agents. In May 1861, he and his then-partner, a J.E. Challard, had met with Colonel Theodore Lewis, "Confidential Agent of Confederate States of America," in Montgomery, Alabama. They showed him samples of military weapons they said they could purchase in Havana and said they could deliver them to the Confederacy from Vera Cruz, Mexico.

If Lewis agreed, they wanted to know, "where you will make a deposit of the amount of freight which will have to be paid?" Betterton and Challard weren't willing to make any deal, "except on this basis." They also wanted to know if he would pay for bribes that had to be given "to fee any official to let the vessel or vessels depart in peace." If they didn't hear from him by July 19, they would be leaving for Richmond.

Lewis agreed to pay $17 for rifles but declined to pay $8 each for sabers. He also refused to give Betterton a deposit in advance. Betterton and Challard accused Lewis of trashing their mission and asked President Davis to compensate them for their time and efforts.

"Having done everything in our power to execute our mission and having failed only through stupidity (if not worse) of your agent, we think we have justly earned our commissions, and respectfully ask the same for our trouble and expense."[26]

Betterton's calling Lewis stupid and incompetent was a mistake. Lewis' brother had heard "rumors derogatory to the honor and integrity of my brother" (who was now a prisoner of war) circulating in New Orleans and other communities. "I traced their origin to a certain W. G. Betterton," he told the *New Orleans Crescent*, "and confronted him to prove his 'foul aspersions'" by "this Betterton's agency."[27]

Betterton had no written proof of his arrangement with Lewis and apologized. Insulting a Confederate government agent was bad for business. Betterton's apology appeared in the *Crescent* below Lewis' brother's accusation. "I hereby retract all I may have said derogatory to his character," said Betterton. He was cheerfully making this correction to restore "myself in a proper position before the community and the Government."

Once bitten, Betterton was now more careful to get Issachar's agreement in writing.

To further convince Betterton he could deliver his side of their deal, Issachar showed him letters Banks had written him proving he had personal contact with Lincoln and Secretaries Seward and Chase. Several months later, Betterton told Banks there was another part of his arrangement that Issachar had left out of their written contract.

According to Betterton, to get Banks' cooperation, Issachar said he would give Banks' wife $50,000 from the money he expected to make. Dr. Zacharie "gave me to distinctly understand that from this speculation, fifty thousand dollars were to be taken and given to Mrs. Banks your wife. The reason why the money was to be given to her, was that it could not be said that you had received any thing, for any such enterprises or operations."

Believing Banks could be bought was assuring. It was the way Betterton did business. "From the manner in which the whole subject was broached, and the free use made by Dr. Zacharie of Banks' name and his wife as the one receiving the bribe," Betterton "gave credence to it."[28]

Even with Issachar's assurances and the written agreement, Betterton still had lingering doubts Issachar had the connections to make the deal happen. To satisfy Betterton he was not bamboozling him, the day before he left for Washington, on March 7, 1863, the same date as he signed the agreement with Betterton, Issachar wrote a letter of introduction for Betterton to give to Banks. Calling Betterton "our mutual friend," Issachar said Betterton "would be most happy to have you visit his family. Any favor conferred upon him will be fully appreciated."[29]

Issachar was nothing if not self-confident and grandiose. His deal with Betterton was not just to shut down Betterton's smuggling operation. By March 1863, Issachar envisioned himself as a peacemaker. To initiate a peace negotiation with the Confederacy, he had to meet in person with someone high up in the Confederate command who could arrange for him to talk to influential Confederate leaders. The nearest Confederate of that stature was General John Pemberton, commanding officer at Vicksburg. Issachar hoped that if he gained Betterton's trust, Betterton would use his influence to arrange a pass for Issachar to meet with Pemberton, and through him, to arrange a meeting with Confederate leaders in Richmond.

The $4,000 bribe to Betterton and Issachar to outfit his spies as peddlers came from the sale of confiscated cotton. "We all know," the secretary of the treasury reported to Congress, "officers in various places were in the habit to taking property wherever they could find it … and using it, as they said, for the purposes of the government, and in many instances probably for their own purposes." Banks used some of that money to buy and sell cotton to pay for provisions. In late December 1863, Banks' quartermaster warned Banks if he didn't sell more cotton, his department would be bankrupt. Banks also used his fund to pay for his wife to come from New York to host lavish parties as a way of winning the support of New Orleans' civic and business leaders.[30]

Issachar's February's invoice for $740 was not very different from January's. There was a charge for a $100 paid to a Mr. Collins, the spy Issachar had recruited to go to Mobile,[31] and an additional $10 charge for "information." The remaining $630 was for Issachar's routine expenses for that month: $121 for his hotel bill at the St. Charles Hotel, $150 for his secretary, and another $360 for "services of self to date."[32] Banks did not question the expenditures.

Issachar was aware "some enemies" were accusing him of profiteering from illegal cotton trading.[33] Issachar "most earnestly" protested any wrongdoing to Lincoln. Knowing Lincoln's well-known fondness for humorous anecdotes to make a point, Issachar said he was like "the Irish Biddy who remarked to the lady of the house, 'shurr Mistress darlent a poor gal that works hard like to know if she gives satisfaction to youz.'"[34]

“Never since I have been here,” Issachar groused to Lincoln, “have I bought sold or bartered, or been interested in any speculation.” His profession, he said, had earned him money enough that he had no need to speculate.[35] Despite his absence in New Orleans, Issachar claimed his New York office cleared $10,000 over expenses.[36] It was either an exaggeration, or he lied to the Internal Revenue Service.[37]

Despite complaints, the law did not provide any means for enforcement. Issachar listed his earnings with the IRS at $1,000 in New York and $800 at his Philadelphia office.[38] He claimed he was exempt from federal tax because of the $800 personal exemption (equivalent of $30,000–$40,000 in today’s money). He wasn’t exempt from New York State retail tax and had a $10 tax bill.[39]

Issachar passed on every snippet of information to Banks and also sent periodic flattering reports about Banks to Lincoln and Seward. He had gone to New Orleans, he said, “to use my best efforts, humble though they be, in aiding to unite our country. Should I in any way be instrumental in consummating so great a result, my ambition will be satisfied. For I shall know full well my name will not be forgotten either by the United States government or the people of Louisiana.”[40]

* * * * * * * *

Issachar’s relationship with Banks was odd. Issachar felt a special camaraderie toward Banks. Did Banks feel the same? Banks was an introvert who didn’t socialize much. Banks’ wife repeatedly said he had no intimates. Vice president Hannibal Hamlin called him “cold and selfish.”[41] William S. Robinson, who knew him personally, said Banks was “not a warm-hearted person.” He “was never known to go out of his way an inch to confer a favor on a friend or supporter, unless another was expected at a future period.”[42] What did he expect from his relationship with Issachar? Banks was uncomfortable in groups, but when Issachar invited him to a party at his hotel, Banks accepted. Issachar was outgoing and ebullient. If he read anything, it was the newspapers and his own testimonial book. Two things they did have in common: both were ambitious, and both dressed meticulously.

Soon after Banks was transferred to New Orleans, his wife began hosting parties in New York, charming the rich and powerful. Among those she entertained were New York’s political boss, Thurlow Weed, influential newspaper editors, and Horace Greeley’s and James Gordon Bennett’s wives. The Astors, Roosevelts, Vanderbilts, Bancrofts, Goulds, and Blodgetts were all guests. Banks told her not to worry about the cost. “‘You deserve to be an empress,’ he said. Behind all Mary’s activities in 1863,” writes Banks’ biographer, “was a deliberate effort to make friends with the people who counted.” Mary’s activities were “redolent of a political campaign, rather than a socialite’s party schedule.”[43]

Issachar rarely missed an opportunity to pass on compliments he’d heard about the general. “A very influential gentleman of this city, who is a registered enemy” had nothing but praise for the general. “The nervous excitability of the population under Genl. Butler’s infamous rule, has given way to a hopeful feeling” now that Banks was in charge. The “registered enemy” was full of praise for him. “I can and must respect an officer who while fulfilling his duties acts with generosity & does not forget that he is a gentleman.”[44] Banks basked in the praise. He was no longer depressed. “All the people seem to think well of me—even the thieves take off their hats.”[45]

Banks wanted to believe what Issachar was telling him. He wanted to believe that his policies

were winning public sentiment. He was mistaken, and Issachar no less so. Thieves may have tipped their hats to the General, but New Orleans was still very much a secessionist city. In February 1863, a crowd of about 10,000 people, most of them women, gathered at the levee. Waving little Rebel flags, singing Confederate songs, they cheered and waved their handkerchiefs to say goodbye to captured rebels as they boarded their ship. The Union officer in charge ordered them to move back. None moved. Instead, they began hurling insults at the Union men. Fed up with their refusal to move, the provost marshal ordered his men to advance on the crowd with fixed bayonets. Several of the women were arrested. Many in New Orleans considered Banks no better than Butler.[46]

Issachar also sent Lincoln flattering reports about Banks: "You cannot imagine the vast amount of business he (Banks) gets through with each day, never losing his self possession, listening patiently to all, I sometimes wonder that his health stands it as well as it does." Then came what would become a typical self-serving, self-congratulatory note. "For my own part I have endeavoured to assist him all in my power, my great desire is that *our* efforts (italics mine) may prove of benefit to your administration."[47]

Once he started congratulating himself, Issachar couldn't hold back. He began to imagine he was more than just Banks' and Lincoln's ears on the ground. He was their ambassador.

"My profession and my habits of life [have] thrown me among all classes of people." He had "secured the friendship of many of our most distinguished statesmen, commencing in my boyhood with the great Henry Clay." Issachar felt "flattered at the success I have met with, not only among my own people but among the most wealthy and influential citizens." Disingenuously, he continued, "do not think it egotism on my part [when I relate these things]." The day before, "one of the most prominent gentlemen had told him, 'Doctor, had the President sent six missionaries amongst us like you it would have more effect upon us than hundreds of Canon.'"[48] Issachar's ego did not think it was too much of an exaggeration.

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The night before Issachar left for Washington, the *New York Herald* reported General Banks had been the guest of honor at a "small, but very select, dinner party" at Issachar's suite at the St. Charles Hotel.[49] Issachar's departure for Washington was duly reported by the *Times-Picayune.* Dr. Zacharie, it informed its readers, was leaving at the request of the President. "The doctor has, we understand, (has) discharged to the entire satisfaction of His Government the important trusts confided to him." Although his "duties here are not yet closed, he expects to return after the elapse of a few weeks."[50]

Lincoln had not summoned Issachar to Washington. He was going on his own and with Banks' approval. Issachar was about to broach his plan to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the war. He himself was the source for the *Times-Picayune*'s comment about Lincoln's summoning him to Washington.

After exchanging pleasantries with Lincoln, Issachar handed him a letter from Banks dated March 6, 1863, a day before Issachar signed the agreement with Betterton. The dating of Banks' letter implies that Issachar had worked out the deal with Betterton and had Banks' approval, some time before it was written out and signed.

Banks began his letter by praising Issachar's efforts in New Orleans: "He has during his stay here been very active and among the People. Especially among his own countrymen, who are numerous and powerful, he has exercised a beneficial influence." Banks was aware Issachar had been accused of speculating. "Some of my own officers have entertained this idea, but, he has

constantly assured me that it was not the fact, and I have fully credited his statement. I mention this because I am informed that such representations have been made to you."

Having praised and defended Issachar, Banks broached the subject of "suggestions" Issachar would be making to him. Banks did not elaborate on what those suggestions might be, leaving it to Issachar to explain.

> Dr. Zacharie from his earliest life here and his extended acquaintance with his own People through the South has had very important opportunities of obtaining information as to the condition and feeling of the southern People. The suggestions he can make to you I believe to be practicable, and worthy of consideration. In a word, I believe, making due allowance for a somewhat sanguine temperament, that you can receive his report of the condition of affairs here and in the South generally with full confidence.[51]

Banks' comment about Issachar's "sanguine temperament" acknowledged Issachar's exuberance. But he was optimistic his plan was worth paying attention to.

Both sides were war weary. In public, Lincoln was steadfast in his pursuit of the war. In private, he was willing to be generous. The Emancipation Proclamation had added a moral element to the war, but as long as the South remained undefeated, it was an empty gesture. The war might drag on for years. Lincoln believed that despite Confederate President Davis' intransigence, most Southerners, especially the South's wealthy planters, were disenchanted with secession and could be induced to return their allegiance to the Union, including giving up their slaves if it were in their material interest.[52]

In 1862, Lincoln had first floated the idea of buying the freedom of slaves in the border states and the District of Columbia. At $400 per person, the price tag would have been about $1.6 billion. Since the value of the slaves was estimated at $4 to $6 billion, slave owners turned it down.[53] Despite the rebuff, Lincoln clung to his lifelong belief in the power of economic forces.[54]

In 1863, with the tide turning in the North's favor, Lincoln believed compensating the South for liberating it slaves was now more viable. When Issachar first offered himself as a peace negotiator, Lincoln saw an opportunity to put his economic overtures back in play. Issachar outlined his agreement with Betterton and the ultimate mission of going to Richmond, "of obtaining information as to the condition and feeling of the southern people."[55]

Banks had said that Issachar would be bringing him "suggestions," but had left it up to Issachar to elaborate. One of those suggestions was to allow Issachar to go to Richmond. Another likely "suggestion" Banks said Issachar would be bringing him was Banks' own idea for using economic incentives to entice planters west of the Mississippi who were still loyal to the Confederacy to switch their loyalties.

Ever since coming to New Orleans, Banks had been aware of the rampant corruption in his department involving illicit cotton trading. Banks proposed a win-win situation to curtail it. Northern manufacturers would still get the cotton they needed, planters would get more money for their staples, and corruption involving speculators would be curtailed.

Issachar had one more suggestion. He proposed the government assume "payment of their (Confederate) debt, which more or less influences every individual in Rebeldom."[56] Taking on all or some of the South's wartime debt, in addition to compensating them for their lost property of slaves, would be a major expense. But the cost of one, two, or more years of war would be an even greater economic burden. If there were a possibility some in the Confederate leadership might be amenable to economic incentives as a way of saving face to a negotiated peace, Lincoln wanted to know their conditions. Lincoln could not officially back Issachar's mission to Richmond. But if Issachar were to go as a private citizen, Lincoln could not be accused of capitulating to the South. Lincoln told Issachar he would get back to him after conferring with

Secretary Seward.

After meeting with Lincoln, Issachar left for New York to visit his family. On March 17, he telegraphed Lincoln from New York. “Arrived here last night. Am quite unwell. Will have the honor of seeing you in day or two.”[57]

Three days later, Issachar’s secretary, Charles Johnson, wrote Betterton from New York that Issachar had been ill for three days in bed. They were now en route for Washington. “Having all the influence we could possibly desire, we have no reason to doubt our success.”[58]

On March 25, 1863, Issachar sent Lincoln his visiting card, letting him know he was back in Washington. Lincoln returned the card with an enigmatic note on the back of it: “I am running your matter down as fast as I can. It would not advance it for you to see me tonight.”[59] The “matter” was the letter from Banks that Lincoln had intended to forward to Seward, which had been mislaid.

The next day, it was located. Lincoln sent it to Seward with a note: “Instruct Banks to furnish Zacharie with funds from secret service and in Bank’s [sic] discretion—spend up to $5,000. Say to Banks that he can draw up to five millions.” The note included a pass for “I Zacharie MD. & his secretary.”[60]

Issachar returned to New York on March 27, without knowing whether Lincoln had approved his mission. Before leaving, he wrote Lincoln a note greatly regretting that “policy” had prevented him from personally saying goodbye.

“My mind is much agitated on account of the great responsibility resting on me. I trust everything will be consummated to realize your best wishes. If it does not the fault shall not be mine. I hope you will aid my efforts by giving such orders as will tend to carry out suggestions contained in my memorandum.”[61] Issachar’s note didn’t indicate what was in the memorandum. It likely mentioned his agreement with Betterton to gain his trust to arrange a meeting with General John Pemberton. Issachar and Lincoln had obviously discussed something Lincoln considered feasible.

Issachar ended his note by thanking Lincoln “for the prompt and kind manner you have acted towards me”[62] and the wrote a jubilant note to Banks telling him “everything that I could do here has been done.”[63]

The same day Seward received Lincoln’s note approving funds for Issachar’s mission, Seward dispatched his own note to Banks: “If you think the doctor can be useful to the public service in the prosecution of his plans for obtaining information,” he was authorized “to provide transportation and funds for expenses, not to exceed five thousand dollars.”[64] In the same dispatch, Seward said he was authorizing a $5 million dollar line of credit from a “secret service fund” that Banks could draw on if needed.

Seward stressed the need for secrecy. “I need hardly say that it is important that it should be guarded against any accidental disclosure.”[65] That same day, Seward sent his son, Colonel William H. Seward, to deliver the secret dispatch to Banks.

A $5 million disbursement from Lincoln’s “secret service fund” was “remarkable,” writes Banks’ biographer, Raymond Banks. Lincoln had already secretly authorized a secret payment of up to $5,000 in December 1862, for spies when he appointed Banks military commander of the Department of the Gulf.[66]

As commander of the Continental Army, General Washington had relied on intelligence to track the movements of British forces during the Revolution and had created a spy ring to

analyze their reports. In his first State of the Union address as President, he asked Congress for funds to finance continued espionage operations. In 1790, in response to his request, Congress created the "Contingent Fund of Foreign Intercourse," also known as the "Secret Service Fund." The original authorization was for $40,000. Three years later, the fund had ballooned to $1 million, amounting to 12 percent of the government's budget. Although Congress required certification of disbursements, it also allowed the President to conceal the purposes and recipients of the funds. In 1846, Congress questioned the secrecy provision. Citing national security and protection of sources, President Polk refused to comply.[67] The secrecy provision was not challenged again, but a report of the amount of funds dispersed was sent to Congress. In 1863, when Lincoln authorized Banks the $50,000 from the fund, expenditures amounted to almost 20 percent of the total $227,000 sent by the dispersing clerk at the War Department to Banks and other recipients.[68]

The Secret Service Fund was just that, a fund. It was not an intelligence agency, and the funds were often used for payments for purposes besides espionage. Banks' biographer noted several payments Banks issued from the fund for Michael Hahn's election bid for Louisiana governor in 1864, including a preelection parade with six military bands. Other payments included $1,500 to Hahn's law partner and $300 to a local dentist who endorsed Banks' policies.[69]

Back in New York, Issachar paid an unexpected visit to Banks' wife, Mary. "I should judge from his conversation," she wrote her husband afterward, "his great wish is to make money. And for you to make some also. I told him I thought he could not persuade you to do that."[70]

Was Issachar following through with the part of the deal Betterton claimed Issachar had made with Banks to funnel $50,000 in bribe money to him through his wife? Was his deal with Betterton in fact a scheme to make money for himself? Had Banks in fact taken a bribe?

Issachar's motives may not have been entirely aboveboard. As much as he believed he was doing his patriotic duty, he may not have been able to resist temptation. The lure of enormous profits from trading in cotton had seduced generals, politicians, and even men closely tied to Lincoln, although Lincoln himself never sought to gain from the trade. Lincoln's long-time friend Orville Browning discussed a "scheme" with Lincoln for him and several "prominent men" to send James Singleton to Richmond with the government's approval and official permission to negotiate contracts for cotton, tobacco, and other staples. Browning said they hoped to "make some money and do the country some service."[71] Sending greenbacks into the destitute Confederacy, he rationalized, would induce secessionists back into the Union.[72] Browning eagerly predicted the scheme "will make us rich if we can only get it out."[73]

If Issachar told Betterton he had bribed Banks only to convince Betterton that Banks was in on the deal, why did Mary write Banks after Issachar left that his "great wish was to make money" and for him "to make some also?" Betterton could not have known about Issachar's visiting Mary. Was Issachar in fact corrupt? Did Banks succumb to a bribe? Or did Mary misinterpret Issachar's intentions about Banks making some money too?

Dr. Zacharie had talked "large," said Mary. He had spoken very kindly of Banks, but she felt that Banks was being "too free and intimate with him." Judging from what Issachar said during his visit, Mary sensed some chicanery was involved. "I do not want, my dear husband, to do wrong," she said.[74]

Issachar visited her again a few days later, adding to Mary's misgivings. "I felt a little afraid of him," she said. Issachar had invited her to come to dinner at his house, but she had made some excuse not to go. From the way Issachar talked about him, someone might think Banks and Dr.

Zacharie were intimate friends. That was not likely, said Mary. “You have no intimates.”[75]

It was because Banks had “no intimates” that she believed him susceptible to Issachar’s flattery. Her concern would have been greater had she known Banks had been a guest at Issachar’s “very elegant dinner” two weeks before he left for Washington.

When Issachar gave a party, he went all out. “Nothing was lacking that might be desired by the epicure or bon vivant!” the *Times-Picayune* told its readers. “The dishes were as many (and) as varied” as before the war, “as were also the wines, which surely came from cellars stocked for years ere the terms ‘blockade’ and ‘contraband’ became familiar to our ears.” Some of the guests, “travelled gentlemen,” were overheard saying “not even in the most celebrated of the Paris restaurants or hotels, had they ever sat down to a more elegant dinner.”[76]

Mary continued to brood about Issachar’s influence on her husband. Several weeks later, she wrote Banks, mentioning she had treated Dr. Zacharie well, “but did not allow him to make any arrangements for me,” implying he should do the same. Mary reiterated he had no “intimates.” “I want your life pure, and correct, faultless,” said his dutiful wife. “We all know that you are a good man. I know that you are good”[77]

Banks’ $6,600 a year salary as a major general plus the $125–150 a year he received from rental property should have been enough to live on. But he seemed always to be living just above his income. He continued to pay his bills on installments. He continued to carry a mortgage on his home in Massachusetts. His clothes were in poor condition. Mary was living in a boarding house on East 14th Street with their three children. She was paying rent by the week. As a general’s wife, she told Banks she was “obliged to spend money pretty freely.” She was hosting parties for the Astors, Vanderbilts, and other wives of New York’s elite to win their support should Banks make a bid for the Republican nomination in 1864. “You know I like to look well and to appear well.”[78] “Both partners,” writes Banks’ biographer, Fred Harrington, “were fond of show.”[79] “Grand entertainments staged by Mrs. Banks” required money. Banks’ expenditure “hinted at large peculation or bribes at New Orleans”[80]

There were also irregularities in charges Banks made to his secret services fund. Banks paid his barely literate clerk, William Palmer, $150 a month, much more than a clerk’s usual salary. Palmer was Mary’s brother. He paid his servant $102, although his salary was already paid for out of government allowances. Banks’ also footed General Grant’s hotel bill when he briefly visited New Orleans. Although the room and food bill normally came to $1, Banks deducted $800 from his “secret fund. Banks also used his secret services fund to pay for Mary to come to New Orleans to host his parties. Banks was not extravagant. During the war, he only spent half his secret services fund.”[81]

1. Zacharie to Banks January 15, 18, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
2. Zacharie to Banks, January 13, 1863, ibid.
3. Zacharie to Banks, January 12, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
4. Ibid.
5. Zacharie to Banks, January 29, 1863, ibid.
6. Zacharie to Banks, January 25, 1863, ibid.
7. Zacharie to Banks, January 11, 1863, ibid.
8. Zacharie to Banks, January 29, 1863, ibid.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Korn, American Jewry, 87.
13. Zacharie to Banks, January 31,1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
14. Ibid.
15. Quoted in James Marten, "The Making of a Carpetbagger: George S. Denison and the South, 1854–1866," Louisiana History 34 (Spring 1993), 136. Denison's salary came from a Supreme Court Case, U.S. vs. Flanders, 112 U.S. 188, November 3, 1884.
16. Denison to Salmon P. Chase, February 1, 1863; Edward G. Bourne (ed.), Diary and Correspondence of Salmon P. Chase (Washington, D.C.: American Historical Association, 1902), Vol. 2, 353 (hereafter Chase Diary).
17. Denison to Chase, February 12, 1863, Chase Diary, 353–359.
18. Thomas Durant, quoted by Joseph G. Tregle, Jr., "Thomas J. Durant," Louisiana Journal of Southern History 45 (November 1979), 495. Denison's corruption is documented in U.S. vs. Flanders, 112 U.S. 88, November 3, 1884, and the Smith Brady Commission, Testimony Received, Book B, 134–42, I, 164–170, 816–22, II, 673–79, 699–701, 715–721.
19. Denison to Chase, Chase Diary, February 12, 1863, 359–360.
20. Denison to Chase, February 1, February 12, 1863, Chase Diary, Vol. 2, 353.
21. Shepley to Butler, February 20, 1863; Butler and Marshall, Private and Official Correspondence, 3, 14; Hollandsworth, Pretense of Glory, 155. On Shepley, see Candace Kanes, "George F. Shepley," Maine Memory Network, https://www.mainememory.net/sitebuilder/site/2176/page/3613/display?use_mmn=1, accessed July 2, 2017.
22. Joseph Hill to General Banks, March 3, 1863, U.S. Archives, Record Group 393, Army Continent Commands, 1821–1920, Department of the Gulf Letters Received (Civil), Box 4.
23. Hill to Banks, March 13, 1863, ibid., Box 2.
24. NARA, Department of the Gulf, Register of Letters Received, RG 393, pt. 1, entry 1920, Box 2. The agreement, dated March 7, 1863, along with other letters from Issachar, was later found in 1865 during a search of Betterton's house by General Stephen A. Hurlbut.
25. Memphis Daily Appeal, April 17, 1863, 1.
26. OR Series IV, Vol. 1, 500, 503.
27. The (New Orleans) Crescent, October 30, 1861, 2.
28. Betterton to Banks, July 22, 1863, NARA, Box 2.
29. Zacharie to Banks, March 7, 1863, quoted by Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 94.
30. OR. Series 1, Vol. 26, 863; Congressional Record, December 12, 1867, 147; R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 911; Richard Taylor, Destruction and Reconstruction, Richard B. Harwell (ed.) (New York: Longmans Green & Co., 1955), 20. Banks was a poor money manager. In February 1864, Banks' departmental surgeon, B. F. Stevenson, wrote home, "there seems to be some hitch in the monetary affairs of this department … the military treasury at New Orleans is just now empty." Troops had not been paid in four months. B. F. Stevenson, Letters from the Army, 1862–1864 (Cincinnati: Robert Clarke, 1886), 306.
31. Zacharie to Banks, January 29, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
32. Expense account, Zacharie to Banks, Banks Papers Box 75.
33. New York World, February 18, 1863, 1; Boston Herald, February 19, 1863, 2.
34. Zacharie to Lincoln, February 19, 1863, ABL LOC.
35. Ibid.
36. Zacharie to Banks, December 28, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 30.
37. To deal with the financial crisis stemming from the war, in 1861, the Republican-dominated Congress voted to institute a national flat rate income tax of 3 percent on annual income above a personal exemption of $800, equivalent to $15,000 today, and 7.5% on income above $10,000. The government also authorized issuance of a national paper currency, popularly called "greenbacks," increases in tariff rates, and an increase in the national debt through public borrowing. Lincoln signed the measures into law in August 1861. Sheldon D. Pollack, "The First National Income Tax, 1861–1872," The Lawyer 67 (2014), 311–312; 311–330). In 1864, the rate was boosted to 5% after a $600 exemption.
38. U.S. IRS Tax Assessment Lists, 1862–1918 (ancestry.com).
39. Ibid.

40. Zacharie to Lincoln, February 19, 1863, ABL.
41. Basler, Collected Works, Vol. 4, 148.
42. Robinson, “Warrington,” 437.
43. Banks to Mary, March 21, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 5; R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 765, 863.
44. Zacharie to Banks, January 28, 1863, ibid.
45. Banks to Mary, February 24, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 5.
46. Leonard V. Huber, “The Battle of the Handkerchiefs,” Civil War History 8 (March 1962), 50.
47. Zacharie to Lincoln, January 14, 1863, ABL LOC.
48. Ibid.
49. New York Herald, March 28, 1863, 2.
50. (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, March 8, 1863, 2.
51. Banks, “To the President,” March 6, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26, original in Seward Papers, RRL.
52. Hollandsworth, Pretense of Glory, 95; OR Series 1, Vol. 15, 640; Series 3, Vol. 3, 187–190.
53. Andrew Weintraub, “The Economics of Lincoln’s Proposal for Compensated Emancipation,” American Journal of Economics and Sociology 32 (April 1973), 177.
54. Gabor S. Boritt, Lincoln and the Economics of the American Dream (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 239.
55. Banks, “To the President,” March 6, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26, original in Seward Papers, RRL.
56. Zacharie to Banks, December 28, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 30.
57. Telegram from Zacharie to Lincoln, March 17, 1863, ABL LOC, Series 1, General Correspondence.
58. Charles Johnson to Betterton, March 20, 1863, Archives RG 393, Letters Received, Box 4, Betterton file.
59. Lincoln to Zacharie, March 25, 1863, Brown Digital Repository, Brown University Library, 72336, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:72336/.
60. Lincoln to Seward, March 26, 1863, RRL.
61. Zacharie to Lincoln, March 27, 1863, Lincoln Papers, LOC.
62. Ibid.
63. Zacharie to Banks, March 27, 1863, NARA, RG 393, Department of the Gulf, Letters Received, Bureau of Civil Affairs, 1863.
64. Seward to Banks, March 26, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 75, original in RRL.
65. Ibid.
66. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 761.
67. The Evolution of the U.S. Intelligence Community—An Historical Overview, https://fas.org/irp/offdocs/int022.html.
68. House of Representatives, 38th Congress, 1st Session, Letter from the Secretary of the Treasury Transmitting Statements Showing Receipts and Expenditures for the Year Ending June 30, 1863, 154. By comparison, Major General Rosecrans was only allotted $4,000, and General Shepley, Louisiana’s military governor, was only allotted $10,000.
69. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 816, 1280–1281.
70. Mary Banks to Banks, April 1, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
71. Quoted in Surdam, “Traders,” 307.
72. Ibid.
73. Theodore Calvin Peace and James G. Randal, The Diary of Orville Hickman Browning (Springfield, IL: Illinois State Library, 1925), xxiii. Lincoln personally approved permits to trade with the South for friends, including one for Robert Lamon, the brother of Lincoln’s long-time friend and self-appointed bodyguard, Ward Hill Lamon, for 50,000 bales of cotton and one for long-time friend Leonard Swett for 150,000 bales of cotton. Surdam, “Traders,” 305.
74. Mary to Banks, April 6, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
75. Ibid., May 14, 1863.
76. (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, March 7, 1863, 2; New York Herald, March 28, 1863, 2.
77. Mary to “My Dear Husband,” May 14, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
78. Ibid., April 1, 1863.
79. Harrington, Fighting Politician, 6, 129.
80. Ibid., 135.
81. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 816, 1280–1281.

17

“Monomaniacs”

On April 17, Seward’s son, Colonel William H. Seward, personally delivered the authorizations to Banks at his headquarters near Port Hudson.[1] When he left**,** Banks immediately dashed off a letter to Secretary Seward. He assured him he had destroyed the secret dispatches in his son’s presence and would not do anything inconsistent with government interests.[2]

Back in New Orleans on April 17, 1863, Issachar telegraphed Banks who was “in the field,” informing him of his return.[3] When Banks didn’t reply, Issachar sent him a note the next day. “You cannot imagine how anxious I am to see you,” he said, “in fact I’m boiling over.”[4]

Issachar was “boiling over” with worry that either Seward had reconsidered, or the authorization letters he had promised to send Banks had been lost. He had to speak with him. “Should I remain here and wait your return or should I join you.” Issachar closed his letter saying his “heart leaped with joy when I heard of your success. many congratulations.”[5] Banks’ initial mission had been to bypass the Confederate stronghold at Port Hudson and strengthen Grant’s attack against Vicksburg. But instead of joining up with Grant, Banks decided to attack Port Hudson on his own. When that effort sputtered, he led a large part of his forces further to the south up the Red River, where he “annihilated” Confederate forces and captured Opelousas, the rebel capital of Louisiana.

Still “boiling over,” Issachar dashed off another letter to Seward that same day. Using the same congratulatory words he had sent Banks, Issachar repeated how his heart had leaped with joy when he heard about Banks’ success and praised him as “truly a man of action.” Issachar ended his note saying “parties” had been “anxiously waiting my return” to carry “out my suggestions.”[6] The “parties” anxiously waiting for his return was “Betterton,” who Issachar had visited that day and assured him he had accomplished everything he had set out to do in Washington.[7]

Banks was in high spirits after his military victory. He told Issachar he had received Seward’s letters authorizing his mission. Stroking Banks’ vanity, Issachar wrote back he had taken the liberty of relaying news of Banks’ victory to Lincoln and Seward, sure they would be proud of his “brilliant achievement.”[8] Issachar was also feeling so secure he ventured to give Banks military advice. “Pardon a suggestion I make, you know ’tis a fault or mine…. I urged the President to send you reinforcements.”[9]

Although Banks believed he had won a major military objective, he was soon to learn he was in the doghouse. Instead of being praised for dislodging the Confederates at Opelousas, General-in-Chief Henry Halleck reprimanded him. By not linking up with Grant, he had weakened Grant’s attack on Vicksburg. “Operations up the Red River [or] toward Texas,” he scolded Banks, were “only of secondary importance, to be undertaken *after* we get possession of the river (Mississippi).”[10]

Meanwhile, New Orleans “was in a state of intense excitement.” Banks had believed his conciliatory policies would soften attitudes toward his administration. Business was improving, and even thieves were tipping their hats to him. But despite token signs of compliance, New

Orleans was still at heart a Rebel city. Newspapers remained openly pro-Southern. Fed up with their intransigence, prior to leaving for Port Hudson, Banks issued a renewal of Butler's "registered enemies" order. Every citizen in New Orleans who had not already done so had to take the oath of allegiance to the Union. Those refusing would be transported into the Confederacy by May 15, 1863.[11] Unwilling to leave their homes, belongings, businesses, and friends, many took the oath, although their loyalties were still with the Confederacy. The more steadfast were allowed to take enough food to last them 10 days, some clothing, beds and bedding, and as much Confederate money as they had, but no gold or silver.

New Orleans' Jewish community was lax in its Judaism[12] but not in its loyalty to the Confederacy. The city's Jewish women were especially patriotic. The whole male population would have taken the loyalty oath, Issachar told Lincoln, were it not for the "female portion of their families who … have become perfect monomaniacs" in their refusal to do so.[13]

The *Cincinnati Enquirer* wisecracked that the result of extradition was that younger refugees would voluntarily enter the Confederate army while the middle aged would be conscripted. "And thus does New Orleans, by the generosity of the Federal Government, add at least two good regiments to the Confederate army."[14]

With no one else to turn to, other New Orleans' Jews who refused to take the oath but did not want to leave sought Issachar's help. Issachar did what he could. "Dr. Zacharie, the chiropodist … has of late been exceedingly active in assisting the Jewish portion of the registered enemies, of which class there are, or were, a great many, in their flight to Dixie," the *New York Herald* told its readers. "The Doctor appears to have taken them under his wing; for he has been beset with them morning, noon and night, and his elegant apartments at the St. Charles Hotel have sometimes been crowded with Israelites, waiting his leisure, in order to obtain his advice as to what they should do."[15] What could he have told them? If they wanted to stay, they had to take the oath.

Rabbi James K. Gutheim was one of the most prominent Jews refusing to take the loyalty oath. Born in 1817 in Westphalia, Germany, Gutheim was largely self-taught. He came to America in 1843 and worked as a merchant and taught Hebrew school until he took a job in Cincinnati as congregational leader at B'Nai Jeshurun (Children of Righteousness). In 1850, he moved to New Orleans as head of New Orleans' Sephardic congregation, the "Dispersed of Judah," Eight years later, he married Emilie Jones, the daughter of a wealthy merchant in La Grange, Georgia.[16]

Emelie was one of the "monomaniacs" who refused to take the loyalty oath. Issachar mistakenly imagined Gutheim was deep down a Union loyalist who held Lincoln in high esteem.[17] Issachar had convinced himself that Gutheim would not take the oath because of his wife.[18]

But Gutheim's heart was not for the Union. He did not hold the Union or Lincoln in high esteem. The day before Gutheim was deported to Mobile, he wrote his friend Rabbi Isaac Lesser in Philadelphia that the "Dictator in Washington" had ordered him and nearly all of his congregation who refused to take the oath of allegiance to leave with nothing but what they could wear and provisions for 10 days. He was more fortunate than the others, he told Leeser, he had somewhere to go because his wife's father was a wealthy merchant in Georgia and a leader in that city's Jewish community.[19] Soon after leaving New Orleans, congregations in Montgomery, Alabama, and Columbus, Georgia, both offered him the pulpit in their synagogues. Gutheim moved to Montgomery with his wife. He spent the rest of the war shuffling between the

two congregations.[20]

Days after taking the position in Montgomery, Gutheim held a prayer dedication for the synagogue, asking God to lend his "abundant favor and benevolence (on) our beloved country, the Confederate States of America" and to "judge between us and our enemies, who have forced upon us this unholy and unnatural war." It was his hope, he said, that the Union would recognize its transgression and "relinquish their cruel designs of subjugation, their lust of gain and dominion." The South, he said, was defending

> our liberties and rights and independence, under unjust and equitable laws … bless and protect the armed hosts that now stand forth in the defense of our sacred cause. May the breaches lately made in our lines soon be repaired, a series of glorious victories blot out our recent reverses, and the unrighteous invaders be repulsed on every side, abashed, confounded and discomfited … and our independence be recognized by all families of the earth.[21]

After the war, Gutheim was an active member in the Southern Historical Society, a group intent on keeping Confederate loyalties alive. His wife was one of the founders of New Orleans' Ladies Confederate Memorial Association and was reputed to have raised more money for the erection of their Confederate monument than any other member.[22]

Before his death in 1886, Gutheim was asked whether it was acceptable for Jews to be buried in Metairie Cemetery, New Orleans' cemetery for local elite. Gutheim gave his blessing, assuming all burials would be below ground and separated from gentile interment. (Burials in New Orleans' cemeteries are above ground because of the high water table.) A few months later, he died and became the first Jew to be buried in Metairie in Temple Sinai's section of the cemetery.

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Banks was unaware of the turmoil going on in New Orleans' Jewish community. The hapless general was leading another failed mission against Port Hudson. Unmindful of Banks' preoccupation with his military undertaking, on May 5, 1863, Issachar wrote that he was impatiently waiting to hear from a "friend" (Thomas Harper, Betterton's agent) who had left New Orleans for Vicksburg.[23] Four days later, although he had still not heard from the "friend," Issachar wrote Lincoln he was waiting for "assurances" from General Pemberton regarding "a pass to travel through Confederate lines to Vicksburg."[24] The reason Issachar never heard from Harper is that all communications with Vicksburg were cut off after Grant began his siege of the Southern stronghold. Discouraged, but not undaunted, Issachar assured Seward he would continue to "press the matter."[25]

Meanwhile, Lincoln and members of his Cabinet were receiving a constant barrage of complaints from New Orleans concerning Jews and specifically about Issachar. Some were outright anti–Semitic tirades. Some were accusations of bribery and profiteering. Some of his accusers were peeved at Issachar's boasting and arrogance. Many of those pointing the finger were less than upright citizens themselves.

General Butler accused "army contractors, 'principally Jews'" of "making fortunes by the war,"[26] while he and his brother were pocketing over a million dollars from illegally trading in cotton. George Denison, a Butler loyalist, accused Issachar of taking bribes, all the while doing exactly that himself.[27] General George Shepley, the military governor of occupied Louisiana and another Butler loyalist who was likewise involved in illicit cotton trading, denounced Issachar.[28] A Jewish merchant returning to Cincinnati from New Orleans wrote Isaac Wise that "local editors and correspondents of northern papers, residing temporarily [in New Orleans], frequently ventilate their stupid prejudice against our race in revolting newspaper hoaxes and downright

lies.[29]

Louisiana Congressman George Michael Decker Hahn also accused Issachar of soliciting bribes.[30] A Jew turned Christian, Hahn distanced himself from New Orleans' Jews to ally himself with anti–Semitic Butler loyalists in case Butler might return to New Orleans or replace Lincoln as the Republican nominee in the upcoming election. Unaware of the secret arrangements Issachar had with Banks and Lincoln, Hahn wrote Lincoln, "a certain Dr. Zacharie—a Jew … is, passing himself off as a confidential or government secret agent of the government and is using his influence over many of our highest military officials" to gain commercial advantages and favors from the government officers for people bribing him. "If he is an agent of yours," he wrote Lincoln, "he should not be liable to such suspicions; and if he is not your agent, the fact should be known."[31]

New Orleans Detective John Richardson, irked that Issachar was passing himself off as "Chief of U.S. Detectives" and interfering with police business, accused Issachar of offering him a bribe. Dr. Zacharie, he said, invited him to his room at the St. Charles to talk to him about Richardson's arrest and seizure of goods belonging to an H. C. Duncan. Issachar told him he wished he hadn't made the arrest because he employed Duncan and the goods and money ($2,500) Richardson had seized were the property of the U.S. government. Issachar said he had sent this man several times into the Confederacy on government business and had allowed him to take similar amounts of goods as a "blind" to the Confederates "and to make a little for himself." Richardson said Issachar urged him to get Duncan "out of his scrape" so his cover wouldn't be blown. If he did, Issachar promised to "give me a better position." Richardson said he had refused.

Duncan was never convicted. Before his trial, he escaped, leaving his money and goods behind. Duncan himself had never claimed to be a government officer, said Richardson, and he suspected him of being a Rebel sympathizer and a speculator. "It seems proper to me," said Richardson, "that Dr. Zacharie should be called to account for such a course of conduct."[32] In Issachar's defense, Duncan may have been one of the three "right kind of men" he recruited to bring back information from behind Confederate lines.

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With Vicksburg under siege and Betterton and his "friend" no longer a conduit to Pemberton, Banks arrested Betterton. Betterton was subsequently "convicted by evidence and confession of fraudulently violating the regulations concerning trade" by shipping contraband labeled as "barrels of beef" without authority through the enemy lines. Banks fined him $25,000 and sentenced him to imprisonment for one year at hard labor at Fort Pickens in Florida.[33] Issachar's name was never mentioned in the indictment.

In a long letter he wrote to General Banks on July 22, 1863, Betterton claimed Issachar had set him up. The doctor, he insisted, had duped him. Betterton described in detail the lengths to which Dr. Zacharie had gone to convince him his "arrangement" had been sanctioned by Banks.

In February 1863, he had become friendly with Dr. Zacharie and his secretary Charles Johnson. That acquaintance led to an "arrangement to take goods into the confederacy and bring back cotton [from the Confederacy]" through a Thomas Harper. Betterton went into detail about Issachar's approaching Banks for a permit on his side of the arrangement, Banks' advising him to go to Washington to get the government's approval, Banks' issuing him a special permit, Banks' agreeing to a $50,000 bribe, letters Issachar had sent him from Washington informing him of his progress, Banks giving him $1,000 worth of goods and a pass for Harper, Issachar's

signing a receipt for the money, Banks' ordering Col. Amos Beckwith to give Issachar another $1,000, and many other details that had convinced him Dr. Zacharie had Banks' full approval and was not deceiving him. Had he thought otherwise, Betterton maintained he would not have cooperated with Dr. Zacharie. Betterton ended his letter asking for clemency. Betterton admitted he was in it for the money, but in light of what he had explained, he hoped "it may mitigate your sentence as I have been imprisoned already three months, by revoking the balance of the time and fine."[34]

When Banks didn't respond, Betterton appealed to Major Benjamin Rush Plumley. Plumley, Banks' staff officer and long-time acquaintance, was a man with a "limitless appetite for political intrigue" and lust for patronage.[35]

After hearing Betterton out, Plumley wrote Banks that he fully believed Betterton had acted in good faith and had been misled by Dr. Zachary [sic], who he said had "made similar proposition to me, exhibiting letters and documents from the President and from yourself." Plumley added he didn't know if Issachar was himself deceived about his authority, but he was convinced Betterton had been misled. If Betterton were guilty, Plumley said, Betterton had suffered enough. If Betterton was innocent of intentional wrong, as Plumley believed he was, common justice should see him released and his fine remitted.[36] Banks ordered Betterton's release on September 7, 1863.[37] After his release, Betterton was back in New Orleans as a shipping and commission merchant.

Despite his avowal that he had been tricked by Issachar, Betterton was on friendly terms, if not in collaboration, with both Butler and his brother Andrew. When Andrew died in April 1864, Betterton sent Butler his condolences on the death "of one whose soul when living was as noble as it was charitable." He parted with him, said Betterton, "only to remember his virtues."[38] Betterton ended his letter "hoping the administration may place you with us again." Betterton was arrested again for smuggling in late 1864.[39]

Issachar was "called to account" a year later and exonerated. Near the end of the war, Lincoln appointed a special commission in December 1864, to investigate violations of army regulations in New Orleans, choosing short, portly, shaggy-mustached 40-year-old Major General William Farrar "Baldy" Smith to head it, along with New York lawyer, James Topham Brady. The official name for the investigation was the Commission on Corrupt Practices in the South. Unofficially it was called the Smith-Brady Commission.[40]

In the course of its investigation, the commission examined issuance of cotton permits, trading activities, conduct of commanding generals, mismanagement of abandoned property and provost marshal's courts, local elections, and the activities of Dr. Zacharie. The commission discovered a broad scheme of fraud and corruption at every level of administration. Custom House officials received bribes to issue trading permits. Several of the witnesses called to testify stated they had no knowledge of Issachar's venality.

General Bowen testified he had "never granted Issachar permits without orders from headquarters."[41] Robert Montgomery, a New Orleans auctioneer, told the commission that Dr. Zacharie "led me to understand that his mission here was diplomatic more than anything else. I knew he had a great deal of intercourse with the other side. He sent people over there constantly, but as far as mercantile operations, they never amounted to anything. I never had but one operation when he sent a cargo of goods into Mobile by the consent of General Banks."[42]

Montgomery was one of the many "registered enemies" Issachar had recruited as a spy. When Montgomery was arrested for smuggling, Issachar wrote Banks to allow the provost marshal to "extend favors to registered enemies." "I may meet these people in the Confederacy," he explained.[43]

Several of the men who had accused Issachar of taking bribes were themselves found guilty of corruption, among them George Denison. A Mr. Brotts, one of the merchants summoned by the commission, said he had had difficulty obtaining permits from the Custom House until he realized the "effective way of doing business was to give presents or rewards to the officials." Brotts said on several occasions he paid Denison from $95 to $1,500 for permits. Benjamin Rush Plumley, another of Issachar's enemies, was also outed for corruption. John Richardson had taken bribes of $1,400–$1,500 to prevent delays in bringing cotton into New Orleans and shipping it down river.[44]

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The commission wound up its inquiry in late summer 1865. The four-volume report was never published. President Johnson said it was "not deemed compatible with the public interests" and refused to release it.[45]

President Grant was similarly reluctant to have it released since it documented questionable activities on the part of General Butler, Chief Justice Salmon Chase's son-in-law; U.S. Senator William Sprague, the quartermaster in his own department, and friends and relatives. A summary report was finally published in 1876.[46]

1. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 762.
2. Banks to Seward, April 17, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
3. Zacharie to Banks, April 18, 1864, Banks Papers, Box 28.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Zacharie to Seward, April 18, 1863, RRL.
7. Betterton to Banks, July 22, 1863, NARA, Betterton file.
8. Zacharie to Lincoln, April 20, misdated April 25, 1863, NARA, RG 393, Department of the Gulf, Letters Received Bureau of Civil Affairs, 1863, F–L.
9. Zacharie to Banks, April 23, 1863, Bank Papers, Box 28.
10. Halleck to Banks, May 23, 1863, OR 26, pt. 1, 500.
11. Burlington (Vermont) Daily Times, May 8, 1863, 4; (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, May 12, 1863, 2.
12. M. Winer, "Report from America," quoted by Glanz, Studies, 67.
13. Zacharie to Lincoln, May 9, 1863, ABL LOC.
14. Cincinnati Enquirer, May 21, 1863, 1.
15. New York Herald, June 13, 1863, 8.
16. On Gutheim, see Korn, American Jewry, 47–51; Scott Langston, "James K. Gutheim as a Southern Reform Rabbi, Community Leader and Symbol," Southern Jewish History 5 (2000), 69–102; Max Heller, Jubilee Souvenir of Temple Sinai 1872–1922 (New Orleans, 1922), 48–51.
17. Zacharie to Banks, May 3, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 27.
18. Ibid.
19. Gutheim to Leeser, May 8, 1863, Korn, American Jewry, 48; Benjamin, Three Years in America, 317.
20. Korn, American Jewry, 49.
21. Ibid., 49–50; Langston, "James K. Gutheim," 77–78.
22. Korn, American Jewry, 50; New Orleans Daily Picayune, May 7, 1904.
23. Zachararie to Banks, May 5, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 27.
24. Zacharie to Lincoln, May 9, 1863, ibid.
25. Zacharie to Seward, May 20, 1863, Seward Papers, RRL.
26. Quoted in Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 275.
27. Denson to Chase, February 1, February 12, 1863, Chase Diary, 353, 359.
28. Letter Shepley to Butler, Butler and Marshall, Correspondence, 14; Hollandsworth, Pretense of Glory, 155.
29. Quoted in Korn, American Jewry, 163.
30. Tregle, "Durant," 495. On Hahn, see Walter Greaves Cowan and Jack B. McGuire, Louisiana Governors (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2008), 90–92.
31. Hahn to Lincoln, May 9, 1863, June 6, 1863, ABL LOC; Tregle, "Durant," 504.
32. Richardson to Banks, June 22, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 27; Richardson to Banks, July 22, 1863, NARA, RG 393, Letters Received Bureau of Civil Affairs, Department of the Gulf, 1863, Q–Z, Box 4.
33. Baltimore Sun, May 9, 1863,1.
34. Betterton to Banks, July 22, 1863, NARA, Betterton file.
35. Tregle, "Durant," 508. On Plumley, see Journal of the House of Representatives 20 (1888), 162–163.
36. Plumley to Banks, September 5, 1863, NARA, Betterton file.
37. Banks to Brigadier General James Bowen, Provost Marshall, September 7, 1863, NARA, Betterton file.
38. Betterton to Butler, Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler (privately published, Jesse Ames Marshal: 1917), Vol. 422.
39. Betterton File.
40. The Commission on Corrupt Practices in the South (hereafter Smith-Brady), 4 volumes; RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's–1914.
41. Smith-Brady, Vol. 1, 214.
42. Montgomery testimony, Smith Brady.
43. Zacharie to Banks, May 5, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
44. Ibid., Vol. I, 232, Vol. II, 699–701, Vol. III, 254–56, 260–64, 364.
45. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 1200.
46. William F. Smith and James T. Brady, Commission on Corrupt Practices in the Gulf, Final Report, September 23, 1865, RG 94, Records of the Adjutant General's Office. No one took any interest.

18

A Service He Alone Was Capable Of

Issachar was discouraged but not undaunted after his intended rendezvous with General Pemberton had come to naught. He was determined to "press the matter," he told Seward.[1] On June 1, 1863, Issachar wrote to Banks, who was still besieging Port Hudson, that he was "anxiously awaiting" a reply to Banks' reaction to "my heartfelt peace plan."[2] Other than payment of the Confederate war debt,[3] Issachar never spelled out any details of his "heartfelt plan" in any of his correspondence. Like Lincoln, Issachar believed in appealing to Southern self-interest. By emphasizing the immediate economic advantages of peace, Issachar believed the South might be open to considering a negotiated settlement to end the war. His overall aim, he would later claim, with characteristic immodesty, was to bring "peace with honor to the North and without humiliation to the South."[4]

When Banks did not respond, Issachar left the safety of New Orleans for Banks' headquarters.[5] He had taken the risk, he told Seward, because he had "been solicited by 'leading men of this country, connected with leaders at Richmond'" to go there to discuss peace. Issachar didn't say who those "leading men" were. They believed, he said, "I may be instrumental to inaugurate some plan which may terminate the war."[6] Uncharacteristically, Issachar wrote Seward he hadn't been willing to listen to their suggestions without first consulting General Banks. "Enough to say—he desires me to go, and as usual has promised to afford me every facility for my intended visit."[7] Issachar was optimistic that an overture from the government to pay Confederate debt would encourage peace talks.

On July 2, 1863, Issachar was back at Banks' headquarters to finalize his adventure. To pave the way for his mission, Banks sent a note to General William Emery to issue passes for Martin Gordon, Jr., and David Pretts to travel through federal lines under a flag of truce to Richmond.[8] Gordon was a cotton broker[9] with known Confederate ties, including a high-ranking brother-in-law in the Confederate army, General Richard "Dick" Taylor.[10] Gordon would have credibility with Confederate leaders about Issachar's proposed trip to Richmond.

Banks wrote a second letter for Issachar to give to Seward in support of this new mission to Richmond. Banks extolled Issachar's diplomatic abilities and praised him as "a zealous supporter of the Government." Dr. Zacharie's "connection with the Jewish community of New Orleans which is very large and very powerful both by its numerical strength, and the activity which distinguishes its leading members has given him great advantages." His "considerate and attentive" assistance to many of the registered enemy families ordered to leave New Orleans, had "won from leading men of the Rebel Government expressions of gratitude." Their "endorsements" would enable him to accomplish what other men of "more commanding or social political position" (a possible reference to Issachar's and Judah Benjamin's shared background) were less likely to achieve. "He has it in his power to render a service which others cannot well do."[11]

Banks sent a final note to his quartermaster, Colonel Samuel Beckley Holabird, to give Issachar $5,000 in Confederate money. The money was for expenses once Issachar passed

through Confederate lines. “Get a receipt for the money,” he added.[12]

Issachar was excited about his impending mission, but not so excited he didn’t hand Banks a note of his own. It was a bill for $1,437 for his last two months and 13 days of “services from April 17 to date.”[13]

Issachar left New Orleans on July 4, 1863. His departure did not go unnoticed. Believing he was permanently leaving, a number of people came by to say goodbye and to thank him “for the benefits I had conferred upon those of their fellow citizens who were in trouble.” Knowing Banks’ susceptibility to flattery, Issachar told him his well-wishers had confided to him, “among the officers of the Government [they] had but one friend here … yourself.”[14]

Banks had counted on military fame to make him a household name. Instead, he had been outmaneuvered so often that Lincoln had reassigned him to an administrative post. But Banks had not given up on his aspirations. He had regarded his assignment in New Orleans as a -stepping-stone to national prominence. Reconciling competing rivalries in the city and elsewhere in Louisiana would gain him national attention as a peerless arbiter. It would catapult him, he imagined, to the cadre of leading contenders angling to replace Lincoln. Despite victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, Lincoln was widely regarded as not re-electable. After Port Hudson surrendered to Banks, Banks felt its capitulation would skyrocket his reputation. Instead, Grant received the credit for Port Hudson on the premise it could not have held out after Vicksburg surrendered. If Issachar’s negotiated peace talks led to an end to the war, any honor he received would be shared with Banks.[15] Sponsoring a phenomenal breakthrough in the national deadlock would dramatically raise his stature as the candidate to replace Lincoln. It would be his ticket to the Presidency.

* * * * * * * *

While Issachar was preparing for his mission to Richmond, Confederate Vice President Alexander Stephens was preparing his own peace initiative. By 1863, Stephens and many other prominent Confederate office holders had become less sanguine about the South’s chances for military victory.[16] Stephens had persuaded President Jefferson Davis, despite his misgivings, to allow him to open negotiations with Lincoln. He would be going under the pretext of a prisoner exchange, Stephens said. If that negotiation failed, the South would not lose face, and Southern honor would not be tarnished.[17]

Stephens’ timing was not haphazard. In late June 1863, General Robert E. Lee’s Confederate forces had invaded Pennsylvania. If Lee’s army prevailed and made its way to Washington, Stephens would have been in position to negotiate a treaty recognizing the Confederacy. With Davis’ grudging approval, Stephens headed to Union-controlled City Point, Virginia. On his arrival, he asked Admiral Samuel P. Lee to allow him to go on to Washington— he had an important letter from Davis to give to Lincoln.

After the Union victory at Gettysburg on July 3, 1863, and the capture of Vicksburg on July 4, Lincoln was inclined to meet with Stephens to hear what he had to say. The proposed meeting put members of Lincoln’s cabinet at loggerheads. Historian Doris Kearns Goodwin memorably dubbed Lincoln’s fractious cabinet a “Team of Rivals.”[18] Secretary of War Edwin Stanton and Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles were amenable to hearing what Stephens had to say, but they quarreled about which department should be the one to communicate with him on Lincoln’s behalf. Secretary of State William Seward, Stanton, and Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase opposed any contact with Stephens. “We are in the midst of a Cabinet crisis,” the *Cleveland*

Plain Dealer reported.[19]

On July 6, Stephens was informed neither Lincoln nor any representative of the government would meet him. The official response from Secretary Welles was "the customary agents and channels are adequate for all needful military communications and conferences between the U.S. and the insurgents."[20]

That was the official statement. Unofficially, Lincoln had been open to contact with Confederate leaders. Lincoln's critics in both the North and the South accused his administration as being an obstacle to a serious peace settlement. "It was a difficult balancing act."[21] Lincoln couldn't appear to be interested in a compromise with the Confederate government, nor could he appear to be rejecting one outright. "It was in his interest to let peace missions go forward without his official blessing." It was also in his interest that they fail. Public awareness of his allowing such unofficial rapprochements would diffuse criticism that he was not interested in a peaceful settlement of the war.[22]

Lincoln didn't foresee any harm in allowing Issachar and other private civilian would-be peacemakers to sound out Confederate leaders, with the understanding they would be going on their own responsibility. At the very least, he might learn their thoughts about a negotiated peace.

Prior to Stephens' peace initiative, in May 1863, the Methodist Reverend James F. Jaques, a colonel in the 73rd Illinois Regiment, asked for a furlough from his commanding officer, General William Rosecrans, which Lincoln approved, to go to Richmond to discuss a peace settlement with Confederate President Davis. Jaques, a prominent minister in the Methodist Church, was in touch with the large number of Methodists in the parts of the South now under federal control. They were tired of the rebellion and ardently wanted peace, they had told him, and would happily pledge their allegiance to the Union if assured of amnesty. Davis was said to be "a praying man," Jaques explained, and "many of his people are devotedly pious … the mission cannot fail. God's hand is in it."[23] Lincoln had refused to meet Jaques in person to avoid the perception that he was encouraging him, but gave his permission on the understanding that he was not representing the government.

Jaques eventually left for Richmond in July 1863, some time after Stephens' return. Jaques never got to Richmond. He met with General James Longstreet and several Confederate leaders behind Confederate lines, but Davis refused to see him since he lacked any authority to negotiate on Lincoln's behalf. When Jaques returned, he wrote Lincoln he had valuable information to convey to him. Lincoln never answered, and Jaques returned to his unit.

* * * * * * * *

Issachar arrived in Washington on July 15, 1863, while Jaques was still in the South. After booking a room at the Willard Hotel, he immediately sent a note to Secretary Seward. He had something important to communicate, he said. "Please let me know at what hour I may have the pleasure of seeing you."[24] When Seward didn't immediately respond, Issachar sent him a second note: "I am waiting to see you…. Will you please give me an interview?"[25]

Issachar met with Seward the next day and handed him the letter Banks had written praising Issachar as "a zealous supporter of the Government" and extolling his diplomatic virtues. His efforts on behalf of "registered enemies" required to leave New Orleans had earned him the gratitude "of people with great influence in the Confederate government." Owing to his Jewish connections, "Zacharie had potential influence with individuals in the Confederate government denied to others."

The “great influence” Banks was alluding to was with the Jewish Confederate Secretary of State, Judah Benjamin. Benjamin, the highest ranking and most trusted member of Davis’ cabinet, was indebted to Issachar for easing Benjamin’s “registered enemy” sister’s departure from New Orleans. The “service” he alone was capable of was using his influence with Benjamin to discuss a peaceful settlement of the war.[26]

The *New York Herald* had assumed Issachar had been dismissed from his post in New Orleans because of alleged bribery and speculation. “It is very evident that Uncle Sam has suffered to a considerable extent in the department of customs.” The government “has been swindled and humbugged by men who have heretofore borne the highest reputation.” Now that “Doctor Zacharie has been deprived of his authority,” there was nothing keeping him from returning to New York and resuming his practice.[27]

Issachar assured Seward there was no doubt in his mind Davis and Benjamin would agree to see him. If nothing else, “I will at least learn the true feelings of the people” and the Confederate leaders. If it were in his power to make a peace agreement, he said with his typical false modesty, he would feel “sanguine” about ending the war. But because he had no such power, he would “go, hear, see and say as little as possible.” His great desire, he said, was to prove to them they would not regret the confidence they had bestowed on him. “What I wish to do is for the benefit of yourself & my country. I have no other aspirations.”[28]

Without directly turning Issachar down, Seward did his best to dissuade him from his proposed trip to Richmond. Do you believe you would be received after Lincoln refused to see Vice President Stephens on his peace mission, he asked? Issachar would not be dissuaded that easily. He would take the risk, he said. Seward was unmoved by his bravado. If you fail to obtain a peace initiative, he replied, the whole country would blame Lincoln. Besides, after the Northern victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg, no one was in a mood for compromise: “the people don’t want it.”[29]

On Friday, July 18, Lincoln and Issachar huddled at the White House for two hours. Seward had not been invited. Lincoln was still interested in learning whether Davis was willing to negotiate peace. He had no illusions that Davis would come to the table, but some of his cabinet might be willing to consider a peace deal. At the very least, he would learn something about morale in Richmond. Lincoln made it clear to Issachar any talks he had in Richmond would not be as Lincoln’s ambassador. He would be going as a private individual on his own to discuss peace. Lincoln also told Issachar he would still need to convince Seward, who opposed the meeting, that he be allowed to go to Richmond.

Issachar took Lincoln’s telling him to go back to Seward as a sign of approval. “From his actions & words I was led to believe that all I wished for would be granted.” Calling on Seward on Saturday, the day after his meeting with Lincoln, Issachar knocked on Seward’s door and handed Seward’s doorkeeper a note: “I am directed by the President to report myself to you this morning and have the honor of so doing.”

The doorkeeper told him to wait. The Secretary was too busy that day to see him, he said. Come back tomorrow, he said. “After church.”[30]

Issachar knocked on Seward’s door early Sunday afternoon. Seward was slightly shorter than Issachar. He had light hair and eyes and an especially large nose, which made him avoid having himself photographed or painted. Usually pleasant, rarely ruffled, and politically astute, after a brief bit of pleasantries, Seward asked Issachar what he wanted from the administration. “All I want for the present,” Issachar answered, “is a Pass to go into the Confederacy, so that I may

have the opportunity to carry out my plans."

Seward replied that he had just met with Lincoln and members of the cabinet that morning, presumably "after church." Members of the cabinet were determined not to give him a pass, he said. They wished to have nothing to do with the Confederate government. Besides, they were concerned his going there might bring complications. The Confederates might hold him as a hostage.

Issachar assured him his safety was not an issue. Gordon and Pretts, the men Banks had sent ahead to Richmond, were waiting for him with papers for his protection. He wouldn't leave without that guarantee.[31]

"Do you think they would receive you, after we refuse(d) to see Mr. Stevens?" Seward persisted.

"I will take that risk," Issachar replied with no hesitancy.

Seward was not convinced. If Zacharie failed, the country would blame Lincoln. The victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg were still fresh in their minds. Seward told Zacharie it was not a time for compromise.

* * * * * * * *

Washington's rumor mill was little different in Lincoln's day than it is now. Within hours of Issachar's meeting with Seward, word of that meeting was leaked. In an editorial titled "Corn Cutting Extraordinary," James Gordon Bennett, the *New York World*'s editor, lambasted Seward for even listening to Issachar. "If there be one thing more remarkable than another in the career of Mr. Lincoln's Secretary of State," said Bennett, "it is his singular inaptitude to the choice of confidants, his secrets are sure to be shouted from the housetops."[32]

Casting about to find a toady, a person through whom Europe's kings negotiated their "little contracts with the Evil One," Bennett said Seward found one, "an illustrious corn cutter, Mr. Zacharie, who had distinguished himself early in the war by offering to *debunionize* the whole of the Seventh Regiment of this city." "The corn-cutter," Bennett continued, "had been speedily cajoled into forgetting his patients." He had "left Broadway to limp itself into a fever, to go to New Orleans as the 'confidential spy and agent' of the State Department and the White House."[33]

Once he arrived in New Orleans, "he rapidly made his presence and his power felt. He gave himself out as the 'representative of the federal government' and a great corn contractor, which he was." "The government paid him a salary larger than a cabinet minister's $8,000/yr." "Zacharie, the cutter of corns, had only to cut his corns discreetly in order to wax fat and prosper exceedingly. He gave fine suppers entertaining the most prominent citizens of New Orleans and the highest officers of the army and navy."[34]

Mistaking Issachar's leaving New Orleans as a sign he had been dismissed, Bennett gloated that Issachar's confrontation with General George Shepley, the military governor of Louisiana, had been his undoing. "Supper parties and contracts, salary and the sweet sense of power, all in a moment vanished like the baseless fabric of a dream. Callous as the corns he treats must be the heart which can contemplate unmoved so sudden and so steep a crash. Pared off and plastered out of sight, the hapless toady disappears, while he who made him to unmake will sorrow for him only as men sorrow for a familiar bunion gone."[35]

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The day after his meeting with Seward, a despondent Issachar wrote Lincoln that Seward had not granted his "or rather General Bank's [sic] request" for a pass to go to Richmond. "I am

fearful that in my short interview, both with yourself & Mr. Seward, my intentions have been misunderstood…. I leave for home this evening. Should you wish at any time to listen to me, or if I can serve you, I am at your command."[36]

Days later, Issachar wrote Banks, "I have been so greatly disappointed, as I may say foiled in my plans." "I have no heart to do, or say anything. All my hopes & plans [have been] destroyed."[37]

Never one to accept his own failings, Issachar claimed his plan hadn't been turned down because of the merit of his plan. "They feel satisfied I would be successful." There had to be some other reason. Issachar decided it had to have been politically motivated. "I think I can see through it all," he groused. "Parties in the cabinet" didn't want Banks to get the credit for anything. If Issachar's mission were a success, Banks "would be the man of *the* people." The "masses" were behind him, and so were the "conservative men of all parties."[38] Disingenuously, Issachar told Banks, "I do not flatter when I tell you that the conservative men of all parties believe you to be the only safe man the country possess who is prominently before the people."[39] In consoling Banks, Issachar also lamented he had lost his own chance for fame. "I have some ambition & would be near the 'Rising Star' (meaning Banks)." What do you want me to do with the funds you have given me? "Like yourself I would have a clean record."[40]

1. Zacharie to Seward, May 20, 1863; Seward Papers, RRL.
2. Zacharie to Banks, June 1, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 26.
3. Zacharie to Banks, December 28, 1863, ibid., Box 30.
4. Zacharie to Banks, December 28, 1863, ibid., Box 30.
5. Zacharie to Seward, June 20,1863, ibid., Box 27.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Banks to General William Emory, July 2, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 27.
9. Harrington, Fighting Politician, 126
10. T. Michael Parish, Richard Taylor (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1992), 457. Gordon was married to Taylor's younger sister.
11. Banks to Seward, July 2, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 27.
12. Banks to Holabird, July 2, 1863, ibid., Box 27.
13. $730 for himself, $365 for his secretary, and $342, "for rent of rooms" at the St. Charles Hotel.
14. Zacharie to Banks, July 4, 1863 Banks Papers, Box 27.
15. Zacharie to Banks, July 30, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 28.
16. Wilfred B. Yearns Jr., "The Peace Movement in the Confederate Congress," Georgia Historical Quarterly 41 (March 1957), 2.
17. Ibid., 6; Cleveland Plain Dealer, July 11, 1863, 3; Macon (GA) Telegraph, July 18, 1863, 1.
18. Doris Kearns Goodwin, Team of Rivals (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005).
19. Cleveland Plain Dealer, July 11, 1863, 3. Gideon Welles, Diary of Gideon Wells (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1911), 358–363.
20. O.R. Series I, volume 6, 84; Welles, Diary, 362.
21. Lehrman Institute, "Abraham Lincoln and Peace," http://www.abraham lincolnsclassroom.org/abraham-lincoln-in-depth/-abraham-lincoln-and-peace/.
22. Ibid.
23. Jaques to Lincoln, May 23,1863, quoted in James R. Gilmore, Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln and the Civil War (London: John Macqueen, 1899), 148–149.
24. Zacharie to Seward, July 16, 1863, RRL.
25. Ibid.
26. Banks to Seward, July 2, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 27.
27. New York Herald, July 1, 1863, 1.
28. Ibid.
29. Zacharie to Seward, July 18, 1863 and July 20, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 27.
30. Zacharie to Banks, July 30, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 28.
31. Ibid.
32. New York World, July 20, 1863, 4.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid.
35. Ibid.
36. Zacharie to Lincoln, July 20, 1863, ABL LOC.
37. Zacharie to Banks, July 30, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 28.
38. Ibid. Historian Fred Harrington speculates that based on that remark and other comments, Issachar had Banks' nomination as the Republican candidate in mind when he proposed his mission to Richmond. Fred Herrington, "A Peace Mission," American Historical Review 46 (October 1940), 76–86, 80, n13.
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.

19

He Lacks Stability

Issachar's ambition to be near a "Rising Star" would not let him just sit back and wait for fate to hand Banks the Republican nomination in 1864. Banks may not have been able to personally campaign for the nomination, but there was nothing to stop Issachar from campaigning on his behalf. Back at his profession and travelling back and forth between his offices in New York and Philadelphia, Issachar took every opportunity to drum up support for a Banks run at the Republican nomination. Issachar wrote him, "Permit me to say without any flattery your name is spoken with more kindness than you can imagine. Your friends are legion and those make more. Only, my dear General, continue the manner you have commenced and all will go right."[1]

According to Issachar, Titian J. Coffey, Lincoln's assistant attorney general, had told him he "would rather have your (Banks') future than that of any man in America."[2] Issachar's own secretary, Charles Johnson, was in Philadelphia forming a Banks Club. "He is a strong believer in you and says you are the only man to save the country."[3] Johnson also kept Banks informed of his popularity. He had been at several large political meetings held by both parties and had "yet to see the man, but was unwilling to trust you at the head of the Government. I don't write to flatter. I speak the words of the people who believe you can, if anyone, save our country from destruction. No man stands before you in the hearts of your countrymen."[4]

In the meantime, Lincoln had received a letter from Banks reporting what Gordon had learned from his trip to Richmond. Banks explained he had supported Gordon's mission to ascertain "the drift of public and private opinion."

Gordon reported that while Jefferson Davis was "still the soul of the Rebellion, most of the people" inside the Confederacy desired peace. "They talked at first stoutly for war, but soon allowed their desire to be known. The public men (meaning important politicians) were of the same opinion. The basis of action would be something like the terms of your proclamation—gradual emancipation of slaves, and more freedom of compensation." Confederate Secretary of State Judah Benjamin was still hoping that either England or France would recognize and support Confederate independence, but no one else in the Confederate cabinet or other "public men" expected any intervention from Europe.[5]

Banks' letter saying the South was tired of war and would accept Lincoln's overtures of compensated emancipation in return for peace and reunification, was engrossing, but Lincoln could not authorize any formal meeting with Confederate leaders. A formal meeting could imply recognition of the Confederacy. It was an acknowledgment he refused to accept. He needed some other way of communicating with his counterparts in Richmond. Zacharie already had permission from Confederate leaders to visit. Since Issachar would be visiting Richmond as a private citizen with no authority to negotiate peace, there would be no acknowledgment of the Confederacy's legitimacy. Lincoln sent him a message to come immediately to Washington.

"Great changes has [sic] taken place in my favour," Issachar wrote Banks. Lincoln had called him back to Washington and told him "I had left Washington in too great a hurry." At the time, he hadn't been able to entertain his proposed mission. Secretary Chase and others had been vocal in opposing any peace talks. Lincoln had also received letters, presumably from Hahn and others,

accusing Issachar of corruption. He had looked into the matter and was satisfied "I *was all right*." He "was now willing to afford me every facility to carry out *my plans* (italics mine)." He "felt sure I would be successful."[6]

Issachar was ecstatic. He was finally more than a spy; he was a peacemaker. "If I am successful," he gloated in anticipation, "you as well as I are made for life…. What is money, to position[?]."[7] Reading Issachar's letter, Banks must have been equally elated. He would be a national hero.

"Rest assured that you will never regret having taken me into your confidence," said Issachar. "I feel proud of having your friendship. I hope the day is not far distant when you will say well done my good & faithful friend." Issachar also crowed about how proud he felt he had outlived his enemies.[8]

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Without consulting Seward or the other members of his cabinet, Lincoln handed Issachar a letter introducing "Dr. Zacharie of New York" to give to General John Gray Foster, commanding officer at Fortress Monroe: he "has been with Genl Banks a large part of the time" and "enjoys the General's confidence in a high degree. Any kindness you may show him will be appreciated by me."[9]

Issachar arrived at Fortress Monroe on September 20, 1863, and showed Foster Lincoln's letter. Foster "received me kindly, and has offered me every facility—to do all I wish," he wrote Lincoln. "[I] leave tomorrow, for Richmond and hope to return to you in a short time, with honour to myself, and render a service to you, and my Government that will be appreciated."[10]

"The more it draws towards my departure," he wrote his secretary, Charles Johnson, "the more I feel the importance of the undertaking. But I have commenced it, & with the help of Providence will go through with it." Two days later, on September 22, Issachar left for Richmond by boat under a flag of truce.[11] Possibly he passed the time between his arrival and departure cutting General Foster's corns and treating men at the fortress for various foot ailments.

Issachar met with Benjamin, Secretary of the Navy Stephen R. Mallory, Secretary of War James A. Seddon, and Richmond's Provost Marshall General John H. Winder on September 27, 1863. The meeting took place at City Point, Virginia, instead of Richmond, so that there would be no doubt that it was not an official meeting.

Issachar was ebullient over his "success." Later that day, he met privately with Benjamin,[12] who told him he was obligated to General Banks for the kindness he had shown his "registered enemy" sister when she left New Orleans. The two men also shared some history. They were both Jews, they had both grown up in Charleston, and their parents both had stores on King Street in Charleston. Issachar took the opportunity to ask a personal favor of Benjamin—would he give him permission to travel through the Confederacy to visit his father in Savannah?

Despite Benjamin's turning him down, Issachar sent Benjamin a letter marked "confidential" the following day, thanking him for the meeting. What else they said is unknown. The next day, he sent a fulsome letter to Benjamin, outdoing himself in flattery. With no sense of vanity or hypocrisy, Issachar said he had been overcome at the pleasure of their meeting. He hoped he had made a favorable impression. "Knowing that the Confederate flag was waving over my head" my "heart was bursting with joy…. Should we meet [again]—I would gladly join the armies of the confederacy if I did not know that I could be of more service to join where I am."[13] Men had

been jailed for saying far less.

Issachar suspected Benjamin had declined his request to visit his father because Issachar would be reporting back to Lincoln about conditions in the South. “Unless I can visit the confederacy without the least doubt of my sincerely towards you all,” he continued, “I would rather sacrifice Father, Sister and all … if you are satisfied of my sincerity towards you all and you can at any time grant me the permission to visit Savannah or Macon, I shall be under everlasting obligations.”[14]

Issachar closed his letter saying he was going immediately to Washington to talk to Lincoln “as but few can,” and would relate Benjamin’s telling him “no propositions of peace may be expected from the South. I shall put matters in the right light,” he assured him. “Some good must come out of our unexpected meeting.” Issachar promised to inform Benjamin of “all that transpires,” but he had to be “very carefull how I write.” If anything important were to come after meeting with Lincoln, he would return himself.

“If I write or telegraph to you at this point, come immediately to me. You will know it is of importance. Should you know any person visiting New York in who you have implicit confidence in write to me and I will post you up on all you wish to know.” Fearful his letters might be intercepted, Issachar warned Benjamin, “be careful not to sign your name. I will know who it comes from. Should I write I will sign this…. Do not think me to anxious to hear from you. I do it from pure motives.” Issachar ended with the hope Benjamin would “never regret the intercourse we had last night.”[15]

Back at Fortress Monroe, Issachar telegraphed Lincoln: “Just returned. Will be with you tomorrow afternoon.”[16] Issachar was ebullient. He felt his mission had been more successful than he could have hoped. He had opened the door to further negotiations in which Banks would be the standard-bearer.

Lincoln welcomed him back. After they shook hands, Lincoln walked to his office door and locked it so they wouldn’t be disturbed, and they talked for two hours. Lincoln, he wrote Banks, was “delighted with my success.” But there was an obstacle—a “rub,” Issachar called it. Lincoln had kept Seward and the rest of his cabinet in the dark about his secret mission. When he had first broached Issachar’s visit to Richmond to the Cabinet, Secretary Chase, the hardest of the hard-liners, had been bitterly opposed to his going. Lincoln, he said, reminded him “of the man that won the Elephant at a Raffle, and didn’t know what to do with it.”[17]

Lincoln ended their meeting by saying he wanted to follow up on Issachar’s initiative, but he needed time to “give it shape & life.” Did Issachar have any suggestions? “This gave me an opening,” he said. “Send for Genl. Banks … you can trust him with your confidence in carrying out any negotiation.” Let him go back to Benjamin and tell him General Banks would meet with him as soon as he could come from New Orleans.

It was a “happy thought,” said Lincoln.[18] He would think about it. It was an idle remark. Lincoln was aware Banks had designs on the Presidency. In January 1864, Banks was listed among the five nominees to replace Lincoln.[19]

Issachar closed his letter to Banks by telling him he was surprised to read in the *Herald* that the cabinet was considering “negociations” for a “Peacefull termination of our trouble … which leads me to believe, that revelations [of] my interview … have been purposely made, with a view of throwing obstructions to prevent consummation of this most desirable movement.”[20]

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The day before, the *New York Herald* had indeed reported the cabinet had been apprised that a secret meeting had taken place to discuss peace talks with the Confederate government. "What these propositions are we are not yet permitted to know, nor whence they came … but from this single fact, in connection with the present reduced and hopeless condition of the rebellion, we are encouraged to anticipate the happiest and most glorious results."[21]

The *Herald* was sketchy in its first account of the clandestine meeting, largely imagining Lincoln's terms for peace: the Confederacy would be abolished. "Conspirators" would be crushed or expelled from "the region of the insurrection," and loyal citizens would "resume their functions under the general government." Lincoln was "still prosecuting the war for the Union, and not as an abolition cause," the *Herald* assured its readers. Slavery was "only an incidental and secondary issue." His administration "will avail itself of the readiest means and the simplest method for the restoration of peace."[22]

Knowing nothing about what was actually said, the next day, the *Herald* concocted an illusionary Confederate invasion of Mexico based on Northern anxiety over the Confederacy's attempts, since 1861, to extend its jurisdiction to the southwest New Mexico territories and Mexico's northern territories.[23] For its part of the peace settlement, said the *Herald*, the United States would "consent and cooperate" with a Confederate invasion of Mexico. Davis and his remaining army and loyalists would invade Mexico and oust the French troops who had been occupying Mexico since late 1861. "Jeff. Davis, with a Southern army of over two hundred, or even one hundred thousand men at his back, and five hundred thousand camp followers, in order to secure a Southern confederacy south of the Rio Grande, would only have to march into the country and take possession…. Both sides will gain what they are respectively contending for—the one a restoration of the Union, and the other a magnificent Southern confederacy…. If Lincoln's Cabinet accepted such grand scheme," opined the *Herald*, "the war would be over in ninety days."[24]

Had there been any truth to the *Herald*'s story, Bennett would have put it on page one. Instead, he buried it on page six. Bennett never expected anyone to take it seriously, especially since it was an exact recycle of the harebrained scenario the *Herald* had published on July 9, 1863, before Issachar left for Richmond.[25]

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Issachar stayed in Washington waiting for Lincoln to make up his mind. Since his last letter, "nothing has been done," he wrote Banks. "Mr. Lincoln has refused to send for you but has not given me his reasons." Issachar believed he knew why he hadn't. He could "see through it[.] it will make you to popular."[26] "I am determined that no person shall have the Eclaim but you…. I know one thing that no person will be received by Benjamin, except myself, as he pledged his word to me that if any thing was to be done that I should have all the honour." Lincoln "lacks stability." "He has it in his power to stop all fighting in twenty-four hours if he would follow out *my program*" (italics mine).[27]

Confederate Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin, of whom Zacharie said: "No one will be received by Benjamin, except myself." Ca. 1856 (courtesy Library of Congress).

In the meantime, Lincoln asked him to meet with Seward to brief him on his meeting with Benjamin. Lincoln had alienated Seward by sending Issachar to Richmond without informing him beforehand. Asking Issachar to meet with Seward was Lincoln's attempt to patch things up.

Issachar was not only frustrated at Lincoln's not following up on his advice about Banks, but he was also peeved at Lincoln's asking him to mollify Seward, who had never been warm to Issachar's Richmond venture. "Mr. Lincoln desired me to call upon him (Seward), but that I refused to do," he griped to Banks.[28] When Lincoln asked him a second time, Issachar relented.

“You will much oblige me (by giving me) an interview,” he wrote Seward. “I have matters of importance to communicate to you, which can only be done by word of mouth…. You will finde my revelations very interesting—to you it is of the utmost importance.”[29]

Secretary of State William H. Seward, ca. 1860–1865 (photograph courtesy of Library of Congress).

On Saturday, Issachar knocked on Seward's red brick three-story home facing Lafayette Park, within steps of the White House. Lincoln often strolled over to Seward's home to discuss state business and swap off-color stories. Sitting in Seward's parlor, where three years earlier Philip Barton Key bled to death after being shot by Congressman Dan Sickles for having an affair with Sickles' wife, Seward puffed on cigars while the two men talked for five hours.

Afterwards, Issachar wrote Banks that Seward "was much pleased with my revelations, and acknowledged that I had done wonders…. It was the only tangible thing that had been done since the war had commenced, but he could not inform me at present what was to be done." Seward invited him to "sup" with him the following Monday after he had a chance to consider what to do next.

Later that day, Issachar called on Lincoln. He had just met with Seward, he said. "He was verry happy that I had explained every thing." Seward had been "pleased to death" at what he had told him. "They would pull together." Seward had been optimistic. He was confident "they could fix matters when ever they wanted too."[30]

On Monday night, Issachar was back at Seward's, impatient to hear what he had to say. Seward was in no hurry; they should "sup" before getting down to business. Seward liked his "victuals." After a three-course meal and a glass or two of wine, the two men adjourned to Seward's luxuriously furnished parlor. What had he decided about his plan, Issachar asked anxiously.

Seward was not encouraging. Lighting up his customary cigar, Seward told him to go back to New York and "keep quiet." The government could not officially back any future meetings he might have with Judah Benjamin. He could communicate with Benjamin on his own, but the government could not be involved.

Issachar was downhearted. "What is the use of my goin to see Benjamin if we are not ready to do anything," he grumbled to Banks. Lincoln and Seward were duplicitous, he said. They were telling him to go home so they could take the credit for his plan. "I am affraid they wish to steal *my thunder from me, and you know that twas I that concocted the plan"* (italics mine). If they would only allow them to negotiate with Richmond, "you & I can make peace in twenty-four hours, satisfactory to the North, & without humiliation to the South."[31]

Bennett's *New York Herald*, however, was not about to "keep quiet" about Issachar's failed diplomacy. In an October 21 editorial, "More Important Negotiations for Peace," the *Herald* informed its readers the "renowned Dr. Zacharie" was the latest among the long line of "independent peace negotiators" and "amateur diplomats" who had failed to secure peace.

> We remember when the Doctor made his debut upon the national stage. Just after the war was fairly inaugurated, Dr. Zacharie went to Washington, resplendent with diamonds and surgical instruments, and cut the corns of the President, the Cabinet, General McClellan and the entire Army of the Potomac. For some time after this, the movements of the administration and the soldiers were astonishingly rapid. Now, alas! both our administration and our armies stick in the mud. The corns have evidently grown again and need cutting.[32]

Despite current setbacks, the *Herald* said Dr. Zacharie had done the country a great service and Lincoln and Seward had not been ungrateful. They had "sent Dr. Zacharie to New Orleans to cut the corns of General Banks and his brave corps," quipping that the immediate capture of Port Hudson by Banks' corps was the result of his "marvelous skill."

Dr. Zacharie's value to the war effort, said the *Herald*, had contributed to the "vigorous prosecution of the war," but it had not ended there. In New Orleans, he had talked with a great many of Confederate President Jefferson Davis' friends and supporters "and learned the Southern people earnestly desired to have the war settled without further bother. But when the

‘acute and diplomatic corn cutter’ personally brought this information back to Washington, the goodly but ungodly city,” Secretary Stanton “mistook him for some visionary fellow, like [Horace] Greel[e]y [publisher of the rival *New York Tribune*], and refused to listen to what he had to say.”[33] Undeterred, Dr. Zacharie had gone directly to the President.[34]

Continuing its earlier spoof of Issachar’s peace effort, Bennett said the moment Issachar entered Lincoln’s private reception room, Lincoln’s first thought was: here was an unexpected opportunity to have his feet taken care of. “The Chief Executive held out his foot and complained of his corns.” While he was cutting away Lincoln’s corns, Issachar explained what he had learned in New Orleans and his desire for a pass to go to Richmond to negotiate peace.

After describing his meeting with the Confederate government and the proposed takeover of Mexico, the *Herald* wrote Dr. Zacharie was now “only waiting for the President and the cabinet to ratify it in order to carry it into instant effect. If he succeeds, he will be the greatest man of the age.… Strange as this narrative may appear, there is a great deal more in it than most people think, and perhaps the skeptical will soon have to acknowledge the corn and the corn doctor.”[35]

Issachar craved recognition and may have leaked information about his mission, although not what was actually said, to Bennett. Feigning shock over the *Herald’s* continuing reports about his mission, Issachar disingenuously assured Lincoln, “I have not lisped a word respecting this matter,” except to Seward and to General James Bowen, provost marshal of the Department of the Gulf, who happened to be in Washington at the time. “I beg you will not for a moment harbor any idea but that I have faithfully kept within my own breast all that has passed between us.” Deflecting any breach of Lincoln’s trust, Issachar ventured that the leak likely resulted from “some person in your immediate vicinity” who was following him. Issachar ended his letter asking Lincoln if he thought “it advisable for me to write the fact that you did not give me any pass to Richmond, or shall I let the paragraph die a natural death?”[36] Lincoln didn’t answer.

On his own, Issachar’s secretary, Charles Johnson, wrote Banks, saying that Issachar was still hopeful his plan would be implemented and was fretting that instead of Banks getting the credit, it would go elsewhere (without mentioning Lincoln). Johnson urged him to write Issachar to assure him he, Banks, had no such misgivings. “A word from you would keep him calm. I must say he has been very prudent, & kept himself as secluded as possible.”[37]

Bennett believed in kicking a man when he was up or down. He simply couldn’t let Issachar fade away gracefully. In November, he editorialized, “Doctor Zacharie, the chiropodist, the corn cutter, the wearer of a big diamond breastpin, and the possessor of the finest Roman nose which has ever astonished the world since the time to Caesar … has apparently failed in his mission … in spite of his magnificent nose.” Dr. Zacharie had disappeared off the political map, said Bennett. “Nobody knows anything of Zacharie. Nobody has heard of him ... Jeff. Davis may have slaughtered him in order to steal his diamonds, or he may be traitorously cutting the corns of the rebel army, preparatory to another invasion of the North…. In life, as in an abolition convention, extremes often meet. Who could say but that the direct road to rebel hearts and heads was through rebel toes.”[38]

“We are sorry to say that the Doctor apparently failed in his mission … in spite of his magnificent nose, which is the sign that nature always hangs outside of the head when she has placed a mighty mind within. We will not admit, however, that any discredit attached to Doctor Zacharie or the president, even if our worst fears are realized and the rebels have robbed earth of his choicest corncutter.”[39] In light of subsequent events, Bennett could not have been more mistaken about Issachar’s disappearing “off the [political] map.”

Seward had instructed him to “lay quiet.” Issachar wrote Banks he suspected Seward and Lincoln, for that matter, of deceit. Pompously, Issachar said Lincoln had confessed to him, “had he the least idea that I would have been Recived that he would of never permitted me to have gone—he did not know me as well as you—he thought he had a toy to deal with and did not know that when I undertake anything. that I know no such word as fail…. You know I lack Education, but I have managed to push smoothly thus far.”[40]

Despite James Bennett’s making fun of him, Issachar told Banks he had had a “cozy chat” with the *New York Herald’s* editor/owner about him (Banks). Bennett had told him he intended to support Banks if there was any chance of his receiving the nomination. But he wouldn’t come out for Banks publicly unless he were sure to win.[41]

Issachar was confident Bennett was right about Banks’ prospects, so much so that he set aside part of his new Philadelphia office as a headquarters for lobbying support for Banks.[42] He would like to visit him that winter, he said, but “there are many wires to pull, and I tell you I am watching every move.” He had heard rumors Banks was being considered as Lincoln’s running mate. Issachar “hope[d] to God” he wouldn’t agree. “I would rather see you hold your present position than to accept any thing less than the President of the U. States.”[43]

Issachar was confident he could muster the support of America’s Jews for Banks’ candidacy. “The Jews,” Issachar said, were his “sincere friends. They publicly say you have done more for them any other public man and feel under obligations to you for your kindness towards their Brothern in New Orleans.” Issachar also assured him he also held “a good position with the Catholics … what with Catholics & Jews, it is a strong team. I would give you every Dollar I am worth, to see my predictions Realized, and I feel confident I shall live to see it.”[44]

1. Zacharie to Banks, September 8, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 28.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Johnson to Banks, September 24, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 28.
5. Banks to Lincoln, misdated September 11, 1863, ABL LOC.
6. Zacharie to Banks, September 8, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 28.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.
9. Lincoln to Foster, misdated August 28, 1863, Brown Digital Repository, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:; Zacharie to Banks, October 9, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 29.
10. Issachar to Lincoln, September 20, 1863.
11. Johnson to Banks, September 24, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 28.
12. Zacharie to Banks, October 9,1863, Banks Papers, Box 29.
13. Zacharie to Benjamin, September 28, 1863, Domestic correspondence of Confederate Department of State in Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 59.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Zacharie to Lincoln, September 29,1863, ABL LOC.
17. Zacharie to Banks, October 9, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 29.
18. Ibid.
19. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 765, 863.
20. Zacharie to Banks, October 9, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 29.
21. New York Herald, October 8, 1863, 6.
22. Ibid.
23. W. H. Watford, “Confederate Western Ambitions,” Southwestern Historical Quarterly 44 (October 1940), 294.
24. New York Herald, October 8, 1863, 6.
25. Ibid., October 9, 1863, 6.
26. New York Herald, July 9, 1863, 7.
27. Zacharie to Banks, October 16, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 29.
28. Ibid.
29. Zacharie to Seward, October 16, 1863, RRH (the dates are off).
30. Zacharie to Banks, October 24,1863, Banks Papers, Box 29.
31. Ibid.
32. New York Herald, October 21, 1863, 6.
33. Greeley had tried to arrange what turned out to be a failed peace initiative between Lincoln and Confederate agents who supposedly were acting on behalf of Jefferson Davis. James M. McPherson, “No Peace without Victory, 1861–1865,” American Historical Review 109 (February 2004), 1–18.
34. New York Herald, October 21, 1863, 6.
35. Ibid.
36. Zacharie to Lincoln, October 22, 1863, ABL LOC.
37. Johnson to Banks, October 29, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 29.
38. New York Herald, November 17, 1863, 6.
39. Ibid.
40. Zacharie to Banks, December 28, 1863, Banks Papers, Box 30.
41. Ibid.
42. Ibid.
43. Ibid.
44. Ibid.

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“Done things for me that would astonish you”

His hopes for brokering a peace dashed, Issachar returned to New York for a brief visit and then hastened to Philadelphia to set up a new practice in Philadelphia at 921 Chestnut Street with one of his students, a Dr. Barnett.[1]

But by February 1864, he was back in Washington using his influence with Lincoln to ask him to intervene in a military matter. Goodman L. Mordecai II, a Jewish Confederate from Charleston, was being held prisoner at the Old Capitol Prison in Washington. Mordecai was the son of Benjamin Mordecai, one of the wealthiest and most prominent of Charleston’s citizens. His father had given $10,000 (equivalent to $250,000 in today’s money) to Governor Pickens when South Carolina seceded “for such purposes as will best advance the interest and honor of our noble commonwealth.”

After serving several years in the Confederate Washington Light Artillery, the 24-year-old son was honorably discharged. Owing to his family connections, a group of stockholders hired him to run the blockade to Nassau to pick up goods they had ordered from England that were docked there and then run the blockade back to Charleston. Nassau and Havana were the main foreign ports where blockade runners exchanged cotton for manufactured goods and then brought them to southern ports like Charleston, where they could unload them as exorbitant prices. Evading the federal blockade could be very profitable; blockade runners made money each way.

When Mordecai arrived in Nassau, he was officially informed that a conscription order had been issued for all able-bodied men to return to service. Instead of obeying the order, Mordecai fled North and was captured attempting to cross the Potomac. When he refused to take the oath of allegiance to the federal government, he was imprisoned in the Old Capitol Prison.[2]

Although he was a Confederate prisoner, Mordecai was able to send a message asking for help to Samuel A. Lewis, the uncle of Mordecai’s fiancée, Ada Jackson. Lewis was a prominent New York businessman, vice president of Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York, and editor of the *Hebrew Leader*. Aware of Issachar’s friendship with Lincoln, Lewis asked him to see if he could persuade Lincoln to release Mordecai. The next day, Issachar sent Lincoln a “Barral of Homminy.” “Eat it with much enjoyment.” “Perhaps I will take a run over to see you in a few days.” Issachar signed it uncharacteristically, “I. Z.”[3]

“Perhaps” turned into a visit during which Issachar obtained the sought-for pardon conditional on his promise not to return to the South during the war. Grateful for his release, Mordecai asked Issachar to arrange a meeting with the President to thank him personally. During their meeting, Issachar offhandedly mentioned that Mordecai’s father had contributed $10,000 to the Confederate war effort. Lincoln smiled at the comment. Shaking Mordecai’s hand as he left, Lincoln joked he was “happy to know that I am able to serve an enemy.”[4]

Six weeks later, in March 1864, Issachar received another plea for help, this time from his nephew, Jacob G. Cohen (Cohen’s father had married Issachar’s sister Rebecca in Savannah in 1859). Cohen had fled the South to avoid conscription “to take up arms against the United States,” but he had been taken prisoner in January 1864 when a ship he was on tried to evade the blockade. The ship was captured by the Union navy, and Cohen was detained at Port Royal.[5]

Writing to his “Dear Uncle,” Cohen pleaded with Issachar to “properly represent my case to the President at Washington & get my release.” Cohen also asked him to “please remember me to Aunt [Mary Ann] and the children. Tell Elly [Eleazar, Issachar’s brother], I shall be pleased to see him soon and this will find all in good health.”[6] On March 16, Lincoln ordered Cohen’s captors to have him take the loyalty oath and then discharge him.[7]

Whatever hard feelings Issachar harbored toward Lincoln after his failed mission, they were now gone. “I do not know what to make of him [Lincoln],” Issachar wrote Banks afterwards. “He is so very kinde towards me. He has done things for me that would astonish you. In fact, it has astonished me.”[8] On May 13, 1864, Issachar sent Lincoln another fruit box, this time of fine “Pine apples” with a note calling him “Dear Friend,” and closed “with kind regards to Mrs. Lincoln.”[9]

A week before, on May 7, some of New York’s most prominent Jews gathered at Issachar’s home to honor him for his endeavors on behalf of the “Israelites of America.” “His influence” and his “power through the clemency of the President” had aided many “and enable them to return to the North and to freedom.” “His efforts to soften the hardships and alleviate the distresses of our co-religionists [in New Orleans]” had not gone unnoticed.[10] In appreciation of his “noble and fraternal efforts” on behalf of the many Israelites who had become involuntarily involved in the rebellion and had “incurred the penalties of their unhappy position,” they were proud to offer him “a silver tea service and a massive salvar.”[11]

After several speeches and the reading of congratulatory letters from General Dix, Rabbi Raphall, and others unable to be present, Issachar rose to speak. He told the gathering he didn’t know what to say regarding the honor bestowed on him. Then, characteristically, he went on and on. After thanking them for their appreciation, he modestly told them he had only done his duty, and then segued into a lengthy narrative of his humble beginnings.

He had been “launched out into the world a poor boy with no friend save my God, without a penny in my pocket, and deprived of that which is so essential to the elevation of man in this world, education.” Despite those disadvantages, he had overcome the “rugged path” he had travelled. What had saved him was his ambition. It had given him “those inspiring tools by which man mastered men.” “Ambition had carried him to the highest levels of power in the land,” meaning his friendship and influence with Lincoln. He had “travelled much,” and throughout his “many fiery ordeals,” he said he had “always been proud to acknowledge that I was an Israelite.”

As someone who well knew from his own experience that a good deed nearly always came at a price, Issachar thanked them for the testimonial. He was sure, he said, they didn’t expect anything in return. “I am sure that none of you expect my favors from a humble individual like myself, I therefore know it comes from the purest motives.” Issachar then invited his guests to his dining room, where “a sumptuous collation was prepared.”[12]

Months later, the *New York World*, the voice of the Democratic Party, was far less complimentary. Its article titled “Mr. Lincoln’s Unionism and Bunionism” derided “Dr. Zacharie … as a man who had been courted and flattered by high officials because of his intimacy with the President.” He “has often left his business apartment to spend an evening in the parlor with his favored bunionist.” Zacharie enjoys “Mr. Lincoln’s confidence perhaps more than any other private individual.” Broadly intimating Mordecai’s release was obtained after a bribe, the *World* ventured, “there must be a reason for this remarkable intimacy between an obscure toe-nail trimmer and the Chief Executive of a great nation.”[13]

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Meanwhile, Banks' ambition to replace an unpopular Lincoln through military victory faltered once again. Banks was a political general. He had had no formal military training, and his record showed it. He had been beaten, and beaten badly, in every military engagement he had led. If he were to be a serious contender for the Republican nomination, he needed a battlefield victory. Lincoln and his army chief of staff Henry Halleck wanted to drive an opening through - Confederate-held Louisiana into Texas and its cotton. The first goal of the offensive was to capture Shreveport, the Confederate capital of Louisiana, and use it as a base from which to invade Texas. General Sherman wanted to be in charge, but General Grant needed him to head the upcoming Atlanta campaign. Once again, Banks showed his ineptitude as a military commander. The campaign was a disaster. Banks was humiliated.

On his way back to New Orleans, he was informed General Edward Canby was taking over his military duties. His authority in the Gulf Department was now confined to only civil duties. His primary duty was to oversee elections in Louisiana. In September 1864, Lincoln summoned Banks to Washington to lobby Congress for allowing Louisiana's two newly elected congressmen to take office. Radical Republicans refused to seat them.

His political aspirations dashed, Banks asked for a leave of absence, which Lincoln granted. Banks later tendered his resignation to Lincoln, who denied his request and sent him back to New Orleans to resume his administrative duties under Canby. Banks remained in New Orleans until after the war. He went on to resume his political career in Massachusetts. After Banks' Red River debacle, Issachar no longer pinned any hopes on a Banks presidency. His influence with the Jewish community and with Lincoln, on the other hand, was in no way over.

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In July 1864, Issachar received yet another personal plea for him to intervene with Lincoln. This time, the request came from Rabbi Raphall on behalf of his son-in-law, Assistant Quartermaster Captain Cheme M. Levy. In a note to Secretary Stanton on November 4, 1862, Lincoln said (incorrectly), "I believe we have not yet appointed a Hebrew" to the post. Levy, an Orthodox Jew, was "well vouched as a capable and faithful man."[14] Almost a year later, in October 1863, Levy was court-martialed and cashiered from service. The charge was "conduct prejudicial to good order and military discipline" and "signing a false certificate relating to the pay of men under his command." The "prejudicial conduct" and "false certificate" involved his submitting a voucher for $100 to be paid to his clerk, but only paying him $50.[15] Levy was stripped of his command, but he continued to protest his innocence.

Raphall first appealed for Kansas Senator Samuel Pomeroy to ask Lincoln to look into the accusation. Lincoln declined to intervene. In a secret memorandum (the "Pomeroy Circular") that didn't remain secret for very long, Pomeroy had blasted Lincoln's reelection as "practically impossible." He wrote Pomeroy that Levy's case "makes too bad a record to admit of my interference … to interfere under the circumstances would blacken my own character."[16] Lincoln was not concerned with having his character blackened. He was not inclined to do Pomeroy any favors. Earlier that year, Pomeroy had spearheaded a movement to replace Lincoln with Treasury Secretary Chase.[17]

The appeal from Pomeroy having fallen on deaf ears, Raphall asked for a meeting with Lincoln to plead his son-in-law's case. After listening to Raphall, Lincoln reconsidered his decision and recommended his reinstatement to the Senate. Raphall wrote him thanking him for "the generosity and justice with which you have treated my son-in-law Captain C(hene). M

Levy."[18] Secretary of War Stanton refused to comply. A military court had ruled he was "forever disqualified to hold any office of trust or profit in the United States." To Stanton, "forever" meant "forever."[19]

In August 1864, Lincoln wrote an introductory letter for Issachar to Secretary of the Treasury William P. Fessenden. "Allow me to introduce Dr. Zacharie of New York, whose acquaintance I have made since residing here, and who has been known, and in some instances, use to me. Any kindness you may find it convenient to show him will be appreciated by me."[20] Why Issachar wanted to meet with Fessenden and the outcome of their meeting isn't known.

With nowhere else to turn, Raphall asked Issachar to use his influence with Lincoln to have him intercede on Levy's behalf. This time, Issachar sent Lincoln a basket of bananas before their meeting.[21] Lincoln thanked him "again for the deep interest you have constantly taken in the Union cause. The personal matter on behalf of your friend (Rabbi Raphall) which you mentioned, shall be fully and fairly considered when presented."[22] Levy was subsequently reinstated.[23]

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Issachar was now the toast of New York, hosting lavish banquets every night at his new "splendid mansion, near Fifth Avenue and Fiftieth Street" for "the most prominent men in New York, in business, in social life and in politics." The *New York Herald* told its readers, "the fashionable chiropodist who attended to the pedal needs of the most noted beaux and belles of the day" was also "a gourmet who kept open house, a wit and an eccentric." A dozen seats were always vacant for uninvited friends to drop by unannounced.[24] "The doctor had the reputation of being the greatest connoisseur of wine in the country. He always served the choicest liquors and the most delicate and original dishes. Not a dish could be concocted in Europe which did not find an early reproduction on his table."[25] Issachar's reputation as a gourmand was so well-known that even men like "Sam" Ward, known for his sumptuous dinners combining "food, fine wines and conversation to create 'social lobbying' in Washington, D.C., consulted him about the proper menu for banquets, public or private."[26]

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By now, Issachar's relationship with Lincoln was so well known there was no need to explain who he was to the readers of a humorous parody, *The War Letters of a Disbanded Volunteer*.[27] Written in fractured English, the anonymous author (Joseph Barber), calling himself "Disbanded Volunteer," said he was calling his "vollum" *The War Letters of a Disbanded Volunteer* "bekase the most of the epistols has been written senst the war commenst, tho it will be seen that they begin immediately arter the elecksin of my ilustrus friend…. His 'idee in publershin the letters n a collected form,'" was to place "the karrickter and sarvices of that Distingwished Statesman … with a view to biass and inflewence thar feelins and judgments, when they go to the poles in November next."

As a way of illuminating Lincoln's "karrickter and sarvices," "Disbanded Volunteer" jabbed obliquely at Lincoln's relationship with Issachar.

> It is as difficult for the solider troubled with warts to handle his arms, as for the soldier with corns to handle his feet. Even Dr. Zacharie must admit this. as new lether is apt to dror the feet and corn salve is sed to be getting skarse in the Union ranks, a ginral forrard moovement (against Richmond) may possably be postponied until arter the result of the November elecskins is known. I believe this is the opinyun of Dr. Zacharie and uther imminent shyrapidists, and they oughter no. Wunderful! isent it, on wot seaming trifuls the most important events depends.[28]

“Disbanded Volunteer,” dedicated his book, “To Abrham Lincoln Of Illannoy, The Loftiest of Livin Statesmen, Renouond Alike For His Great Milentary Talons. Firm Adhearance To The Constitooshin, And Fidelity To HIs Inaugerashin Oath.”[29]

1. Johnson to Banks, January 22, 1864.
2. Rosengarten and Rosengarten, A Portion of the People, 127–128.
3. Zacharie to Lincoln, February 13, 1864, ABL LOC.
4. Markens, “Lincoln,” 155; New York Tribune, February 12, 1864, 190.
5. OR, Series I, Vol. 15, 245.
6. Cohen to Zacharie, March 5, 1864, NARA, RG entry 36, correspondence 1798–1918, Miscellaneous Letters Received, 1801–1884, Doc. No. 291966.
7. Ibid.
8. Zacharie to Banks, March 26, 1864, Banks Papers, Box
9. Zacharie to Lincoln May 13, 1864, ABL LOC.
10. Jewish Messenger, May 13, 1864, 141. Korn muses that Issachar must have used his influence to intercede for several other Jews in trouble for such a large congratulatory party. Korn, American Jewry, 199.
11. Ibid.
12. Ibid.
13. New York World, September 24, 1864. Mordecai became a prominent member of the Gold Board, which became the New York Stock Exchange, and publisher of The New Era & Illustrated Southern Weekly in New Orleans.
14. Quoted in Korn, American Jewry, xxii.
15. Reports of Committees: 44th Congress, 1st Session, Senate, Vol. 2 (Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 1876), Report No. 370.
16. Lincoln to Pomeroy, November 8, 1863, ABL LOC.
17. https://civilwarbookofdays.org/tag/samuel-pomeroy/.
18. Raphall to Lincoln, March 17, 1864, ABL LOC. As a further token of his appreciation, Raphall sent Lincoln several photographs of himself.
19. Samuel F. Chalfin to Levy, July 16, 1864, ABL LOC.
20. Lincoln to Fessenden, August 2, 1864, Brown Digital Repository, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:72311/.
21. Zacharie to Lincoln, undated, RRH.
22. Lincoln to Zacharie, September 19 1864, ABL LOC.
23. Zacharie to Lincoln, September 21, 1864 ABL LOC.
24. New York Herald, quoted in Charleston, Evening Post, September 19, 1900, 10.
25. Ibid.
26. Boston Herald, September 17, 1900, 10. On Samuel Cutler Ward, see Kathryn A. Jacob, “King of the Lobby,” Smithsonian Magazine 32 (May 2001), 122–131.
27. Joseph Barber, War Letters of a Disbanded Volunteer (New York: Frederick A. Brady, 1864), 203, 211.
28. Ibid.
29. Ibid.

21

“Can’t go Lincoln”

Although the North had won impressive victories at Gettysburg, Vicksburg, and the Shenandoah Valley in 1863, the Confederacy showed no sign the fight had gone out of it. The spring of 1864 had seen some of the bloodiest battles of the war. An estimated 32,000 Union soldiers were killed at the Battles of the Wilderness (May 5–7, 1864) and Spotsylvania (May 8–12, 1864). Another 13,000 were butchered at Cold Harbor (May 31–June 12, 1864). The *New York World* howled the stalemate was “a national humiliation.”[1] The war, as it was now being prosecuted, was a failure. After Lincoln issued a call for 500,000 more volunteers, the *Pittsburg Daily Post* blamed him “for the terrible and unavailing waste of life which renders five hundred thousand new men necessary so soon after the opening of a campaign that promised to be triumph?”[2]

Lincoln knew he was in trouble. The grumbling in the heartland that the war had gone on far too long and couldn’t be won militarily was loud enough to be heard in the nation’s capital. Washington’s politicos, even those loyal to Lincoln, told him he would only carry three states in the upcoming November election. If he didn’t bow out of the nomination at the Baltimore Convention in June, he was assured he would lose the election, and Republicans in both the House and the Senate would also lose their seats.[3]

It was not just that the North was discouraged. To many, Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation had turned the war from a fight to restore the Union to one of eradicating slavery. “[Lincoln] cannot be elected,” declared *New York Tribune*’s Horace Greeley. “We must have another ticket to save us from overthrow.”[4] Generals Grant, Butler, or Sherman, Greely opined, would be stronger presidential candidates. Thurlow Weed, publisher of the *New York Enquirer* and a confidant of Secretary Seward, told him in no uncertain terms that Lincoln’s reelection was “an impossibility.”[5]

Radicals within the Republican party wanted no more of Lincoln. He was too moderate for their taste. In early December 1863, without consulting his cabinet, Lincoln had issued a “Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction,” known as the Ten Percent Plan. The plan offered pardons and restored their property to Confederates who took the oath of allegiance to the United States, excluding its military leaders and high-ranking officials. When 10 percent of eligible voters enumerated in a state’s 1860 census took the oath, the state would be allowed to rejoin the Union. Lincoln’s “ten percent” policy toward a post-war South was far too lenient for the Radicals. Most felt the same as Kansas’ Republican Senator Jim Lane, who hoped to “live long enough to see every white man in South Carolina, in hell, and the negroes inheriting their territories.” It wouldn’t wound his feelings, he said, “to find the dead bodies of rebel sympathizers [his term for the Democrats] pierced with bullet holes in every street and alley of Washington.”[6]

Radicals in Congress passed the Wade-Davis Bill (named after Ohio Senator Benjamin F. Wade and Maryland Congressman Henry Winter Davis) as an alternative to Lincoln’s Ten Percent Plan. Under its provisions, readmission to the Union by former Confederate states would not be as easy. A majority in each of the seceding states would have to swear they had never

supported the Confederacy and had to ban slavery in their state's constitution. Lincoln torpedoed the bill by a procedural tactic called a "pocket veto."[7] Infuriated, on August 4, 1864, Wade issued a blistering "Manifesto" "To the Supporters of the Government" accusing Lincoln of "anarchy" and "dictatorial usurpation."[8]

By May 1864, feuding between the Radical and moderate wings of the Republican party was so embittered that the party split. The Radicals formed a splinter party called the Radical Democracy Party and nominated General John C. Frémont as their candidate for President when they convened in Cleveland.[9]

Frémont was the Radicals' darling. As commander of the Department of the West, headquartered in St. Louis, he had on his own accord instituted martial law in Missouri. He ordered confiscation of all property belonging to secessionists and emancipation of all slaves in his department. When Frémont refused to obey Lincoln's order to rescind his emancipation order (Lincoln was leery of alienating slave-holding border states), Lincoln stripped him of his command. Bowing to political pressure from Frémont's supporters, Lincoln gave him command of a minor department in West Virginia. Frémont was subsequently reassigned after the army was reorganized and placed under the command of General John Pope.

Republicans loyal to Lincoln joined with disaffected Democrats to form a reconstituted Republican party, called the National Union Party. At its convention in Baltimore, on June 7, 1864, they re-nominated Lincoln for President. Andrew Johnson was chosen as his running mate. The Democrats were also divided. The "Little Giant," Stephen A. Douglas, had been the party's acknowledged leader for more than a decade. When he died in 1861, Democrats had no clear spokesman. Even if it meant continuing the war, many former Democrats allied themselves with Lincoln's National Union Party. Peace Democrats, denounced as "Copperheads" by their opponents,[10] favored a quick negotiated end to the war, including a return to conditions before the war, including slavery.

Peace Democrats had high hopes of winning the election. The Republicans were divided. Lincoln was unpopular. The North was war weary. Several names were floated for the nomination, among them General Butler, Treasury Secretary Salmon Chase, Lincoln's Vice President Hannibal Hamlin, and General Grant. They chose General George McClellan on the first ballot and Ohio Congressman George H. Pendleton as vice president. McClellan supported the continuation of the war, but promised to end it by any means, even to the point of recognizing Southern independence.

Lincoln was not optimistic about being reelected. After Frémont withdrew his candidacy for President and endorsed Lincoln, Radical Republicans grudgingly backed Lincoln. They were pessimistic. The feeling throughout the North was that Lincoln had mismanaged the war effort. A war everyone had expected to be over in 90 days was now in its third year. The Confederates had been turned back at Gettysburg, and Vicksburg had been captured, but the South seemed as determined as ever to fight on. Peace Democrats campaigning for a negotiated settlement with the Confederacy and abandonment of emancipation had made significant Congressional gains in the 1862 elections. Twenty-two Republicans were defeated in Congress, while the Democrats picked up 28 seats. What was once a Republican majority in Congress was now a Democrat majority. Many anticipated a similar outcome in the upcoming Presidential election.

Facing what seemed inevitable defeat, Lincoln approved of a second unofficial peace mission to Richmond by Colonel Jaques and journalist Richard Gilmore to stop "Christians killing Christians." Jaques and Gilmore met with Jefferson Davis and Judah Benjamin in Richmond in July 1864. Gilmore conveyed Lincoln's terms for peace: immediate dissolution of the Southern

Government; disbandment of its armies; recognition of the supremacy of the Union; and total, absolute, and perpetual abolition of all slavery. In return, Lincoln promised complete amnesty to all engaged in the rebellion, restoration of seceding states to the Union, and compensation to slave owners on the basis of one-half the value of slaves in 1860. Davis rejected Lincoln's offer outright. Amnesty, he said, implied Southerners were criminals. "This war must go on till the last of the generation falls in his tracks and his children seize the musket and fight our battles unless you acknowledge our right to self-government. We are fighting for independence, and that, or extermination we will have."[11]

Lincoln was not surprised at Davis' reaction. He had counted on it. The Peace Democrats had howled he would reject any negotiated settlement. News of the failed Jaques-Gilmore effort showed Lincoln was willing to negotiate. It was Davis who was intransigent. The failed attempt showed Northerners there was no middle ground for peace.[12]

Humorist Charles Graham Halpine poked fun at Jaques' mission by reminding his readers of Issachar's previous failed venture. In his *Life and Adventures of Private Miles O'Reilly*, Halpine implied Lincoln wanted to send Issachar back to Richmond instead of Jaques, but Dr. Zacharie, "the celebrated corn-cutter and international negotiator," had turned down a second invitation.

Issachar's decision, Halpine said, had to do with his being Jewish. The "pickled pig's head at the top of the table, pickled pig's feet at the foot, and four thin slices of broiled bacon" served at the negotiating table at his last visit, said Halpine, "did not by any means form a pretty feast to set before a gentleman of his character."[13]

* * * * * * * *

On August 23, six days before the Democrat's Chicago convention on August 29–31, a grim Lincoln handed a sealed envelope to his cabinet asking them to sign it without showing them its contents. Possibly it was to avoid Secretary of the Interior John Palmer Usher, a paunchy gregarious "great lover of gossip," from leaking it.[14] Lincoln handed the signed envelope to Gideon Welles, Secretary of the Navy, instructing him not to open it until after the election. The note predicted his defeat:

> This morning, as for some day's past, it seemed improbable that this administration will be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to co-operate with the President-elect so as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration, as my successor will have secured his election on such grounds, that he cannot possibly save it afterwards.[15]

Although the Democrat convention in Chicago was still six days away, Lincoln was aware McClellan would be nominated, and he anticipated his victory. Had the election occurred soon after McClellan's nomination, McClellan would likely have won. Days later, the political tide changed in Lincoln's favor.

On September 2, 1864, General Sherman captured Atlanta, the "Gate City of the South." Atlanta had been a major industrial center in the Confederacy and a railway hub for the deep South. Sherman burned every munitions factory, foundry, warehouse, and any other building or structure in Atlanta that had contributed to the Confederate war effort. Union successes in the Shenandoah Valley in late September and early October raised Northern hopes the war was nearing an end.

But the election was still far from in the bag. Lincoln knew from his own experience there were no guarantees in politics. No one had given him a chance to be the Republican nominee at the Chicago convention in 1860, when William Seward had been the odds-on favorite. Yet here he was President, and Seward was his secretary of state.

An editorial in the Clearfield *Pennsylvania Republican* two weeks after Atlanta's capture

claimed one of every four Republicans “Can’t go Lincoln”:

> The people are tired of war. They are for peace, for settlement, for a restored Union, for reduced taxes, for a return to the Constitutional currency. They know Lincoln’s re-election would defeat all these darling objects. They are opposed to a national debt, and particularly to a further increase of our present one. They know that this can only be prevented by the success of the Democratic party. Is it strange, then, that they “can’t go Lincoln?”[16]

* * * * * * * *

On September 19, 1864, Issachar received a brief note from Lincoln thanking him “for the deep interest you have constantly taken in the Union Cause.”[17] Issachar read the note not as a thank you, but as a request for him to stump for Lincoln. Two days later, he wrote Lincoln he was leaving New York the next day for the interior of Pennsylvania and “might go as far as Ohio.”[18]

That same day, Issachar sent a similar note to Secretary Seward, likewise advising him not to take Lincoln’s reelection for granted. “I finde when men are to sure of any thing—that is the very time they fail. Now if they relax their Efforts *at any time before the 8th of Nov*. we are gone. They must work and keep on working until he is Elected. I am doing what little I can, and now leave, to work in Pennsylvania. May visit Ohio. ‘We must carry Pennsylvania & Ohio’ to succeed—and Mr. Lincolns Friends—are to sure, to suit me. I therefor beg of you—to speak to them and spur them up.” The “friends” could only have been Jews who might be wavering to the Democrats. With whom else did he have any influence? Although they were relatively few in the overall population, in a narrow election, they could sway the vote.[19]

Zacharie in later years. "I find when men are too sure of anything—that is the very time they fail" (courtesy American Jewish Historical Society).

In lecturing Seward, a seasoned politician on strategy, Issachar saw himself as Lincoln's strategist. The "me" was pure conceit. Pennsylvania's and Ohio's 26 electoral college votes each could not be ignored. But for Issachar, New York's 33 votes were the key to winning the election. Issachar believed the outcome in New York would heavily depend on the city's Jews.

New York City belonged as much to the South as to the North. Its economy, its political endorsement of unrestricted immigration, and its pro-slavery position put it squarely in the Democrat camp. By 1860, its garment industry had produced almost 50 percent of the country's clothing, including the clothes worn by Southern whites and slaves. Although it still manufactured uniforms and other clothing, peace with the South would bring even more wealth to its merchants. Fearing losing their jobs to freed slaves, New York's newly arrived German and Irish immigrant laborers were strongly Democrat.

Jewish lawyer Abram J. Dittenhoefer recalled how pressured he felt as a 20-year-old to join the Democratic party. "My father, who was a prominent merchant of New York, and very influential with the German population … urged me to become a Democrat." Dittenhoefer's father warned him if he allied himself with the Republicans, public office "would be impossible in the city of New York." On the other hand, if he joined the Democrats, he was assured "in a few years [he] undoubtedly would become judge of the Supreme court; later on, I might go still higher up." Dittenhoefer's decision to join the Republican party and his decision to campaign for Lincoln in the upcoming election[20] subjected him "to obloquy from and ostracism by my acquaintances, my clients, and even members of my own family."[21] Lincoln won the state by a narrow margin of 50.5 to 49.5 percent. He only won 33 percent of the city's vote.

* * * * * * * *

Issachar never made it to Pennsylvania. Around 10 o'clock on the morning he was supposed to leave, he lay wounded on the floor of his apartment in New York, shot in the face, a bullet "entering at the right of the nose."[22] The gunman was Issachar's junior partner at his Chestnut Street office in Philadelphia, 32-year-old Dr. Samuel M. Barnett.[23]

Brought before a judge, Barnett claimed he had shot Zacharie, whom he characterized as a "desperado," in self-defense. He said the two had had a falling out and quarreled when he had gone to Issachar's home to reclaim his possessions. Issachar had become irate and insulted him, he said, calling him a damned puppy and a son of a bitch. When Issachar advanced toward him, Barnett believed Issachar intended bodily harm and shot him in self-defense.[24] Issachar had a different explanation. With his ever-inflated sense of self-importance, he said Barnett was a spy "in the employ of the Confederate States Army." Issachar was implying he was so important the Confederate government had sent Barnett to assassinate him because of his clandestine activities on Lincoln's behalf.[25] There are no further reports of whether Barnett was charged with attempted murder and brought to trial, and nothing more was ever heard about him.[26]

In the course of reporting the shooting, the *New York World* informed its readers the Jewish foot doctor "is a man who has enjoyed Mr. Lincoln's confidence perhaps more than any other private individual. Dr. Zacharie is perhaps the most favored family visitor at the White House, and has often left his business apartment to spend an evening in the parlor of his favored bunionist."[27] The *Daily Ohio Statesman* described Issachar as "one of the boon companions of Lincoln and a great favorite with him."[28]

The incident eventually attracted the attention of the *Lancet*, a prestigious medical journal. The editor chuckled that the shooting lowered the dignity of chiropody even more. It also noted, mistakenly, that Lincoln had appointed "Dr. Issachar Zacharie, of New York" with the "lofty sounding title, 'Chiropodist-in-chief' of the United States Army!" Although the recent "difficulty" lowered "the newly-obtained dignity of corns and chiropody," nevertheless, the United States was rejoicing in its newly appointed chiropodist-in-chief.[29]

1. New York World, July 12, 1864, 2.
2. Pittsburgh Daily Post, July 21, 1864, 2.
3. Benj. F. Butler, Autobiography and Personal Reminiscences of Major-General Benj. F. Butler, Butler's Book (Boston: A.M. Thayer & Co., 1892), 434.
4. Horace Greely, August 18, 1864, quoted in the New York Sun, June 30, 1889, 3.
5. Thurlow Weed to William H. Seward, August 22, 1864, ABL LOC.
6. Quoted in Wisconsin Daily Patriot, January 9, 1864, 2.
7. The Constitution mandated that if a President did not sign a bill presented to him less than 10 days before the end of the congressional session, it was void. If presented more than 10 days before the end of the congressional session, a bill automatically became law even if the President did nothing.
8. The "manifesto" is reprinted in http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1851-1875/the-wade-davis-manifesto-august-5-1864.php.
9. Frémont had been the Republican party's nominee in 1856 when it first formed, but he lost to Democrat James Buchannan.
10. Peace Democrats wore copperhead badges made from copper pennies that bore the likeness of the Goddess of Liberty on them. Wood Gray, The Hidden Civil War (New York: Viking Press, 1942), 140–141.
11. On Jacques and Gilmore and their mission, see Kirkland, Peacemakers, 85–96. Gilmore wrote an extensive description of their meeting, "Our Visit to Richmond," for the Atlantic (14 [September 1864], 372–373). The article is reprinted online at: https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1864/09/our-visit-to-richmond/522843/.
12. Edward Chase Kirkland, The Peacemakers of 1864 (New York: Macmillan, 1927), 92. Davis' comments were widely quoted in the newspapers: Boston Evening Transcript, July 22, 1864; New York Times, July 29, 1864.
13. Charles Graham Halpine, The Life and Adventures, Songs, Services, and Speeches of Private Miles O'Reilly (New York: Carleton Publishers, 1864), 211.
14. Basler, Collected Works, Vol. 7, 514.
15. On November 11, 1864, after he was reelected, Lincoln tore open the envelop and read them the memorandum. John Hay, Lincoln and the Civil War (New York: Dodd Mead & Co., 1939), 237.
16. Clearfield (Pennsylvania) Republican, September 14, 1864, 2. Despite complaints about the tax on annual income, the law did not provide any means for enforcement, so in reality, it did not affect so many people that it became an issue in the election.
17. Lincoln to Zacharie, September 19, 1864, ABL LOC.
18. Zacharie to Lincoln September 21, 1864, ibid.
19. Zacharie to Seward, September 21, 1864, RRH.
20. Abram J. Dittenhoefer, How We Elected Lincoln (New York: Harper Brothers, 1916), 4.
21. Dittenhoefer became friends with Lincoln after the 1864 election and visited him several times at the White House. "I often found him sitting in the business office of the White House having on a black, threadbare, alpaca coat, out at the elbows and in slippers." Markens, "Lincoln," 138. In later life, Dittenhoefer was appointed a justice of the City Court of New York, was a delegate to several Republican national conventions, and was chairman of the Republican Central Committee of New York. Markens, "Lincoln," 139.
22. New York World, September 23, 1864, 7.
23. Philadelphia Press, May 9, 1864, 2. Chestnut Street was the location of two other Jewish chiropodists, Levi Lindoman at 702 Chestnut and 1342 Chestnut, and Marcus Goldberg, at 1208 Chestnut. Charles E. Krausz to Bertram Korn, March 3, 1955, American Jewish Archives. As noted, medically trained physicians scorned chiropody, enabling Jews to become dominant practitioners in the profession.
24. Issachar was so famous by this time that the incident was reported by several national and foreign newspapers: New York Times, September 23, 1864; September 29, 1864; New York World, September 23, 1864, 7; (New York) Courrier des Etats-Unis, September 24, 1864, 2; (Sheffield and Rotherham) Independent, October 12,1864, 4: Glasgow Herald, October 14, 1864, 7; Dublin Freeman's Journal, October 12, 1864, 3.
25. The Sun, September 23, 1864, 4.
26. Historian Charles Segal contacted the New York Police Commissioner's Office about the incident, but the records of the shooting had been destroyed. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 117, n135).
27. New York World, September 24, 1864, 4. James Tucker, General Banks' secretary, said that when he was in Washington, Issachar was "at the President's house a good deal. I saw him there two or three times." Smith Brady Commission, 256.
28. Daily (Columbus) Ohio Statesman, September 29, 1864, 2.
29. Lancet, October 15, 1864, 444.

22

“I promised I would elect you”

About a month after he was shot, Issachar felt well enough to resume his intended campaign itinerary. He decided there wasn’t enough time now for him to stump Ohio as originally planned and instead, he focused on Pennsylvania, a battleground state.

Pennsylvania’s Republican governor Andrew Curtin was a staunch supporter of Lincoln. When Curtin was running for reelection in 1863, Lincoln gave government clerks in Pennsylvania and Ohio leave for 15 days and had the railroads issue them passes so they could return home to vote Republican. Lincoln also authorized officers to issue furloughs to soldiers from Pennsylvania so they could go home to vote. Democrats groused Lincoln had furloughed so many men that he had imperiled General George Meade’s army.[1] Despite Lincoln’s help, Curtin only narrowly beat his Democrat opponent, but the Democrats won the Senate race.[2]

Issachar believed if anyone could swing the vote in Lincoln’s favor, it was him. And he believed he could do it by getting out the Jewish vote for Lincoln. As the 1864 election approached, there were about 150,000 Jews in the United States. Most of them lived in New York City, Philadelphia, and Cincinnati. Issachar’s hustling was aimed at getting the only bloc he had any influence over out for Lincoln.

Lincoln never publicly admitted he was interested in any particular group, but as early as 1858, Illinois politician Abraham Jonas, Lincoln’s Jewish friend who had worked for Lincoln’s nomination, urged him to court “the Israelites” as well as “liberal and freethinking Germans.”[3]

While Jews zealously sought voting rights and aspired to public office, prior to the Civil War, Jewish leaders generally discouraged their political involvement as a group. Many of those leaders had recently come from Europe. They had had personal experience with anti–Jewish hatred and sought to keep a low profile for their minions. During the debate over tariffs and nullification raging in Charleston, the city’s Jews were rumored to have petitioned the state legislature for representation “as a religious sect.”[4] Nervous over possible political repercussions, 80 of Charleston’s Jews publicly denied partisan allegiance. Charleston’s Jews, they said, supported both parties. “We wholly disclaim any wish or intention to be represented as a peculiar community … the perfect independence of the Israelite of Charleston, is beyond the control of any individual, it matters not to what sect or party he may be attached.”[5]

Jewish leaders had another good reason to be concerned about taking sides. Protestant Know-Nothings had venomously attacked Catholics as un–American for allegedly voting for Whig candidates.[6] If Jews sought influence as a religious group, they too would be branded as un–American, they said. Their efforts would invite a backlash of anti–Semitism similar to anti–Catholic bigotry.[7] From recurring editorials in prominent Jewish periodicals advocating neutrality, however, it was evident for the most part, most of their Jewish followers ignored their admonitions.[8]

Jews in the North had mixed feelings about Lincoln. Jewish middle-class garment makers and their Jewish employees felt the same as their German and Irish counterparts did about their jobs. Others were strongly in Lincoln’s camp in the run-up to the 1864 election. Lincoln had appointed Jews as military chaplains and officers in the army and had countermanded Grant’s “Jew order.”

But there was a strong undercurrent of anti–Semitism in the Republican party, especially among Radicals.

As noted, Illinois Congressman Elihu Washburn, a close friend of Lincoln's, had written him he hoped the report of Lincoln's revoking Grant's expulsion order was incorrect.[9] Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson (Grant's future vice president) blamed Jewish cotton brokers for starting the war and supported their expulsion from America.[10] Seething with indignation at Wilson's slur, Isaac Meyer Wise, editor of *The Israelite*, retorted that the race he had insulted "has produced greater statesmen and better men than you … a ward politician."[11] Ohio Senator Ben Wade called Judah Benjamin an "Israelite with Egyptian principles."[12] Benjamin replied, "it is true that I am a Jew, and when my ancestors were receiving their Ten Commandments from the immediate hand of the Deity, amidst the thunderings and lighting of Mount Sinai, the ancestors of my opponent were herding swine in the forest of Great Britain."[13]

Republicans called August Belmont,[14] the chairman of the National Democratic Committee and a strong supporter of General George McClellan for President, the "Jew Banker of New York." The *Chicago Tribune* claimed "Belmont, the Rothschilds, and the whole tribe of Jews" were financing McClellan's campaign because they had "invested in Confederate bonds and stood to lose a lot of money if the Confederacy went down."[15] It didn't matter that Belmont, a Sephardic Jew by birth, had converted and married a Christian woman in an Episcopal church and had never had any association with the Jewish community. The *Philadelphia Illustrated New Age* opined Belmont was being abused not because he was a Democrat, but because he was a Jew.[16]

Ohio Republican governor John Brough ridiculed Benjamin as untrustworthy because he was "a Jew by birth and (hypocritically), a politician by trade,"[17] Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, editor of *The Israelite*, reminded Brough there was a sizable Jewish vote in Ohio. "There are 2,000 and more Jewish voters in Cincinnati, and about 3,000 to 4,000 in the state of Ohio, who might feel offended at that uncalled-for remark." If Brough and others persisted in demeaning their Jewish - fellow-citizens, Wise said, "we will certainly feel obliged … [to] show them how many thousand votes we can kill for them."[18]

Jews had yet another reason to vote Democrat. When Lincoln's vice presidential running mate Andrew Johnson was in the Senate, he had lashed out against Jewish senator David Yulee of Florida, calling him "the contemptible little Jew" and a "despicable little beggar." Johnson had also sneered that Judah Benjamin was "a sneaking, Jewish unconscionable traitor. He looks on a country and a government as he would on a suit of old clothes … one who belongs to that tribe that parted the garments of our Savior…. He sold out the old one; and he would sell out the new if he could in so doing make two or three millions."[19] Republican Herman Moos, literary editor of *The Israelite*, fretted that Johnson's remarks and similar screeds "'against my race will deprive us in the coming presidential election of ten thousands of votes."[20] When Moose asked Johnson about his "loose and uncalled for remark's," Johnson sidestepped the accusation. If he had had ever made derogatory remarks about the Israelites, Johnson said he didn't remember the time or the place.[21]

Many Jews were also inclined to vote for McClellan because his running mate, George Pendleton, had been one of the few members of the House of Representatives to publicly come out against Grant's "Jew order."[22] Another Democrat, Clement L. Vallandigham, had been the

only gentile in Congress to protest the July 1861 requirement that only "a regularly ordained minister of some Christian denomination" could serve as a chaplain in the Northern army.[23]

Issachar was aware, as was every Jew, that neutrality was a fiction. Republican slurs directed at Judah Benjamin, David Yulee, and August Belmont, Grant's "Jew order," and every snub, taunt, abuse, invective, and slander vilifying a prominent Jew, no matter how indifferent to Judaism and the Jewish community, was an aspersion on every Jew. Despite such animosity, Issachar was confident he could sway Jews to vote for Lincoln in bloc in 1864. If he did nothing, their votes would go to McClellan.

Issachar was not the only one making promises to deliver the "Jewish vote" to Lincoln. A. S. Cohen, editor of the *Jewish Record*, wrote to Lincoln in September 1863 that a number of his subscribers had asked him to pass on a message. They "could use considerable influence by money and votes to secure your success … through an organization known as the Bnai Berith which has branches in every town and City in the Union."[24]

Thirteen Jewish spokesmen, 12 from New York and Pennsylvania and one from Illinois (their letterhead said Indiana) who called themselves the Jewish Union Republican Association also saw themselves as get-out-the vote advocates for Lincoln. "To Our Jewish Brethren," its lengthy broadside began, "in the political affairs of our adopted country, very few members of our persuasion have hitherto been led to take an active part…

> It [now] becomes imperative upon every honest-minded responsible Jew as well as Gentile, in the interests of humanity, patriotism and the preservation of the National existence, to well and impartially weigh the respective merits of the two candidates for the Supreme Executive Power in the American Republic…
>
> One more effort, strong, united and determined, and the Champion of Freedom, the Emancipator of the Slave and the preserver of his country will be reelected to the power he has so wisely and justly wielded during four years of civil war and political disorganization. We call earnestly upon our Jewish brethren to bring heart and soul, influence and wealth to this great movement.
>
> Unity is strength—Combine strongly, act energetically and unitedly, and the votes of the immense number of Jewish citizens will go far to determine the re-election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency in November next, in other words, the salvation of the republic…

Lincoln and Union! McClellan and Disunion![25]

On October 23, 1864, Lincoln had a face-to-face meeting with "certain gentlemen of the Hebrew faith." The delegates claimed it represented "the Israelites of New York or the United States" and assured Lincoln they could deliver the "Jewish vote" his way. Myer Samuel Isaacs, secretary of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites and co-editor of New York's *Jewish Messenger*, was outraged to hear that New York Jewish leaders were claiming to represent Jews at large and had told Lincoln they could get them to vote for Lincoln. Isaacs didn't know exactly what was said at the meeting, but three days later, on October 26, 1864, he dashed off an angry letter to Lincoln, challenging any promise of a Jewish vote.

> As a firm and earnest Union man, I deem it my duty to add a word to those that have doubtless communicated to you from other sources, with reference to a recent "visitation" on the part of persons claiming to represent the Israelites of New York or the United States and pledging the "Jewish vote" to your support, and, I am informed, succeeding in a deception that resulted to their pecuniary profit.
>
> Having peculiar facilities for obtaining information as to the Israelites of the United States from my eight years' connection with the Jewish paper of this city and my position as Secretary of their central organization, the "Board of Delegates" … I feel authorized to caution you, sir, against any such representations as those understood to have been made … the Israelites are not, as a body, distinctively Union or democratic in their politics…. Jews as a body have no politics.

"There is no 'Jewish vote,'" he bristled, "if there were, it could not be bought."[26] Two days later, Isaacs followed up his letter to Lincoln with an editorial in the *Jewish Messenger*. "Nobody is authorized to speak for our co-religionists on political questions. There is no such thing as 'a Jewish vote.' Israelites will indorse Mr. Lincoln or Gen McClellan according to their individual

judgments."[27]

Lincoln could not ignore Isaac's warning. If Isaacs believed Lincoln could be bought, he might rail against him in his newspaper. If so, it could cost him the very Jewish bloc of votes Issachar had assured him did exist. Lincoln instructed John Hay, his private secretary, to write Isaacs to assuage his concerns. Hay's letter, dated November 1, 1864, didn't deny Lincoln had met with "certain gentlemen of the Hebrew faith." Those gentlemen had made "no pledge of the Jewish vote" to the President, and the President had not given them any "inducements or promises." "You are in error in the assumptions you make in regard to the recent interview to which you refer." They had claimed no such authority and had "received no such response as you seem to suppose."[28]

Even though Issachar was far away in Pennsylvania stumping for Lincoln, he had a subscription to the *Jewish Messenger* and read Isaac's editorial. Issachar was also concerned about promises of a Jewish vote, but for a different reason—someone or some other group might claim credit for delivering it. Issachar wrote his friend Samuel L. Lewis, urging him to write Lincoln about not being taken in by this other group. He could have written the admonition himself, but instead he asked Lewis to write it. Perhaps he thought the concern would seem more genuine if it came from Lewis because Lewis was indebted to Lincoln for arranging the release from prison of his soon-to-be son-in-law, Goodman Mordecai, who been arrested as a Confederate agent.

Heading his letter "having understood through our friend Dr. Zacharie that some parties representing themselves as 'a committee from the Jews'" had called on Lincoln soliciting a bribe for their support in getting out the Jewish vote for him, Lewis assured him they did not represent America's Jewish community. Speaking on Dr. Zacharie's and his own behalf, "I hasten to inform you that it is entirely against the wish of your Jewish friends here to take any money from outside committees or others … [we] Jews propose to give not take." If any other Jewish group called on the President, Lewis said, "send them to me." Then in an about-face, he offered to bribe them. "I will furnish them such amounts as we can see can be used to advantage. Nothing shall be wanting," he assured Lincoln, "on the part of your friends here towards carrying the Union Cause."[29]

On November 3, 1864, five days before the November election, Issachar was back in New York, just returned from stumping for Lincoln for nine days. He was happy to inform him, he puffed, "that I have done much good. I now think all is Right," meaning the election would go Lincoln's way. "As regards the Israelites [sic]—with but few exceptions they will vote for you…. I understand them well, and have taken the precaution—to see that they do as they have promised. I have secured good and trustworthy men to attend to them on Election Day—My Men have been all week seeing that their masses are properly Registered—so that they will go right on the 8th inst."[30]

"I flatter myself I have done one of the sharpest things that has been done in the campaign," he continued, promising to explain exactly what he had done the next time they met. Then he outdid even himself, hyperbolically claiming he was a king-maker. "3 years ago, I promised I would elect you, and if you are not it shall not be my fault." Issachar ended his letter sending his regards to Mrs. Lincoln and saying he was looking forward to seeing him "after the fun is over, when I hope you will say, 'Well done, my good and faithful Servant,'" adding in a P.S. "Did you receive the oranges."[31]

"Election day," writes historian Allan Nevins, "was filled with anxiety and tension in the

largest cities, especially in New York."[32] General Dix, commanding the Department of the East, charged General Butler with keeping the peace. Butler stationed men at strategic points in the city. Saloons were shuttered to prevent drunken violence. Rain and fog that day defused partisan animosities among voters who waited patiently, some for as long as two hours, to cast their ballots.[33]

Lincoln won the electoral college vote by 212 to 21, winning all but three states (Delaware, Kentucky, and New Jersey), and the national election by more than 400,000 votes. Had the election been decided by New York City alone, Lincoln would have lost. The city went against him two to one (66.8 percent to 33.2 percent). He barely won the state as a whole by a 50.5 to 49.5 percent margin. Lincoln's support came mainly from native-born citizens in the farmlands and the skilled workers, merchants, and professional classes, whereas McClellan's primary support came from the immigrant working class. Most Protestants voted for Lincoln, while Irish Catholics voted for McClellan.

Historian Howard Rock contends Jews were similarly split. Ignoring the goodwill Jews may have felt toward Lincoln for his appointment of Jewish chaplains and his rescinding Grant's anti–Semitic fiat, Rock instead focused on economic issues. Jewish industrialists and merchants and garment manufacturers had made fortunes before and during the war supplying the army with its needs and were solidly in Lincoln's camp. New York's working and middle-class Jews, many of whom had emigrated from Germany, voted Democrat. Wages increased during the war, but so did inflation. Prices for sugar doubled, and coal and flour prices rose by a third. Jewish immigrants from Germany continued speaking in their native language for decades after their arrival, mingled freely with gentile Germans, and experienced the same economic hardships and resentments. The Irish and German wards came out strongly for McClellan, giving him 69 percent of its votes. Since Jews did not live in separate enclaves from their gentile German neighbors, they voted the same way as their working-class neighbors.[34]

1. John C. Waugh, Reelecting Lincoln (New York: Crown Publishers, 1998), 16.
2. Cincinnati Gazette, quoted in the Buffalo Evening Courier and Republic, October 21, 1863, 2.
3. Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), 174.
4. Quoted in Naomi W. Cohen, Encounter with Emancipation (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1984), 130.
5. Ibid., 130.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., 131; Korn, American Jewry, 13.
8. Korn, American Jewry, 13.
9. Washburne to Lincoln, January 7, 1863, OR, Series 1, Vol. 18, pt. 1, 544.
10. The Israelite, March 22, 1861, 300; March 29, 1861, 308.
11. The Israelite, November 4, 1864, 148.
12. The Israelite, November 4, 1864, 148.
13. Ibid.
14. The Belmont Stakes, the third leg of horseracing's Triple Crown, is named after Belmont, who inaugurated the race in 1867.
15. Chicago Tribune, quoted in The Israelite, September 1864.
16. Philadelphia Illustrated New Age, November 2, 1864, 2. On the alleged influence of the Rothschilds in American politics, see Glanz's chapter, "The Rothschild Legend in America," in Studies, 358–383.
17. Quoted by Kurt F. Stone, The Jews of Capitol Hill (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2011), 18.
18. The Israelite, September 16, 1864, 2.
19. Charles Francis Adams, An Autobiography (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1916), 94–95.
20. Moos to Johnson, September 16, 1864, Graf, Papers of Andrew Johnson, 168.
21. Ibid.
22. George M. D. Bloss, Life and Speeches of George H. Pendleton (Cincinnati: Miami Print and Publishing Co., 1868), 50.
23. Bertram W. Korn, "Congressman Clement L. Vallingham's Championship of the Jewish Chaplaincy in the Civil War," American Jewish Historical Quarterly 53 (December 1963), 188–191.
24. Cohen to Lincoln, September 1, 1863, Jewish Record, October 24, 1862, 2.
25. "John A. McAllister's Civil War: The Philadelphia Home Front," http://www.librarycompany.org/mcallisterexhibition/section5.htm. This document was discovered by Jonathan Sarna in a collection of 19th-century Jewish-American documents donated to Princeton University. Other than its existence, nothing is known about the organization or its members.
26. Isaacs to Lincoln, October 26, 1864, ABL LOC.
27. Jewish Messenger, October 28, 1864, 124.
28. Hay to Isaacs, November 1, 1864, ABL LOC.
29. Samuel A. Lewis to Lincoln, October 26, 1864, ibid.
30. Zacharie to Lincoln, November 3, 1864, ABL LOC.
31. The phrase "my good and faithful servant" is unusual for a Jew to say since it is taken from the New Testament (Matthew 25:14–30). Issachar's sending his regards to Mary implies he was also on good terms with her, although Mary never mentioned him in any of her letters or recorded comments.
32. Allen Nevins, The War for the Union (New York: Charles Scribners and Sons, 1959), Vol. 7, 138.
33. George Templeton Strong, November 8, 1864, Diary (New York: Macmillan, 1952), 510.
34. Howard B. Rock, Haven of Liberty: New York Jews in the New World, 1654–1865 (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 247.

23

“My family are crazy with joy”

Five days after General Sherman sent Lincoln the city of Savannah as a “Christmas gift,”[1] Issachar wired Lincoln his congratulations, adding his family (his father and sisters and their husbands in Savannah) “are crazy with joy.”[2] Either Issachar was expressing what he felt were his family’s sentiments, or more intriguing, someone in his family had been able to telegraph him now that the city was in Union hands and knew where to find him. It also meant Issachar had somehow maintained contact with them during the war, despite restrictions on communications.

With Savannah under Union control, Issachar now had an opportunity to visit his family. From New York, he wrote Secretary of War Stanton requesting a pass to allow him passage through the Union lines. Issachar expected Stanton would not object. He and Stanton were both Masons, and Issachar had treated Stanton’s corns in Washington. Stanton had also not objected to his heading up a “chiropody corps” for the army (the appointment was rejected by Surgeon General Hammond). But Stanton refused to issue the necessary pass.[3]

Never one to take no for an answer, the next day, Issachar called on Lincoln. After some brief pleasantries, Issachar reminded Lincoln of a promise he had made about allowing him to visit his family once Savannah was under Union control. If Issachar mentioned Stanton’s refusal to give him the pass, which he probably did, there is no mention of it in any of their correspondence. Despite anticipating angering Stanton for pulling rank, Lincoln told Issachar he would have the pass sent to him the next day. Issachar asked for one more favor. Could he also have a pass for his nephew, Jacob G. Cohen, his sister’s son? Lincoln had earlier arranged for Cohen’s release when he was detained after fleeing the South. Lincoln nodded agreement.[4]

Lincoln issued the pass for Issachar and his nephew[5] as asked, and also wrote a letter of introduction for Issachar to show General Sherman.

> Allow me to introduce Dr. I. Zacharie, of New York who visits his father & friends at Savannah, when the Dr. is well acquainted, and when very likely he could be of (unreadable) to you in some matters—He is entirely loyal and devoted to the Union Cause.[6]

A few days later, Issachar wrote Lincoln he was leaving for Savannah “where I hope to find my Dear old Father and friends—if you have any matters that you would have properly attended to, I will consider it a favour to let me attend to it for you.” Issachar ended his brief letter with a P.S: “please informe me if you [received] the Bannas.”[7] Always alert to Issachar’s activities, the newspapers assumed some clandestine reason behind his trip south. Dr. Zacharie had been appointed by Lincoln to go to Savannah, readers were told, “upon an important mission.”[8]

By coincidence, Stanton was on his way to Savannah at the same time as Issachar. Stanton’s asthma was especially bad during the winter, and Surgeon General Joseph Barnes had strongly urged him to take the trip to give him some relief.[9] Anticipating adverse publicity over using military resources for a health trip, Stanton had given out that the purpose of his trip was to consult with Generals Grant, (John Gray) Foster, and Sherman. They were to discuss prison exchanges, “the organization of colored troops; raising the blockade of Savannah,” opening

Savannah to free trade, and seizure of rebel property.[10]

Issachar arrived at Hilton Head, South Carolina, on his way to Savannah, a few hours before Stanton. "The distinguished statesman" (Issachar, not Stanton), the *New York Herald* reported, was accompanied by two other men, "one doubtless of the legation (Issachar's nephew), and the other holding the position of confidential secretary (Charles Johnson) to the envoy extraordinary."[11] The implication was there was more to Issachar's visit than just his visiting his family.

As soon as Issachar's steamer docked, "the celebrated chiropodist and distinguished diplomatist" called on General Foster, the officer in charge of the Department of the South, and showed him his pass along with Lincoln's introductory letter to Sherman. The two men then sat down and chatted for several hours. Foster asked him about Lincoln, obviously aware Issachar was on intimate terms with the President. Born in New Hampshire, Foster was a career military officer. He had served as an engineer during the Mexican American War and had been an instructor at West Point. Foster was one of the engineers who constructed Fort Sumter. He'd been second in command to Major Robert Anderson when he surrendered the fort. In 1864, Foster was put in charge of the Department of the South and had aided Sherman in capturing Savannah.[12]

"The doctor was in his glory," the *New York Herald's* correspondent reported, "brisk and blithe as a bird in full plumage, in the June sunlight." But the "bird" was cut "down while he was in full blossom." A few hours later, Stanton's steamer, the *Nevada*, arrived. As soon as General Foster was notified of Stanton's arrival, he immediately went to greet him. Without a second thought, Foster asked Issachar if he'd like to accompany him. Even though his last meeting with Stanton had not turned out well, Issachar went along.

Stanton was livid at seeing Issachar standing beside Foster. Lincoln had obviously gone over his head and issued Issachar a pass. After Foster and Stanton shook hands, Issachar held out his hand. Stanton stared at Issachar for a moment and briskly turned away, saying, "I want nothing to do with that man." Stanton ordered him off the ship. Issachar stood speechless and dumbfounded. Everyone on board held his breath. "It was a moment big with import," wrote the *Herald*. "It settled the diplomatic mission of the Doctor. He was not to be permitted to go to Savannah and meet with Sherman."[13]

Issachar left the ship wondering what to do next. He didn't have to think about it for long. Humiliation over being ordered off the ship was only the beginning of his problems. Moments later, an officer informed him he "had a disagreeable duty to perform." Issachar's eyes widened in fear as the officer told him he had been "ordered by the Secretary of War to place you under arrest, with a sentry at your door. It is a disagreeable duty, but must be performed." The officer then escorted him to the provost guard house.[14] "It is understood that the Secretary will send him North by the first conveyance and with him his two secretaries," the *Herald* reported. With obvious sarcasm, the *Herald* scoffed, "Dr. Zacharie will hereafter add the proud title of martyr to the equally distinguished and proud appellations of chiropodist and diplomat."[15]

Two days later, the *Herald* gleefully ran the exact same story with a different headline: "Dr. Zacharie, Chiropodist and Diplomatist, Becomes a Martyr."[16] The story became a lead article in newspapers as far west as San Francisco.[17] Bennett correctly speculated Stanton had had Zacharie arrested because Issachar had gone around him and had obtained the pass to Savannah after Stanton had refused to give it to him. Stanton could be vindictive. Just before leaving for Savannah, Stanton had General Butler transferred to Lowell, Massachusetts, "a decree of

meanness that is worthy of our small secretary." Before the war, Butler had been beaten and given a black eye before the war by a local bricklayer in Lowell. "To send him to this town where he will daily be in danger of meeting the brick layer … is perfectly terrible."[18]

Major John Chipman Gray, the judge advocate for the Department of the South under Foster,[19] had a different explanation for Stanton's "arbitrary" behavior. According to Gray, who was on board when Issachar was arrested, Stanton didn't want anything to do with Jews, and Issachar was a Jew. Gray was quite open about his own anti–Semitism[20] "This man Zachary is in appearance the lowest and vulgarest of Jew peddlers and it is enough to condemn Mr. Lincoln that he can make a friend of such an odious creature. He came with letters to General Foster but Mrs. Foster absolutely refused to sit at the same table with him."[21]

It was Gray's anti–Semitism, not Stanton's, that prompted his explanation. Stanton had no personal animosity toward Jews or Issachar prior to their Hilton Head confrontation. Earlier in his career, Stanton had defended Florida's Jewish elected Senator David Yulee's right to a seat in the Senate in a contested election.[22] He also ignored the attempt on the part of General Stephen A. Hurlbut to deflect corruption charges against him by forwarding the agreement between "the celebrated Chiropodist Dr. Zacharie" and Betterton, along with letters Issachar had written for him allegedly implicating Issachar in smuggling.[23]

Stanton was well aware of Issachar's activities when he was in New Orleans and did not respond. Stanton's absence of anti–Semitic bias was also indicated when he ordered another Jew, Simon Wolf, freed after Union spymaster Lafayette C. Baker arrested Wolf for meeting with a Southern refugee in Philadelphia. A lawyer and prominent member of the B'nai B'rith in Washington, Wolf often represented other Jews in similar circumstances. Baker had charged him with being an enemy agent: "You belong to the Order of B'nai B'rith, a disloyal organization which has its ramifications in the South, and … helping traitors."[24]

Shortly after Stanton left for Washington after his meeting with Sherman, Issachar was freed and escorted aboard a steamer back to Washington without meeting his family in Savannah. By then, his entanglement with Stanton had made him such a national figure that the *New York World's* correspondent, who had sailed on the *Fulton*, the same steamer Issachar took to Hilton Head, wrote an amusing tongue-in-cheek spoof of Issachar's wayward journey.

He had tried to book a stateroom for himself and his companions on the trip to Hilton Head, he said, but was told it belonged to Dr. Zacharie. Seeing the journalist's dismay, Issachar asked if there was anything he could do for him, and the journalist told him he needed a berth for him and his friends. The journalist said Issachar smiled back at him and told him he couldn't oblige, "for I have refused it to two brigadier-generals, three colonels, and five captains, who are now sleeping on the floor." Issachar offered him some brandy, "the same brandy which I have sent as a gift to General Sherman and to General Foster," he said. "The demijohns are now on the deck with the labels on They cost me three hundred dollars apiece, and are of the finest quality I could find in New York."

The doctor had not exaggerated its merit, said the correspondent. "This indeed is a very fine liquor, doctor; I do not suppose Mr. Lincoln drinks any better in the White House."

"The same sir, the same sir, I gave him the address of the importer myself," Issachar beamed. "Mr. Lincoln is my friend, and I should be sorry to see my friends drink worse liquor that I drink myself." (Lincoln in fact was a teetotaler.)

Issachar then pulled out a letter from his pocket and handed it to the correspondent. It was supposedly Lincoln's letter to Sherman, introducing "Dr. Zacharie, my friend who is going to

Savannah on some important business. You will find him a pleasant and very useful gentleman. I ask for him your kinds regards and attention."

That "is certainly as high a recommendation as any one can wish," the correspondent said, handing the letter back.

"Is it not," said Issachar with "another smile of satisfaction." "Well, gentlemen, I could show you many letters, just as strong from every distinguished man in the country." As proof, Issachar showed him a pocketbook with similar letters (Issachar's well-known certificate book). Hearing the dinner bell, Issachar invited him to dinner.

"No one, then contemplating so much wealth, so much brandy, and so much impudence," he said, could have anticipated the "sad fate" about to unfold.

On the way back to Washington after Issachar's humiliation, the correspondent wrote Issachar seethed with anger at Stanton. "I will slap his jaw, I will have him turned out of the cabinet, I will ruin him in the eyes of the people."[25] Believing the correspondent's farfetched recital of the incident, the *Columbia* (Connecticut) *Register*, no friend of Stanton's, said "it is to be hoped he (Issachar) may get it (his vengeance)."[26]

Back in Washington by January 25, Issachar related his reception and subsequent arrest to Lincoln. Lincoln immediately dashed off a memorandum to Stanton. It began, seemingly enigmatically, "About Jews." Lincoln asked Stanton to issue Issachar a second pass for him to go to Savannah for a week and return, "bringing with him, if he wishes his father and sisters or any of them. This will spare me trouble and oblige me—I promised him long ago that he should be allowed this whenever Savannah should fall into our hands."[27]

Historian Bertram Korn inferred that when Lincoln wrote "about Jews," he was reacting to Stanton's dislike of Jews and Issachar in particular because he was Jewish. But as noted, Stanton had no personal animosity toward Jews or to Issachar prior to their Hilton Head confrontation. The reason the letter began "about Jews" was that in the same letter, Lincoln referred to another Jew, Major Leopold Blumberg, who had been summarily dismissed from service for alleged "cruelty in gagging men to make them confess they were deserters."[28] Lincoln asked Stanton to give him a "hearing" to defend himself. "He (Blumberg) has suffered for us (he had been 'crippled' at the Battle of Antietam) & served us well (after Antietam he was appointed Provost Marshall of Maryland's Third District)—had the rope around his neck for being our friend—raised troops—fought, and been wounded. He should not be dismissed in a way that disgraces and ruins him without a hearing."[29]

Stanton could read Lincoln's anger between the lines. He dashed off a reply to the President that same day. "An order for leave to Zacharie as directed by you has been issued & sent to Mr. Nicolay."[30] As to Blumberg, Stanton said he hadn't known anything about his case beforehand. After looking into the matter, he had been informed Blumberg had been dismissed for reasons besides gagging men to make them confess. Blumberg was later cleared of all charges. After the war, he was reinstated and promoted to brevet brigadier general.[31]

Issachar departed for Savannah the following day. Before leaving, he wrote a brief note to Lincoln, calling him "My Dear Friend." Issachar said he hoped to "find my Dear old Father and Friends" and would be more than happy to attend to any matters for Lincoln he might have in the city. He ended the letter with "God Bless you," and asked whether he had received the bananas he'd sent him earlier.[32]

Under the headline "Movements of Dr. Zacharie," the *New York Herald* whimsically reported, "Dr. Zacharie, whose return from Savannah, by request of Secretary Stanton, was rather sooner

than anticipated, leaves again for that point, having today received the necessary authorization for the purpose from the Secretary of War."[33] What happened after Issachar left for Savannah isn't known. There is no record of his meeting with General Sherman or of his seeing his family. His thank-you to Lincoln for reissuing his pass was the last known correspondence he ever had with Lincoln.

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1. W. T. Sherman to Abraham Lincoln, December 22, 1864, ABL LOC.
2. Zacharie to Lincoln, December 26, 1864, ABL LOC.
3. New York Herald, January 21, 1865, 1.
4. Pass for J. G. Cohen, quoted in Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), 182.
5. Lincoln, "pass for Issachar Zacharie," Brown University, https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:72290/.
6. Lincoln to Sherman, December 27, 1864, Brown University, https://reposi tory.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:72290/.
7. Zacharie to Lincoln, December 1864, ABL LOC.
8. Springfield (Massachusetts) Republican, December 29, 1864, 2.
9. "Edwin Stanton's Whipping Boy," https://www.historynet.com/edwin-stantons-whipping-boy.htm; Binzel, personal communication.
10. New York Times, January 6, 1865, 4.
11. New York Herald, January 21, 1865, 1.
12. A few months after Issachar's visit, due to wounds he had earlier suffered in battle, he relinquished his command and was reassigned to another, less demanding command in Florida. After the war, he remained in the army and developed techniques for underwater demolition. John G. Foster biography, http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/chron/civilwarnotes/foster.html, accessed December 13, 2015.
13. New York Herald, January 21, 1865, 1.
14. Ibid.
15. Ibid.
16. Ibid.
17. Sacramento Daily Union, February 20, 1865, 1; (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, February 2, 1865, 7; Rochester (New York) Daily Union and Advertiser, January 24, 1865, 1.
18. Detroit Free Press, January 11, 1865, 2.
19. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 118.
20. Ibid., 86.
21. John Chipman Gray and John Codman Ropes, War Letters 1862–1865 (Bos-ton, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1927), 442. On Gray, Ezra R. Thayer, Samuel Williston, and Joseph Beale, "John Chipman Gray," Harvard Law Review 28 (April 1915), 539–549.
22. Rosen, Jewish Confederates, 55–58. I thank William Binzel for alerting me to this and other instances of Stanton's and Yulee's interactions. Other than John Gray, no one accused Stanton of anti–Semitism, and Stanton's actions on behalf of Yulee and Wolf speak otherwise.
23. Hurlbut was later accused of illicit trading and stealing silver sequestered at the Custom House, and he resigned his commissions to avoid court martial. Jeffery H. Lash, A Politician Turned General (Kent, OH: Kent State University Press, 2003), 169–170).
24. Simon Wolf, The Presidents I Have Known from 1860–1918 (Washington, D.C.: Byron S. Adams, 1918), 10. Wolf's American Jew as Patriot documented the service of Jews in the Civil War in both the Union and the Confederacy.
25. New York World, January 30, 1865, 5.
26. Columbia (Connecticut) Register, February 4, 1865, 2.
27. Lincoln to Stanton, January 25, 1865, Basler, Collected Works, Vol. 8, 238.
28. Stanton to Lincoln, January 25, 1865, ABL LOC.
29. Lincoln to Stanton, January 25, 1865, Basler, Collected Works, Vol. 8, 238.
30. Stanton to Lincoln, January 25, 1865, ABL LOC.
31. Bertram W. Korn, "Lincoln and the Jews," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society 48 (Summer 1955), 181–182.
32. Zacharie to Lincoln, undated, ABL LOC.
33. New York Herald, January 26, 1865, 5.

PART FOUR

Later Years

24

“Surely you don’t intend to go for Grant”

After Lincoln’s assassination, Issachar busied himself with his chiropody practice in New York and Philadelphia[1] and with marketing “Italian Lotion. For the Complexion. Prevents sunburn, freckles and pimples” as a new sideline.[2] He didn’t need the money. Issachar hadn’t exaggerated when he told Lincoln he had no need for bribes. According to the *New York Evening Telegraph*, he owned $10,000 in diamonds, putting him high on the list of “principal Diamond Owners in New York.”[3]

In 1868, Issachar moved his family into a mansion on 51st near Fifth Avenue.[4] The new address was more prestigious than Broadway. It was also larger and needed more servants to properly host the “nightly banquets” he gave for “the high-rollers of that city.”[5] It wasn’t just New York’s elite who were guests at the Zacharie mansion. Issachar kept in touch with General Banks, who was still popular enough in his home state of Massachusetts to be reelected to Congress and was serving as chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. When Banks visited New York, Issachar invited him to dinner at his new residence at number 16 on 51st street, a few doors west of 5th Avenue.[6]

Nothing much is known about Issachar’s personal life. Did he have any close friends? Was he a faithful husband? His and Mary Ann’s marriage seemed happy enough. Had there been any strain in their marriage, Mary Ann could have sought divorce, but they stayed married. Was Mary Ann religious? Did she take her children to church? Did they go to Sunday school? Did he ever speak to them about his own religion?

Issachar’s children began leaving to start their own families in 1871, when 19-year-old Amelia, Issachar’s eldest daughter, married Joseph Edward Hughes and left to live with her husband in England.[7] That same year, his son Charles Lawson Zacharie married Florence Cowing. (Their son, Charles C. Zacharie, born two years later, served as a physician in the American army during World War II and died in 1948.)

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Like the rest of America, Issachar read about the political drama evolving after Andrew Johnson became President. When Johnson took office, Radical Republicans were overjoyed that one of their own was in the White House as President and would go along with their intentions to punish the South for the war. But Johnson had his own ideas about Reconstruction that were much more lenient. When Johnson refused to budge, the House considered impeaching him, but couldn’t come up with sufficient grounds. The House finally found a cause after Johnson asked Secretary of War Stanton, whom he suspected of conspiring with the Radicals, to resign. When Stanton refused, Johnson suspended him when Congress was not in session and appointed General Grant as interim secretary. When the Senate returned, its members insisted Stanton could not be fired. Grant resigned to avoid becoming entangled in the dispute. Johnson wouldn’t back down. He accused Grant of reneging on his promise to continue as an interim cabinet member until the Supreme Court weighed in on the constitutionality of his firing Stanton. Grant said he had given him no such assurance. Johnson then appointed Major General Lorenzo Thomas Secretary of War. Impeached by the House, Johnson narrowly avoided conviction in the

Senate by a single vote.[8]

There was no chance Johnson would be reelected in 1868. Issachar would have been ecstatic had Banks been the Republican party's nominee, but Banks' time had come and gone. General Grant was the obvious choice to succeed Johnson. Issachar kept in touch with Banks and invited him to call on him "when convenient,"[9] but Issachar no longer had any illusions of riding back to fame on Banks' coattails.

Ulysses S. Grant was not a politician. He had never held public office. He knew war and horses. A political naif, he lacked the acquired instincts of the wily politician.[10] Grant was a modest man not prone to bombast. His simple presidential message was, "let us have peace,"[11] by which he meant reconciliation between North and South and black and white.[12] Grant favored black manhood suffrage in the former Confederate states, but left the issue up to the states in the rest of the country. Promises aside, Grant's strategists knew one thing: Grant was a revered hero. "Waving the bloody shirt," they reminded the country Grant had defeated the enemy and restored peace, despite Democrats' opposition.

Grant's Democrat opponent in the 1868 election was New York State's former governor, Horatio Seymour. Seymour had not been one of Lincoln's admirers. When Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, Seymour lambasted it as a "proposal for the butchery of women and children, for scenes of lust and rapine, and of arson and murder."[13] Seymour's vice presidential running mate, Francis Preston Blair, Jr., promised, when elected, to "prevent the people of our race … from being driven out of the country or trodden under foot by an inferior and semi-barbarous race."[14]

America's Jews were conflicted.[15] Like the rest of the North, they revered Grant as a war hero, but the memory of Grant's infamous order expelling all Jews from his department was still vivid in their minds. Myer Samuel Isaacs, editor of the *Jewish Messenger*, wasn't dismissive of Grant's egregious fiat, but insisted, as he had in the 1864 election, America's Jews would vote as individuals on the basis of their ideals, not as a Jewish bloc. "Judaism," he insisted, "has nothing in common with partisan politics."[16]

How Jews voted in the 1868 election is guesswork. Jews were only a small minority, numbering no more than 150,000 to 200,000, but that included women and children and recent immigrants who were ineligible to vote.[17] If the outcome were based solely on the popular vote, in a close election, they might have made a difference. But the electoral college determines the winner. In 1868, America was still mostly farmland and rural. Most of America's Jews lived in the larger cities of New York, Baltimore, Chicago, Cincinnati, and Philadelphia. Their votes would not count for much in the electoral college.

Grant easily won the electoral college, 214 to 80. He carried the popular vote by the narrower margin of 3 million to 2.7 million votes. In New York, Grant lost by 10,000 votes.[18] The *New York Times* opined that because of the lasting "enmity" over Grant's "Jew order," "the entire body of voting Israelites" marked their ballots for Seymour.[19] Sarna and Chernow speculate Grant would have lost the popular vote were it not for the more than 500,000 African American voters who supported him.[20] At 46, Ulysses S. Grant was the youngest Presidential candidate ever elected, until John F. Kennedy at 43.

Issachar had no personal influence or connection with Grant or Seymour or any of their supporters, but he had hardly been forgotten. In the aftermath of the 1868 election and Grant's mantra, "let us have peace," *Galaxy* magazine reminded its readers of Issachar's peace mission

to the South, not to praise, but to blister him for "meddling in public business, pretending to do something when doing nothing … then telegraphing it to the newspapers?" Wagging a finger at "Mr. Lincoln's corn-doctor," it asked what "was the State business requiring so queer an ambassador as this reaper and mower of corns, and soother of in-grown toe-nails?" The "worthy corn-doctor" used the notoriety he got by his "diplomatic functions" well. "He is now doing a thriving trade in salves and toe lotions up in Broadway, in a museum of monstrous corns and abnormal bunions, to which he will add yours, gentle reader, at a reasonable rate."[21]

Issachar was in fact "doing a thriving trade." He'd relocated his storefront in Philadelphia to 1011 Chestnut and was still selling his Italian lotion from his Broadway building,[22] Issachar had also rented out part of his business space at his Broadway location to an M. Lausson who offered to enhance faces by enameling them "in the most exquisite style, so as to last for one day or one year. The preparation used is purely vegetable and warranted not to injure the skin. Eyelashes trimmed and eyebrows arranged so as to add much to the appearance of the face…. All communications strictly confidential."[23]

* * * * * * * *

The year 1872 was another election year. Grant told a reporter he wasn't anxious for a second term. He said he had decided to run to learn whether the country really believed all that was alleged against his administration and himself personally. Grant was aware of the animus many Jews still harbored against him because of his expulsion order, but he had done much to undo that bitterness.[24]

Grant's opponent this time was the *New York Tribune*'s prickly Horace Greeley, who was backed by an unholy alliance between the Liberal Republican Party, splintered from the Republican Party, and the Democrats. Liberal Republicans balked at Grant's Reconstruction policies, including his promotion of black suffrage, and the "Grantism" that characterized his administration.

"Grantism" became a generic term for the scandals and corruption for the era known as the "Gilded Age." The "Gilded Age" was Mark Twain's cynical label[25] for the "shiny and prosperous on the outside, but rotten on the inside" years that began with Grant's first term as President, an administration mired in mismanagement and corruption. Initially inclined to be lenient toward the postwar South, Grant changed his attitude after scheming politicians with more punitive ideas plied him with expensive wines and cigars and fast horses.[26]

Dishonest politicians and businessmen became multimillionaires dur-ing Grant's administration while millions of others struggled to keep food on the table. A year into Grant's presidency, his administration was racked by "Black Friday," the first of its major scandals. Millionaires Jay Gould and "Jubilee Jim" Fisk cornered the gold market, buying enough gold and stock to send gold prices soaring, and then sold it for a huge profit. The scheme worked because Gould and Fisk bribed Grant's brother-in-law, Abel Corbin, to persuade Grant not to let the Federal Treasury sell its gold. When the Treasury finally released its gold, the price for gold plummeted. A Congressional investigation concluded that Grant was stupid, but not crooked.[27]

* * * * * * * *

Issachar had sat out the 1868 election. Like many, he was fed up with the scandals that dominated the newspapers. He felt certain Grant would not be reelected and sensed this might be an opportunity for Banks and himself, as Banks' self-appointed advisor, to regain the national spotlight. When Issachar read Banks was considering supporting Grant, he dashed off a letter to

the General.

> Surely you don't intend to go for Grant. You are too young a man to choose deliberately to go on the losing side, when both your principles and our feelings can be better served by going on the winning side. We know here that the indorsement of Greeley or a Brown (Benjamin Gratz Brown, Greeley's running mate) by the Democratic convention is as certain as anything in the political future can be. With that indorsement, and with the support he already has from the Liberal Republicans especially from the Irish and Germans, there can be scarcely a reasonable doubt of his election.[28]

Despite his initial support for Grant, Banks was disappointed Grant had ignored him after the 1868 election. He had expected Grant to offer him a cabinet position or a foreign ministry.[29] Grant had also ignored Banks' patronage requests,[30] but Banks wasn't yet ready to sever his loyalty to the Republican party he had helped organize. "Waiting on the Lord" to see in which direction the electoral wind blew, Banks procrastinated about lending his name to the Greeley campaign.[31]

Issachar intimated that Banks could expect a cabinet appointment or at least patronage appointments in return for supporting Greeley. "If political gratitude amounts to anything, you could hardly in any other way command yourself so well to the Administration that is for the next four years to rule."[32] By early July, Banks was rumored to be leaning toward Greeley.[33]

There is no longer "the slightest doubt that General Banks has determined to abandon the administration, and array himself on the side of the democracy and liberal republicanism," the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* told its readers. "Of course, this movement destroys his chances for reelection to Congress (Republicans would turn against him) but it may be possible that the General is willing now to terminate his Congressional career and take the chances of a cabinet position or a foreign Ministry under the government to come."[34]

"Not a sorehead," the *Chicago Post* crowed about Banks' silence, surmising it amounted to a denial of apostasy. "He [still] adheres to the Republican party."[35] Banks had "positively denied the rumors in regard to his being a supporter of Horace Greeley," trumpeted the *Boston Traveler*. "This is decisive. General Banks' friends never doubted his fidelity."[36] General Banks is "too shrewd a man to step outside of an organization which has given him so much more than he deserves," said the *Sacramento Daily*.[37]

"I have tried to serve you," Issachar chastised Banks after he failed to show up at a meeting Issachar had arranged for him to meet with Greely and a "few prominent friends." "Without further explanation from you," he said, he will not again allude "to the subject in which I have taken a deep interest," implying Banks was wasting Issachar's time. Issachar scolded Banks as if he were a disobedient child. "I do all for your good but I fear that you as usual procrastinate." "I have done my duty towards you as I would expect any friend to do towards me. If I have failed it is not my fault. I fear you will come out too late. Now is the time or never."[38]

On July 31, Banks finally announced he was supporting Greeley. "No personal feeling of any character" influenced his decision, he said, by which he meant Grant. "My duty to myself and my country requires me to give him [Greeley] my support."[39]

Just as it had been in the 1868 election, Grant's General Orders No. 11 was weaponized, this time by the Greeley camp. Greeley's *New York Tribune* published a letter from a reader saying it seemed odd to him that the Jewish press, with one exception, had been ominously silent on the election. If the controversy merely involved political questions, there might be a reason to keep aloof. But "we know that both Grant and (Henry) Wilson (his vice-president running mate) … are both enemies to the Jews…. What Grant has done against us we all but too well know, he having issued that infamous order, banishing the Jews as a class from his district, because,

forsooth, a few of them were petty traders."[40]

By 1872, however, the animus many Jews felt toward Grant had lost most of its sting. In a letter to a former Congressman, Isaac Morris, that was purposely leaked to the press, Grant said he had issued the expulsion order "without any reflection and without thinking of the Jews as a sect or race … but simply as persons who had successfully (I say successfully instead of persistently because there were plenty of others within my lines who envied their success) violated an order, which greatly inured to the help of the rebels."[41] It was a transparently feckless denial. Nonetheless, many Jews accepted the halfhearted apology, especially when Grant added he had "no prejudice against sect or race, but want each individual to be judged by his own merit." Grant admitted Orders No. 11 didn't support his statement. "But then I do not sustain that order. It would never have been issued if it had not been telegraphed the moment it was penned, and without reflection."[42]

To prove he had no animus against Jews, Grant appointed Jews to public office, opposed a Constitutional amendment explicitly acknowledging "the Lord Jesus Christ as the Ruler among nations," publicly protested pogroms in Russia and Romania, and appointed a Jewish consul-general to Romania.[43] Countering the accusations of Grant's anti–Semitism, the pro–Grant *New York Times* accused Greeley of ridiculing a sacred Jewish rite. According to the *Times*, after some Indians had fled to Canada after a rabbi had allegedly forcibly circumcised them as the lost tribes of Israel, Greeley supposedly said that when he got to be President, "I'll send a lot of these rabbis out there" to get the redskins to leave the country.[44] During the war, Greeley had also disparaged Jews as "the most persistent and cunning contrabandits."[45]

As he had in the 1864 and 1868 elections, the *Jewish Messenger's* editor, Samuel Myer Isaacs, berated the partisan newspapers for urging Jews to vote as a bloc, this time against Grant. "While some Israelites may not have forgotten that indefensible action (Grant's Orders No. 11), many have long ago forgiven Grant, and have buried their private feelings in consideration of the General's public services…. It is absurd for the managers of either party to imagine that 'Jewish votes' can be bought or sold," he blustered. "There are no 'Jewish votes.' Let there be an end to these newspaper efforts to embroil American Hebrews in political controversy."[46] For his part, throughout his stumping for Greeley, Banks never mentioned Grant's order or made any overtures to win the "Jewish vote." Strangely, neither did Issachar. During the 1864 election, Issachar had prided himself on allaying America's Jews on Lincoln's side. This time, Issachar was strangely silent about getting out the Jewish vote for Greeley.

The day after Banks came out publicly for Greeley, Issachar congratulated him on his decision. "Well done my good friend. I know you will never regret coming out for Greeley."[47] A day later, Issachar wrote him he had heard from "several prominent men" about what they thought about Banks' letter. Issachar had lost none of his self-serving sycophantism. "I can say with satisfaction to myself and friends and with honor to you, that it is one of your master letters." He had spoken with Greeley in his home the day before, and Greeley asked Issachar to thank Banks. Greeley told him Banks' letter clinched his election. He hoped to meet him soon and thank him personally.[48] Continuing to praise Banks for his "manly letter," Issachar gloated with satisfaction and pride that his efforts to persuade Banks to support Greeley had not been in vain. "Keep it up," he beamed with anticipation, "and N.P. Banks will yet pull the strings of government."[49]

Just as he had boasted to Lincoln years before that he would guarantee his reelection if he

followed his advice, Issachar ended his letter by praising himself for putting Banks "on the right path," telling him to "only take my advice" and his future would not "slip through your fingers." Ironically, Issachar cautioned Banks to "trust no man, they will deceive you." He himself had induced Banks to go into this campaign, he said, "from the purest of motives." Should Greeley lose the election, "I hope you will not blame me for persuading you to break ranks with the Republicans and support him."[50]

A day later, flush with enthusiasm, Issachar wrote Banks he had picked up some gossip the night before at Democratic Headquarters. One of the delegates had said Banks was "the biggest gun that Greeley has" and hoped one day to vote for Banks for President.[51] Feeling he could once again be Banks' puppet master, Issachar wrote he was too busy seeing patients to call on him at Banks' room in New York, but if Banks could come to his office, "I think it will be to your advantage."[52]

It was no contest. Grant won 31 of the 37 states, including several Southern states, the electoral vote, 286 to 3, and the popular vote with 55.6 percent to Greeley's 43.8 percent (other candidates won the remaining 0.6 percent). Just before the electoral college cast its votes, Greeley unexpectedly died.

Banks' support of Greeley cost him his own state congressional seat. But Banks was not ready to retire. Two years later, Banks again ran for Congress. Despite the disastrous outcome of the national election and his costly advice to Banks' career, Issachar once again offered to help Banks in his reelection bid. Telegraph me immediately, he wrote Banks, "and I will be on hand…. Never Say Die."[53] Banks did not take him up on his offer and regained his seat in the midterm election on his own.[54]

* * * * * * * *

Issachar had finally closed his business in Philadelphia in 1872. In 1873, he relocated his residence to 27 Union Square East in New York, one of the streets surrounding the Union Square Park.[55] Union Square was a much more prestigious address than Issachar's former location farther down on Broadway. The streets surrounding the park were paved, and the streets were lined with trees, posh hotels, and upscale businesses like the first Tiffany & Co.

Issachar was nothing if not resilient. Whatever animus he may have had toward Grant, Issachar didn't let it get in the way of an invitation on Grant's part for him to come to Washington to remove Grant's corns. As was his usual custom, he asked Grant for a testimonial. The autographed note, dated Washington, January 15, 1874, stated "Dr. I Zacharie M.D. has extracted from my feet corns of long standing without producing the slightest pain and the work is done in the most effectual manner."[56]

Grant's testimonial caught the attention of journalist George Alfred Townsend. Best known as John Wilkes Booth's first biographer, Townsend, writing under the pseudonym Gath, visited the "celebrated corn doctor" under the pretense of ridding himself of bunions. What he was really interested in was "making some inquiries about the footprints of statesmen. So, with all my antennae out, I dropped, in an indifferent way, into the sanctum of our greatest corn-surgeon, and asked him to cut four dollars' worth off, but not to hurry about it." Townsend embellished his description of his visit for his readers, but despite his elaborations, his is the first and only insight into Issachar's personality and business.

Issachar showed him a "luxurious chair" and told him to sit and relax while he "prepared some occult salve." While he was busy preparing the ointment, Issachar gave him a large pile of corns

to examine. Years earlier, *Galaxy* magazine had referred to Issachar's "museum of monstrous corns and abnormal bunions":

> He had about one thousand hard corns of all sizes strung upon wire, as a merchant keeps his bills or charges on file. Some were nearly an inch square and looked like a section cut out of a horse's hoof; others were little delicate corns no larger than those raised upon the branching feet of a young robin; others were clear as glass … while some were dark and muddy, and the coagulated blood at their center made them resemble ossified violets…. What a memorandum of mankind and womankind it was! The story of torture for vanity's sake; of high heels consented to the sacrifice of love; of man's pursuit of wealth, all day upon his feet, and these horny milestones, the silently accumulating measure of his journey; of weary postmen bearing out letters from door to door, while the long, poignant ache rested within the boot unnoticed of soldiers marching into the jaws of death but reckon less of the enemy's Minnie balls than of those missiles which crush their feet at every stride. Here it was, the intensest epitome of woe ever hung up in a business museum.

Townsend asked Issachar why he kept them. "Curiosity," Issachar answered, and also as evidence he had not lived in vain. "If the man who gives a cup of cold water to one of these little ones, expects to be remembered in Heaven, what will they say up there when I appear with my linear half mile of such corns as this?"

"So, you think there is a religious aspect to your business," Townsend asked?

Issachar nodded. "Yes, I like to think so. So does everybody like to think that he is necessary and comfortable to have round. Yesterday there was a young lady here, whose foot looked like a slim new moon made out of ivory, with a corn peeping out behind it like a star. I cut it off for her, and she said: 'Oh! Doctor, I feel as if I could fly.' And the young man who came with her asked me to give him the corn to put in his watch seal."

Some of his patients were less grateful when he handed them his bill, said Issachar. Reaching out for a "corn which looked like three silver half dollars that had been run over by a locomotive," Issachar smiled. "Didn't that one make him 'ouch,'" he said. Then in all seriousness, "that disagreeable and ungrateful fellow" complained about Issachar's bill. "No sooner shed that corn that he turned round, and says: 'If I knew you'd a charged two dollars I'd walked with it half a century first.'"

Issachar then took Townsend's foot "very much as if he were picking at the flint of an old-fashioned musket, and, having moistened the corn, proceeded with three sorts of knives alternately to quarry off the capstone. Then he cut all my nails with a machine which seemed to be a sort of juvenile guillotine, and having set a plast upon the spot showed me through the glass a corn like a limekiln."

After more light banter, Townsend edged the conversation to the reason he had come to see Issachar. "Doctor, do any of the great politicians come here?"

Issachar showed him corns he had cut from General George H. Thomas, "a little fellow," and then showed him corns he had removed from Generals Sheridan and McClellan and Lincoln, "the whole set. It's the only collection in the United States." Then with no little pride, Issachar showed him a corn he'd "cut off the little toe of Grant after Lee's surrender. It's the only wound he ever received in the war; and I've been offered twenty-five dollars for it." (Did Issachar treat Grant when he was in Washington just before Lincoln's assassination?)

Townsend was excited. He was now getting down to business. Here was what he came for. "Doctor, what sort of foot has Grant?"

"A solid sort of an edifice," said Issachar. "He's well sot on his astragali, but horseback has given him a pigeon-toed tendency. When he stands up and ain't thinking, the axes of his feet, if prolonged, pass through each other a rod ahead of him. He's a better officer than ossifier."

As Townsend paid his bill and left, Issachar told him his "corn has gone into the American National Pedalion collection, and will be preserved for the benefit of posterity."[57]

1. Philadelphia Inquirer, April 14, 1865; June 9, 1865; March 21, 1867; (New York) Daily Graphic, March 14, 1873.
2. New York Herald, July 8, 1869, 10.
3. New York Evening Telegraph, March 20, 1867, 8.
4. Phoenix (AZ) Weekly Republican, October 4, 1900, 6.
5. Ibid., October 15, 1870, Banks Papers, Box 51.
6. Zacharie to Banks, October 15, 1870, Banks Papers, Box 51.
7. Zacharie Banks, March 23, 1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
8. Ron Chernow, Grant (New York: Penguin Press, 2017), 609–611.
9. Zacharie to Banks, October 21, 1868, Banks Papers, Box 51.
10. Chernow, Grant, 615.
11. Richmond Whig, August 11, 1868, 1.
12. Brooks D. Simpson, The Reconstruction Presidents (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1998), 133.
13. Jonathan D. Sarna, When General Grant Expelled the Jews (New York: Schocken Books, 2012), 66.
14. Quoted by Chernow, Grant, 617.
15. A detailed analysis of divisions among Jews with respect to Grant in the 1868 election can be found in Sarna, Grant, 50–79.
16. The Israelite, February 28, 1868, 4.
17. Sarna, Grant, 60.
18. Ibid., 77.
19. New York Times, November 30, 1868, 4.
20. Sarna, Grant, 77; Chernow, Grant, 623.
21. Philip Quilbet, “Cheap Notoriety,” The Galaxy 7 (April 1869), 596.
22. New York Herald, November April 23, 1869, 7.
23. Ibid., April 24, 1869, 7.
24. Sarna, Grant, 83–84, 87–90.
25. Mark Twain and Charles Dudley Warner, The Gilded Age (Chicago: American Publishing Co., 1873).
26. Thomas A. Bailey, Presidential Saints and Sinners (New York: Free Press, 1981), 101.
27. Ibid.
28. Zacharie to Banks, May 13, 1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
29. Banks to wife, March 9, 30, April 14, May 7, 11, 1869; May 23; July 1, 1870, Banks Papers, Box 5.
30. R. Banks, King of Louisiana, 1435.
31. Harrington, Fighting Politician, 210.
32. Zacharie to Banks, May 13, 1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
33. New York Evening Post, July 9, 1872, 3.
34. Brooklyn Daily Eagle, July 16, 1872, 2, 7.
35. Chicago Post, July 18, 1872, 2.
36. Boston Traveler, July 18, 1872, 4.
37. Sacramento Daily Union, July 19, 1872.
38. Zacharie to Banks, July 23, 1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
39. New York World, August 2, 1872, 1.
40. New York Tribune, July 7, 1872, 5.
41. New York Times, November 30, 1968, 2.
42. Ibid. 4.
43. Sarna, Grant, 82–103.
44. New York Times, August 17, 1872, 1
45. New York Tribune, October 7, 1861, 6.
46. Jewish Messenger, August 8, 1872, 4.
47. Zacharie to Banks, August 1, 1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
48. Ibid. August 3, 1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
49. Ibid.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid. August 4, 1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
52. Ibid. August 3,1872, Banks Papers, Box 51.
53. Ibid. March 28, 1874.
54. Banks remained in Congress off and on until 1890, when he finally retired. He died in 1894.
55. New York Herald, August 5, 1873, 7.
56. A copy of the handwritten note is reproduced in Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), 185. When Issachar reprinted Grant’s letter in his testimonial book, he changed the text of the letter. In place of the words after “slightest pain,” he substituted “and now some time since the operation, I must say

that his operations [implying more than one] have been effectual." I. Zacharie (comp.), Testimonials to I. Zacharie (London: privately published, 1875), 6.

57. George Alfred Townsend, Washington, Outside and Inside (Cincinnati, OH: James Betts & Co., 1874), 112–116.

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“Republics are unquestionably ungrateful”

General Banks owed his reelection in Massachusetts in the middle of Grant’s second term to a Democrat resurgence in the wake of government scandals and a financial crisis rocking America. The years immediately after the war had been a boom time in America, fueled in large part by rapid growth in railway construction. Between 1868 and 1873, more than 30,000 miles of new track were laid.[1] Owing to government land grants and subsidies, the railroad industry and its ancillary industries became the country’s second largest employer next to farming. Thousands of factories opened. The stock market soared.

The bubble burst when profits didn’t match expectations. Much of the expansion had been fueled with borrowed money. The most powerful banking firm in the country, Jay Cooke & Company, which had invested millions of dollars in railway industry, couldn’t sell its bonds and declared bankruptcy. It was the end of a lovely summer holiday, said financier Andrew Carnegie. “All was going well when one morning in our summer cottage … a telegram came announcing the failure of Jay Cooke & Co. Every hour brought news of another bank and investment firm’s collapse.” At the same time, Congress tightened the money supply. Businesses that had to borrow at the higher interest rates closed. The New York Stock Exchange shut its doors for 10 days. About 14 percent of the workforce was suddenly unemployed. Workers who didn’t lose their jobs took pay cuts. “Every failure depleted the resources of other concerns,” said Carnegie. America was in the grip of “a total paralysis of business.”[2] The country was in the midst of what was called the “Great Depression,” until the depression of the 1930s took over that unwanted title.

In July 1864, Congress created a committee to provide payment for debt the federal government owed to loyal citizens in states not in rebellion for their property losses. In 1873, the name of the committee was changed to the Committee on War Claims. During its tenure, the committee examined 2,407 claims for over $5 million in compensation. Of these, 1,244 were disallowed. The final bill only came to $770,711 (approximately $16.5 million in today’s money).

To qualify for compensation, petitioners had to prove they had been loyal to the Union cause and had to provide documents supporting their petitions. Every petitioner had to answer 43 questions, among them:

> Where were you born? If not born in the United States, when and where were you naturalized? Produce your naturalization papers if you can.
>
> Did you ever do anything for the Union cause or its advocates or defenders? If so, state what you did, giving times, places, names of persons aided, and particulars. Were the persons aided, your relations?
>
> Were you in the service or employment of the United States government at any time during the war? If so, in what service, when, where, for how long, under what officers, and when and how did you leave such service or employment.
>
> Did you ever voluntarily contribute money, property, or service to the Union cause; and if so, when, where, to whom, and what did you contribute?
>
> What favors, privileges, or protections were ever granted you in recognition of your loyalty during the war, and when and by whom granted?[3]

Most of the claims were disallowed because the claimants had served in the Confederate army, had sent a substitute, were in the Confederate civil service, had voted for secession, were not

American citizens, or were not in the service or employment of the government.[4]

The committee's most sensational claimant was Dr. Issachar Zacharie. Stating he had operated on the bony excrescences of not less than 5,000 soldiers at Fortress Monroe, 6,000 men in New Orleans preparing for the Red River campaign, and, 4,000 men in the capital and Baltimore and surrounding areas after returning to Washington, Issachar asked for reimbursement of $45,000 (about $960,000 and $60, respectively, in today's money), charging $3 for two feet.[5]

To support his petition, Issachar sent the committee the testimonials Lincoln and Seward had signed on September 23, 1862, stating from personal experience they had benefited from his skill in treating various "troubles of the feet" and "we desire that soldiers of our brave Army may have the benefit of the doctors' surprising skill."[6] He also submitted Stanton's order giving him the freedom to operate on the feet of soldiers around Washington and on the Potomac for 30 days[7] and its continuance, for another 60 days, that was signed by General Tucker Black, Stanton's assistant secretary of war.[8] Issachar would have asked Lincoln, Stanton, and Seward to testify or write additional letters on his behalf, but they were all dead—Lincoln in 1865, Stanton in 1869, and Seward in 1872. The only other high-ranking official still alive who could support his claim was General Banks.

So certain Banks' testimony would convince the committee his claim was legitimate, Issachar wrote asking for his help, offering to pay all his expenses if he went with him to Washington (Banks was at the time state senator in the Massachusetts legislature) to appear before the committee. "Your position alone will assist me," he pleaded. "I have all the Evidence. Still they want to know if [I]was with you in New Orleans. I do hope you will do all you can for me. I think there will be no doubt that a favourable report will be made, and a few words from you will assist me very much."[9]

Banks had had enough of Issachar. He had lost his seat in Congress because he had followed Issachar's advice and supported Greely in the 1872 election. Banks answered a few days later. His duties in the state legislature, he said, made it "imposable" for him to appear before the War Claims Committee in Washington at the present time. There was no doubt, he said,

> you was operating upon the feet of our soldiers. When I was in Command of Washington in 1862, and that when I was ordered to the Department of the Gulph, that the President ordered me to take you with the Expedition … no one will doubt but that you did good Service, and must of operated upon several thousand of our brave Soldiers during the War. I am satisfied had Mr. Lincoln had lived, that you would of received your pay for operating upon our Army long ago. Hope that you will now receive your just claim.[10]

Despite Banks' support, the committee denied Issachar's claim. It could have dismissed it outright because claimants had to be U.S. citizens. Issachar was not born in the United States and had not been naturalized. He was still a British citizen. For some reason, the committee did not take his citizenship into consideration. Instead, it said Issachar hadn't produced any evidence from soldiers "whose pedal extremities are alleged to have been operated on…. It is not even pretended by Zacharie that the corns and bunions on the feet of the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac operated by him were the result, either of the active military operations" or were preexisting conditions. As far as the committee knew, he might have been paid by the soldiers themselves when he treated them.

The committee also turned him down because it said it only had his word he had operated on 15,000 men. He hadn't submitted any account whatever to the commanding officers of the units he said he had treated. Had he done so, it would have been a valuable addition to the "Army Medical Museum." The information gained from those records could have been provided a way of "recoupment, or set-off" for his claim. Besides, he did not have a formal contract from the

government. If he had, he would be due the money he claimed. Issachar answered that although he had worked *pro bono publico*, "a great, powerful, and just Government should, in the consideration of a claim like his, lay aside the legal technicalities that surround the case, as well as mere formalities, and, considering only the results attained, decide the case in his favor."

The committee answered that if it honored Issachar's claim, based solely on his word, it would establish a principle that the government was bound to remove the corns and bunions of its soldiers during the war. "If soldiers were entitled to such relief at Government expense, why not sailors? If sailors, why not civilian employees? Congress would be flooded with so many claims it would have to appoint 'a standing committee on corns and bunions.'"[11]

Newspapers around the country had a field day mocking Issachar's failed bid for reimbursement. The Chicago *Daily Inter Ocean* questioned his motives. Dr. Zacharie had treated the army's foot soldier out of "lofty patriotism," it said. Now he was asking the government to pay for what he had offered *pro bono*.[12] The New York *Daily Graphic*'s coverage was sarcastic. It restated Issachar's evidence and said the Committee on War Claims had treated Dr. Zacharie as though corns were a joke and a chiropodist a confirmed humorist. "Republics are unquestionably ungrateful, and this particular Republic evidently doesn't feel the slightest gratitude for the elimination of military corns."[13]

The *Indiana Herald* criticized the committee's decision for the same reason. "Republics are unquestionably ungrateful, and this particular Republic evidently doesn't feel the slightest gratitude for the elimination of its military corns."[14] The *Biloxi* (Mississippi) *Herald* stated that Zacharie's claim amounted to a "Pretty costly corn crop for our Uncle Samuel."[15]

The most biting commentary came from the *Cincinnati Commercial*. In a widely reprinted editorial headlined "Concerning Corns." the *Commercial* called Issachar, "A Quack Patriot … an official excrescence exterminator of the army in the times that tried men's soles." Citing verbatim parts of the War Claims Committee's summary of Issachar's evidence, including his "alleged" documents, the *Commercial* tore into his claim for reimbursement for having done "his part toward the stamping out of the rebellion." "Fifteen thousand stamps would otherwise have been in hospitals hobbling about on crutches, consuming rations and hospital stores instead of serving at the front, had it not been for his efforts." The reason he was asking for compensation now, the *Commercial* mused, was Dr. Zacharie had decided to wait "until the war was over, the negroes freed and habilitated as citizens, the work of reconstruction about completed and, the national debt in process of reduction." The paper mockingly accused the chairman of the committee of having turned Issachar down because, not having corns or bunions or other painful extremities himself, he didn't know what it was like to suffer.

Dr. Zacharie needn't despair, the *Commercial* continued. He should renew his petition when the new Congress takes over. If he failed there, "it is the duty of the rich and powerful municipality of which he is an honored resident, to erect to his memory, and in recognition of his patriotic services, a towering monument in Central Park." The appropriate design for the monument would be a colossal corn surrounded by a gigantic statute of the famed chiropodist.[16]

Twenty years later, an editorial in the *New York Times* cited Issachar's claim as one of a number of "Freaks of Legislation. Odd Bills and Reports to Congressional Committees…. There was perhaps no better example of one of these doubtful and musing claims," it chuckled, "than that of Issachor Zacharie, a gentleman learned in the profession of extracting corns, who plied his trade during the war of the rebellion." To illustrate how "freakish" his claim was, it reproduced much of the War Committee's report verbatim.[17]

1. James Stuart Olson, Encyclopedia of the Industrial Revolution in America (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 191.
2. Quoted by Michael A. Bellesiles, 1877: America's Year of Living Violently (New York: New Press, 2010), 1.
3. Barton A. Myers, Rebels against the Confederacy (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 233–235.
4. House of Representatives (HR), 43rd Congress, 2nd Session, 1874–75, Report No. 142. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1875), 130.
5. HR, 43rd Congress, 1st Session, Report No. 817, 124.
6. Lincoln and Seward to Zacharie, September 23, 1862, HR 43rd Congress, 1st Session, Report No. 817, 123.
7. Stanton to Zacharie, September 24, 1862, ibid.
8. General Tucker Black to Zacharie, November 21, 1862, ibid.
9. Zacharie to Banks, June 1, 1874, Banks Papers, Box 51.
10. Banks to Zacharie, June [?} 1874, in Banks manuscript, copy in Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 120–121.
11. HR, 43rd Congress, 1st Session, Report 817, 123–126. In fact, Congress did approve payment of $6,719 to Colonel Jacques "for services performed and money expended" visiting Richmond on several occasions "acting under instructions." The payment, Louisiana Congressman Frank Morey, the bill's sponsor, said, had been approved by Lincoln and would have been paid but for the untimely death of the President. Congressional Globe, 42nd Congress, Third Session, 1873, Vol. 46, pt. 2, 1020. Although Lincoln had approved Jacques' mission, he made it clear he was acting on his own, and not, as Jaques claimed, "employed by the late President Lincoln in the secret service of the Government."
12. (Chicago) Daily Inter Ocean, February 18, 1874, 3.
13. (New York) Daily Graphic, May 15, 1875, 3.
14. Indiana Herald, May 27, 1875, 2.
15. Biloxi (Mississippi) Herald, September 22, 1888, 6. Twenty years later, an editorial in the New York Times cited Issachar's claim as one of a number of "Freaks of Legislation. Odd Bills and Reports to Congressional Committees…. There was perhaps no better example of one of these doubtful and musing claims," it chuckled, "than that of Issachor [sic] Zacharie, a gentleman learned in the profession of extracting corns, who plied his trade during the war of the rebellion." To illustrate how "freakish" his claim was, it reproduced much of the War Committee's report verbatim. New York Times, January 14, 1896, 10.
16. Reprinted in the Indiana State Sentinel, May 20, 1875, 6.
17. New York Times, January 14, 1896, 10.

26

Return to England

In the second year of the “long Depression” which began in 1873 and lasted until 1879, Issachar left America for good to join his family. The *London Morning Post* informed its readers, likely repeating what it was told by Issachar himself, that Dr. Zacharie had been “induced to return to the country of his birth by some of our most influential men.”[1]

In late 1874, he immediately set up an office in London where his wife and daughter Clara had moved into in an elegant 11-bedroom, three-bathroom, four-story building at 80 Brook Street at the corner of Brook and Gilbert streets in Grosvenor Square. Issachar’s office was in one of the three ground floor reception rooms. The *Business Directory of London* for 1884[2] listed him along with 31 other chiropodists in the city. By then, chiropody had become a respectable profession. One of those also listed in the *Business Directory* was Frederick Bearnard, “Surgeon Chiropodist to the Royal Family.” Another directory, *Webster’s Royal Blue Book: Fashionable Directory and Parliamentary Guide*, listed “Dr. Zacharie” among “the names and addresses of (London’s) better class private residents.”[3]

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Zacharie's home at 80 Brook St., London, "Among the names and addresses of (London's) better class private residents" (photograph by author).

Grosvenor Square, where Issachar had his new home, was located in London's exclusive Mayfair District. Lord North, the prime minister, lived there during the American Revolution, as had many of England's elite. In *Pride and Prejudice*, Jane Austen alludes to its posh residences. Oscar Wilde lived there in the 1880s and referred to it in four of his plays. Grosvenor Square, the "little America in London," has traditionally been America's diplomatic home site ever since John Adams lived from 1785 to 1788 at 9 Grosvenor Square at the corner of Brook and Duke streets. Adams' wife, Abigail, said their home was opposite Lord North's. General Eisenhower had his headquarters in Grosvenor Square during World War II. At one time, George Frederic Handel, guitarist Jimi Hendrix, and the Bee Gees all lived on Brook Street.

Modesty or veracity rarely being among Issachar's virtues, he now advertised his past professional standing as "late Chiropodist-General of the United States Army."[4] A year later, the *London Morning Post* spotlighted his return with a lengthy and largely exaggerated profile that could only have come from Issachar himself. "Although of American reputation," the *Post* beamed with pride, "this justly-celebrated practitioner is an Englishman." He emigrated to America when a "mere boy," but before leaving, he had been a pupil "of our celebrated St Astley Cooper." Once his family settled in Philadelphia, he studied surgery under "the famous Dr. Mutter."[5] In 1862, the *Post* continued, he was appointed "Chiropodist-General to the United States Army" and "served during the whole of the campaign under Generals M'Clellan, Banks, Burnside and Grant." He was a confidant of President Lincoln and Secretary William Seward, "who appointed him Minister Plenipotentiary to the Department of the Gulf." In 1864, "he was sent as peace commissioner to the Southern Confederacy … the result of which (as far as the doctor was concerned) was highly satisfactory to both parties."

Other than his being Lincoln's confidant, none of the story was true. What was true was that since arriving back in England, he "has already performed some wonderful operations with great skill and dexterity. He operates we are informed, without pain of the slightest kind, and without drawing a drop of blood."[6]

Issachar relished London society. He became widely known for his lavish dinner parties, at which he hosted the "elite of Masonry" and "frequently many of the worthiest of England's nobility."[7] A contemporary recalled his mother telling him about a patient of hers (she was also a chiropodist) who complained that although "you make me quite comfortable … you do not ask me to dinner. Now if I went to a certain chiropodist in Brook Street, I might be asked to dinner and perhaps to a game of cards."[8]

"Under the influence of the cheery glass," Issachar was wont to "unlock the stores of his memory" of his exploits in America. With typical immodesty, he bragged to his guests about how he had been responsible for "the disbursal of large secret service State funds, necessary to effect certain operations arising during the internecine conflict" (the Civil War) and regaled his dinner companions with stories about the "friends he had on both sides. He and he alone," he said, had been able to "gain a hearing from the leaders when their ears were closed to every other voice."[9]

Although he had left the United States, Issachar was still newsworthy there. American newspapers continued to report on his activities in England, especially when there was anything offbeat about the flamboyant chiropodist. In the March 1880 edition of the *Washington Evening Star*, under the ominous headline, "Thirteen at Table," it reported Queen Victoria's personal

physician, Dr. Fairbank, had mysteriously died the day after dining at Issachar's home, intimating some supernatural involvement in his death.

According to the news report, Issachar had invited 15 of London's elites to a dinner party at his home. On the morning of the day of the party, two of the guests cancelled. Since that would leave 13 guests, the superstitious host was about to invite an intimate friend to avoid the unlucky number when he received a telegram from another expected guest saying he also couldn't make it. With his guest list down to 12, Issachar went about taking care of other things he had to do that day. As the guests arrived, the man who had sent the telegram unexpectedly appeared, having cancelled his previous engagement.

Gazing around the table, it quickly dawned on the guests there were 13 of them. "Presently everybody remarked upon the ominous number present." There was another superstition attached to the "thirteen at table" that the guests were all aware of—the first one to sit down was destined to die shortly.[10]

Dr. Thomas Fairbank, a 36-year-old obstetrician, dismissed the superstition as foolishness. He was about to sit when Issachar warned him about the fatal prediction. Fairbank laughed, although before sitting down, he confided to one of the other guests he didn't feel in a dinner mood. He died unexpectedly the next day.[11]

A month later, an editorial regarding Fairbank appeared in the *London Medical Press and Circular*. The

> morbid curiosity for petty details of purely personal and private matters which the so-called "society" journals have carefully fostered and now live, by gratifying, is extending its unpleasant inquisitiveness into the ranks of our profession. We fail to see why the fact should be trumpeted forth to the world through the press. We notice, however, "Dr." Zacharie's address is carefully recorded. Is it possible the eminent "orthopeaedist" is in want of an advertisement, and secures it cheaply by asking an editor to dine with him?[12]

Issachar had become such a prominent social figure in London that he was invited to elegant banquets given in honor of prominent figures in England. At one such banquet at London's posh Metropole Hotel, he sat at the table with an English lord, several high-ranking military officers, the United States consul to London, France's Prince Camille de Polignac, and more than a hundred other dignitaries.[13] De Polignac had been a major general in the Confederate army. When he died in 1913, he was the last surviving Confederate major general.

Anything remotely involving Issachar was reported, even domestic disputes among his employees. When Issachar's cook was arrested for assaulting Issachar's footman, "a lad of colour," "both in the service of Dr. Issachar Zacharie, orthopedist," the incident was reported in both the *London Morning Post* and *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*.[14]

* * * * * * * *

Very little is known about Issachar's personal life in England apart from his activities as a Mason.[15] In 1887, several members of his Masonic lodge met at Issachar's home and resolved to form a new chapter of the Order of the Secret Monitor Issachar had founded in California.[16] Issachar was nominated as its first Supreme Ruler. Mary Ann and her daughters arranged the tailoring for the robes Issachar wore at its first meeting.

His greatest pleasure was still entertaining guests at his home. Although he never denied his religious heritage, it ceased to be of any importance to him. Very often, he attended Sunday services at Westminster Abbey. Afterwards, he invited fellow Masons and their wives to his home for dinner. "The dinner was a beautiful one," one of the guests recalled. It was "bountiful … and beautifully served in courses, embracing the choicest viands of the season. Bro. Dr.

Zacharie is a whole-souled host, enjoying his guests as much as they enjoy his hospitality and -*bone-hommie*."[17]

By 1895, Issachar's health was failing, and he resigned his position as Grand Supreme Ruler of the Order of the Secret Monitor, but he continued to see patients.[18] When he was just starting out, he had sold patent medicines, some of which he claimed to have created on his own. At this late stage in his life, he latched on to the dieting craze that had started several years before with the first low carbohydrate diet book, the Banting Diet.[19] Catering to a public he believed would prefer an easier and quicker weight loss method, Issachar capitalized on another fad—magnetism. Applying magnets to the body was ballyhooed as a cure for any and all ailments. Issachar decided to get into the weight loss business and advertised he was selling the "Magneticon," a magnetized belt heralded as a way of reducing abdominal corpulence without dieting.[20] When even that became too onerous, he turned over "his most extensive practice" to his student, W. Prince Mumford.[21]

1. London Morning Post, Aug. 30, 1875, 8.
2. The Business Directory of London (London; J.S.C. Morris, 1884), 736.
3. Royal Blue Book: Court and Parliamentary Guide for May 1897 and January 1900 (London: Kelly's Directories), 1429.
4. Pall Mall Gazette, August 6, 1875, 15; Masonic Standard, August 7, 1875, 4.
5. Thomas Dent Mutter was one of the most famous surgeons of his day, renowned not only for his skill, but also for performing surgical procedures in front of an audience of other physicians. The Mutter Medical Museum in Philadelphia is named after him.
6. London Morning Post, Aug. 30, 1875, 8.
7. Masonic Standard, Nov. 3, 1900, 19.
8. Dagnall, "Issachar Zacharie," 231.
9. Freemasons and Masonic Illustrated, September 29, 1900, 568.
10. Washington Evening Star, March 2, 1880, 4.
11. Ibid.
12. London Medical Press and Circular 29 (March 10, 1880), 199–200. On Fairbank, Transactions of the Obstetrical Society of London 23 (1882), 155.
13. Our Society Journal, 13 (August 1890), 14.
14. London Morning Post, September 25, 1880, 7; Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper, October 3, 1880, 3.
15. Issachar's Masonic activities are summarized in The Freemason's Chronicle, October 24, 1896, 196.
16. The order was based on the scriptural story of the enduring Biblical friendship between David and Johnathan. In 1937, to commemorate the order's Jubilee, the order created a pendant to mark the occasion. The pendant had a star of David at its center and "DJ" in the center of the star, standing for the Biblical friendship of David and Jonathan. Beneath the star was the Latin motto Semper Fidelis (always faithful). Semper Fi(delis) was adopted as the Marine Corps' mottos in 1883.
17. The Masonic Review 74 (1890), 152.
18. Truth, June 20, 1895, 1552; Post Office London Directory for 1895, pt. 2, 76.
19. William Banting, Letter on Corpulence, Addressed to the Public (London: Harrison, 1864). Before becoming the best-selling author of his diet book, Banting had been a funeral director to the Royal family, burying such luminaries as Queen Victoria and Kings George III and IV and Edward VII.
20. Invented by P. W. Seymour, the Magneticon was heralded as a cure-all for every and any ailment. P. W. Seymour, The Magneticon (Cheltenham: G. F. Poole, n.d.).
21. London Morning Post, September 19, 1894, 6. Mumford listed himself as "surgeon-chiropodist, Late Pupil of the Eminent Dr. Zacharie, London." Mumford dedicated his The Human Foot: Its Ailments Painlessly Treated "to my esteemed friend and tutor the late Dr. Zacharie."

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Death of an Eccentric Man

Issachar Zacharie died on September 16, 1900, at his home. at 80 Brook Street. He was 74. He was buried in Highgate Cemetery in the outskirts of London. The same cemetery housed the bodies of Karl Marx, novelist George Eliot, poet Christina Rossetti, artist John Singleton Copley, scientist Michael Faraday, and philosopher Herbert Spencer. Mary Ann died six years later. She was buried alongside Issachar.[1] Issachar's brother, Eleazar, called Elly, married Ann Hutchings, a New Jersey girl, in 1853. Eleazar died in June 1903 in Chicago.[2]

Nothing is known about Issachar's family life. His and Mary Ann's marriage seemed happy enough. Their daughters' and grandchildren's married lives were less than happy.[3] Amelia, Issachar's eldest daughter, was divorced. She'd married Joseph Hughes in 1871 when she was 19. Fourteen years later, in 1885, Hughes divorced her on grounds of adultery. Amelia had had an affair with Hughes' brother John.[4]

Clara Louise stayed in New York after her parents left. A year later, she married Francis Bulley in February 1876, in a Dutch Reformed Church ceremony.[5] Their son, William, was born in November, eight months later.[6] Their marriage was not a happy one. Clara left Francis and went to live with her parents. She filed for divorce in 1883.[7]

Ten years later, in 1893, the *Boston Globe* reported Clara, "Daughter of Dr. Zacharie of London" was engaged to "Morland Dessau of Boston."[8] How Clara and Morland met or how they became engaged isn't known, but the Zacharies and the Dessaus were long-time friends. In 1843, Issachar's sister Amelia Lavinia married Jacob Dessau in Charleston. In 1891, two years before Clara's and Morland's engagement announcement, Issachar testified at an inquest in a London suburb about the death of David Dessau. Issachar told the inquest he'd been an intimate friend of the deceased who had been staying with him for several weeks before his death.[9]

Morland's wife, Katherine Bray, "a fair-featured good-looking woman of rather heavy build," was startled when she read the engagement announcement in the *Boston Globe*. Braving a storm at night, she made her way to the *Globe* office. Wiping the rain from her forehead "with an elegantly embroidered, sweetly perfumed handkerchief, she told a tale of domestic infelicity that would move to pity a granite statue."[10]

Morland had left her with only a dollar to her name, a bill for rent, and a grocery man clamoring for money she owned him. Her married life had been a nightmare. At one time during their marriage, he had tried to have her incarcerated in an asylum. Another time, when he was short of money, he doused himself with kerosene and lit himself on fire to claim accident insurance. He was badly burned before the fire was put out. The insurance company paid him over $200. He had never been faithful. She knew he had "made love to several young women in and around Boston." She was "glad to get rid of him."[11] "Let that poor woman over there know what sort of a person she had promised to marry."[12]

The scandal ended Clara's and Morland's engagement. When Morland returned to Boston, he pleaded for his wife to take him back. He promised he would never treat her badly again or desert her. Mrs. Dessau had had enough. She now only felt contempt for Morland. She told him

she was divorcing him.

Clara never married again. Her name appears in the 1901 England census with only Mary Ann's name as "parent or spouse." In a 1903, she filed a negligence suit against two pharmacists for incorrectly labeling her medicine. Clara claimed the error had caused her to overdose on mercury pills. A jury awarded her £150.[13] She died in 1928 in Brighton, England.[14]

Mariposa, Issachar's and Mary Ann's youngest daughter, married Lon-don-born Marcus Arthur Blumenthal in 1881.[15] Marcus was a bullion dealer and banker. Mariposa died in 1899 when she was only 39. Although they had three children, it may not have been happy marriage. Within months of Mariposa's death, Blumenthal married Agnes Cage in Kent, England, in an Anglican ceremony.[16]

The marriage of Issachar's granddaughter, Amelia's daughter Edith, did not turn out much better than her aunts'. In 1894, she married Hector Gammell.[17] The newspaper tactfully omitted reporting Mary Ann's mother's name. The bride was elegantly attired, the *Bristol Mercury* told its readers. Her wedding gown was a gift from her grandmother, Mrs. Issachar Zacharie. The wedding reception at the Zacharie home was held a day after Issachar's and Mary Ann's golden wedding anniversary.[18]

In 1905, the Gammells moved to Saskatoon in the midwestern Canadian province of Saskatchewan, where Hector had been hired as an engineer. When Edith discovered Hector was having an affair with a Saskatoon woman, she left Saskatoon and filed for divorce in Toronto on grounds of adultery. The marriage was formally dissolved by an act of Parliament in 1908.[19]

Issachar's two sons Charles and Samuel earned medical degrees and remained in the United States. In 1873, Charles married Florence Cowing, a girl from Seneca Falls. The couple had four children they named after themselves and family members.[20] In 1901, while their son Charles C. was living in White Plains, New York, the *New York Tribune* informed its readers he had inherited $25,000 from his grandfather Issachar's estate, mistakenly reporting he had received the inheritance "through the death of an uncle in London last January."[21] Less is known about Samuel except that in 1886, Issachar assigned patent rights to an "orthopedical appliance" to Samuel.[22]

Although Issachar had willed $25,000 to his grandson Charles, his officially reported estate was valued at only £276, 14s (approximately $43,000 in today's money)[23] The wily Issachar had somehow hidden his assets or had placed them in his wife's name before he died.

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Despite having disappeared from public notice in America for more than 25 years, newspapers across the country carried lengthy obituaries of Issachar's career. Headlines announced his death in large block headlines and brief subheads. The longest tribute appeared in his former nemesis, the *New York Herald*.

DR. I. ZACHARIE, OLD NEW YORKER, IS DEAD

For a Quarter of a Century One of the Best-Known Characters Of This City. He had for Many years Lived in London, Where He passed away.[24]

Other papers carried similar, albeit less flamboyant headlines:

WAS FAMOUS IN WAR TIMES

Death in London of Dr. Zacharie, Who Was a Noted Chiropodist and Bon Vivant.[25]

DEATH OF AN ECCENTRIC MAN

Wanted To Raise A Corps of Chiropodists For Army[26]

DR ISACHAR ZACHARIE DEAD.

A Famous Army Chiropodist And A Friend of Lincoln[27]

Most of the papers covering the story reprinted the *New York Herald's* obituary For almost a quarter century, the "fashionable chiropodist attended the pedal needs of the most noted beaux and belles of the day" at his "magnificent offices at No. 760 Broadway, near Bond Street and Washington Square," the aristocratic quarters of the town. Issachar's offices were convenient to both. "Fame and money rolled in upon him."[28]

"He was also a gourmet, a wit, and an eccentric." He hosted "magnificent banquets at his splendid mansion near Fifth Avenue and Fiftieth street every night." He invited "the most prominent men in New York, in business, in social life, and in politics," and "they were glad to accept." A dozen seats were always left vacant for uninvited friends to drop by, and they did. He had the choicest liquors on hand. He was reputed to be "the greatest connoisseur of wine in the country." He served his guests the most delicate and original dishes. He was a "bon-vivant" in New York and no less in London after he moved there in 1874.

Issachar's failed attempts to raise "a corps of chiropodists to accompany the various armies" and his grandiose scheme for ending the Civil War and expelling the French from Mexico were also reported in detail. He was ridiculed and made a laughingstock, but he "stood this fun good naturedly," said the *Herald.*[29]

Obituaries in Masonic newspapers credited him with nonexistent military associations and achievements. "Under the influence of the cheery glass,"[30] they said he regaled not just "many of the elite of Masonry" with his exploits, "but frequently many of the worthiest of England's nobility."[31] "While yet a boy," he was said to have been appointed a medical officer "in the U.S. Army of the West Californian region," after which he was "attached to Grant's division, and was Lincoln's 'shrewd ambassador.'"[32] "Naturally qualified, he came to be a diplomat of no mean ability, and an astute and dexterous mediator. Many social and state secrets, were said to have been confided to his care."[33] "Numerous are the occasions when his astuteness, dexterity and high diplomatic qualities" patched up social quarrels.[34]

"One seldom sees so many and such lovely floral tributes" as those at his grave site in Highgate Cemetery, the *Freemason and Masonic Illustrated* told its readers. "The beautiful wreaths at his headstone were 'most striking' … one wreath bore the legend 'Great Grandpa.' Others bore the names of intimate and distinguished private friends and relatives."[35] Notably, the burial service was performed by a Christian minister, not a rabbi.[36]

A month later, a memorial service in his honor was held at London's posh Hotel Cecil. "A - semi-public Masonic Memorial is a very rare thing in England," the *Freemason's Chronicle* noted.

> On this occasion no jewels or Masonic clothing were worn. The whole ceremony was simple to a degree. The raised catafalque in the middle of the room was covered with a purple pall. On it were photographs of the deceased member, illuminated and framed testimonials, and an album presented to him on his golden wedding anniversary. Nearly all the members of his family, attired in deep mourning, were present.[37]

1. New York Herald, September 17, 1900, 3; March 4, 1906, 1; “Find a Grave, Mary Ann Lawson Zacharie.”
2. Dowling Family Genealogy, RootsWeb world, ID: I462961, http://wc.rootsweb.ancestry.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?op=GET&db=dowfam3&id=I462961.
3. Amelia and Clara were the only children mentioned in Issachar’s estate. England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1966, probate date November 1, 1900, ancestry.com 1900 England and Wales Probate.
4. Divorce Court File, 368, Appellant: Joseph Edward Hughes. Respondent: Amelia Lavinia Hughes. Co-respondent: John William Hughes. http://discovery.naitonalarchives.gov.uk/details/r/C7983605, accessed December 14, 2018.
5. Ancestry.com.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Boston Globe, July 22, 1893, 4.
9. London Standard, September 30, 1891, 3.
10. Boston Globe, July 23,1893, 4.
11. Ibid.
12. Boston Globe, November 16, 1889, 5.
13. Pharmaceutical Journal, January 17, 1908, 71.
14. Ancestry.com.
15. Pall Mall Gazette, January 21, 1881, 5, www.myheritage.com/names/victoria_Zacharie, accessed November 29, 2018.
16. Adolph, born 1882 (died 1930), Mariposa, born 1883, and Edith Constance Blumenthal, born 1891, www.myheritage.com/names/edith_Blumental, accessed June 24, 2018.
17. Bristol Mercury and Daily Post, September 12, 1894, 6.
18. Ibid.
19. An Act of Parliament of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland (Ottawa: Samuel Edward Dawson, 1908) 137–138. Their son Beaumont Edward Zacharie Gammell served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Air Force in World War I and died in April 1918, seven months before the war ended.
20. Charles C., Samuel, Florence Mariposa, and Marian.
21. New York Tribune, August 7, 1901, 14. Major Charles C. Zacharie served as a physician in the American army during World War I. He died in 1948. Charles’ daughter Marian married Samuel Stayton, one of the first families of Milford, Delaware. Her maid of honor was her sister, Florence Mariposa. Charles C. Zacharie was the groom’s best man (Seneca Falls) County - Courier-Journal, October 8, 1903, 1.
22. Official Gazette of the United States Patent Office, 37 (December 7, 1886), 1076.
23. England & Wales, National Probate Calendar (Index of Wills and Administrations), 1858–1966, probate date November 1, 1900, ancestry.com1900 England and Wales Probate.
24. New York Herald, September 17, 1900, 10.
25. Baltimore Sun, September 17, 1900, 2.
26. Charleston Evening Post, September 19, 1900, 10.
27. (New Orleans) Times-Picayune, September 17, 1900, 10.
28. New York Herald, September 17, 1900, 3.
29. Ibid.
30. Freemason and Masonic Illustrated, 39 (September 29, 1900), 568.
31. Freemason Chronicle, September 29, 1900, 147.
32. Ibid.
33. Masonic Standard, November 3, 1900, 19.
34. Freemason’s Chronicle, September 29, 1900, 147.
35. Freemason and Masonic Illustrated, 39 (September 29, 1900), 569.
36. Freemason’s Chronicle, September 29, 1900, 147. Issachar is not listed in J. S. Harfield’s Commercial Directory of the Jews of the United Kingdom (London: Hewlett & Pierce, 1894).
37. Freemason Chronicle, October 27, 1900, 194; Masonic Standard, November 3, 1900, 19.

28

Aftermath

In the 1880s, thousands of Jews from eastern Europe and Russia began immigrating to America. The soaring wave of "huddled masses yearning to be free" touched off a new wave of nativist resentment, hostility, and derision. Christians denounced these highly visible newcomers' "unmannerly habits in walking, talking, and acting" as clannish, unassimable, and "undesirable."[1] By implication, so were all American Jews.

These immigrant Jews were painted as no different from the Jews who had supported the Confederacy during the war; a people without allegiance or loyalty. German Jews who had come before them and had fought in the war worried these newcomers might cause them to lose the gains they had made in America.[2] If the German establishment was not to lose its good reputation, the newcomers had to be integrated into American Jewry.[3] Jews had to be recognized as "Americans in every respect." Only then would prejudice against them end.[4] In this country, which is the promised land, said Simon Wolf, a vocal spokesman for American Jews, "the Israelite must, in common with his fellow-citizens, contribute to the political and social formation of the state" as Americans, not as Jews.[5]

The Civil War and the post-war elections of 1868 and 1872, had given American Jews a new sense of political consciousness. If they were ever to be accepted and become socially respectable, they needed to assert they were not strangers in a strange land. To meet that need, Jewish journalists and amateur historians began writing articles and books that emphasized Jews had been coming to America for hundreds of years. Jews had been a vital part of America's emergence and stature as a nation. These articles gave American Jews a sense of pride in their accomplishments. They instilled a sensibility of a common past with their predecessors. Equally important, they counteracted unfavorable perceptions of otherness and disloyalty, particularly with respect to Jewish participation in the Civil War.

The earliest of the Jewish writers to instill a consciousness of the positive role of Jews in conflict was Isaac Markens, who in 1888 self-published *The Hebrews in America*.[6] Markens was a journalist, not a professional historian, and relied on newspapers for his information. Setting a pattern that would be followed for more than 50 years, Markens highlighted Jewish participation in the war, listing the names and regiments of Jewish officers and episodes of Jewish bravery,[7] but failed to mention Issachar, the second most famous Jew in the war next to Judah Benjamin. Twenty years later, when Markens published a lengthy article specifically about Lincoln's dealings with Jews before and during the war, he briefly mentioned their relationship.

Issachar was similarly ignored in Simon Wolf's 1895 *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen*. Simon had written his book after reading an article in the 1891 *North American Review*, a popular newsmagazine of the day, claiming Jews had shirked military service during the war. A few months later, a letter to the *Review* by a gentile Civil War veteran claimed he had never seen a Jew in uniform during the war and that Jews had been either illegal traders or Confederate spies.[8] Incensed at what he and many other Jews regarded as an outright instance of anti–Semitism, Wolf devoted three years to compiling 10,000 names of Jews who had participated in the war, 7,000 in the Union and 3,000 in the Confederacy, in his *American Jew as*

Patriot, but Issachar was not included in his compendium.[9]

Not until Isaac Markens' 1909 article "Lincoln and the Jews" was published was Issachar's name mentioned. Even then, Markens had less to say about Issachar than he had about Abraham Jonas, Lincoln's Jewish friend in Illinois before his presidency. Markens said he was relying almost solely on information from American newspapers, which he said gave "special prominence … to his (Issachar's) relations to Lincoln."[10] Based on those sources, Markens described Issachar as "a young Englishman, who had attained considerable celebrity as a skillful chiropodist." He had been "one of the vast army of civilians attracted to Washington in the early days of the Civil War." By "some means," he was introduced to Lincoln, after which "friendly relations resulted in their intimacy."

Markens was skeptical about the depth of their relationship. Lincoln, he said, allegedly entrusted Zacharie with going to Richmond in the role of peacemaker, a statement Markens said "should be accepted *cum grano salis* (with a grain of salt)."[11] Although there was no doubt about their close relationship, Markens said he hadn't been able to find out if their relationship went beyond Zacharie's treating Lincoln's feet. The only evidence of their acquaintance Markens was able to discover was Lincoln's handwritten 1862 statement about Issachar's operating on his feet with "great success and considerable addition to my comfort."[12]

Markens also made note of the *New York Herald*'s October 1862 column "The Head and Feet of the Nation," characterizing Issachar as "a wit, gourmet and eccentric," his "splendid Roman nose" and "fashionable whiskers," his "perfect knowledge of his business," and "a plentiful supply of social and moral courage." Other than what had appeared in the *Herald* article, Markens had little else to add to what was known about him. Like most historians who wrote about Issachar, Markens had little information about Issachar's life before or after the war. With little to go on, he said Issachar left New York for London after the war, founded a branch of Free Masonry, and died in 1897, not 1900.

Five years later, Markens wrote a second article titled "Jews Close to Lincoln," mentioning an interview he had had with a little-known secret service agent, Louis Sterne, whom Lincoln had sent to the Baltic coast to prevent blockade runners from that area from smuggling equipment to the South. According to Markens, Sterne told him that in conversations he had had with Lincoln, the President had mentioned offhandedly he was bothered by corns on his feet and had employed a Jewish foot doctor, Issachar Zacharie, to relieve him of his discomfort.[13] Markens concluded his article with a comment that would be often heard with obvious irony: further research into Lincoln's life had "the appearance of a dreary waste."[14]

Two years later, Sterne published his own story of his life during the war. In a passing comment, he described the interview he'd had with Lincoln in more detail.

> I shall never forget that at one of the early interviews I had with him (Lincoln) he told me that he suffered from corns, and that he employed the best chiropodist obtainable, and had given him the post of Chief Orthopedist [sic] to the army. The President declared that no man can do good marching if he suffers from this cause. Issachar Zacharie was the name of the orthopedist in question, and he subsequently practiced in London with considerable success. This, l believe, is the only instance of such an appointment being made in connection with an army in the field.[15]

Since Lincoln never appointed Issachar "Chief Orthopedist," Sterne probably relied on one of Issachar's obituaries for his statement.

Nothing more was written about Issachar until the 1930s, when memory of the once-famed Jewish doctor was invoked. Like Anthony's eulogy over Caesar, it was to bury the man, not to praise him.

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America was in the grip of a world-wide depression. According to America's flourishing anti–Semites, it was brought on by an international conspiracy of Jewish bankers. Jews were accused of not only of causing the depression, but also of unduly influencing President Franklin Roosevelt, whose "New Deal" slogan was derided as the "Jew Deal."[16] Roosevelt was himself maligned as "Rosenfelt the Jew."[17] Roosevelt went on record as denying any physical relationship to the Jewish race.[18]

Anti–Semites also resurrected Issachar's relationship with Lincoln to prove undue Jewish influence in American politics had deep roots, reaching back to the time of the Civil War. To blunt that assertion, journalist Bertram Jonas downplayed Issachar's political connections. In a three-column article titled "Exploding a Myth," Jonas scoffed at the "crop of fantastic and obviously ridiculous rumors … accepted by a gullible and disturbed people." The most curious rumor, he said, "one widely accepted as true during Lincoln's lifetime, was to the effect that his most intimate unofficial backs-stage adviser, this one man 'brain trust' was Dr. Issachar Zacharie, a Jewish chiropodist." "Ill-informed historians," he said, had exaggerated Zacharie's influence on the basis of articles from the *New York Herald* ("Head and Feet of the Nation") and *New York World* ("Unionism and Bunionism") and on rumors Lincoln had sent Issachar on his secret unofficial mission to Jefferson Davis to discuss peace terms. Jonas especially singled out the *New York World* for creating the impression Lincoln was so reliant on the Jewish doctor he frequently left the White House to spend an evening discussing affairs of state with his bunionist. The *World* mistook those visits, said Jonas. Those nighttime calls, he said, were merely professional visits. Lincoln was so busy prosecuting the war he didn't have time to have his feet treated during the day.[19]

Jonas also contended Lincoln's pardoning of Mordecai, a Jewish officer in the Confederate army, was not the direct result of Issachar's intervention. "Students familiar with Lincoln's character," said Jonas, "knew the pardon was not the result of Zacharie's influence but simply one of a thousand cases of Lincoln's good nature and desire to re-unite families separated by war." This incident "merely increased the extravagant tales regarding Zacharie's influence over Lincoln." The best Lincoln authorities, he said, "are agreed that between Lincoln and his Jewish chiropodist there was nothing more than the ordinary relationship between doctor and patient and possibly a mutual interest in witticisms which may or may not have prompted the President to seek out his toe doctor for occasional social diversion."[20]

Jonas' final argument denying Issachar's influence on Lincoln was his letter to Secretary of War Stanton, telling him to issue Issachar a pass to visit his family in Savannah. The letter, Jonas contended, was "something in the nature of a reward for faithful work done by the Jewish doctor during the period of the war. It proved quite conclusively that the great influence attributed to Zacharie was a myth. If the Jewish doctor were really such a close confidante of the President and his cabinet," said Jonas, "Zacharie could easily have obtained the pass without troubling Lincoln about it."[21]

Jonas ended his long discrediting of Issachar's and obliquely other Jewish influences on Lincoln by noting Issachar was not the only Jew Lincoln knew. "He had numerous Jewish friends, and on several occasions, went out of his way to befriend the Jewish People.… Suffice to say that in Abraham Lincoln the Jews of the United States had a staunch and sympathetic friend. In turn Jews were his strongest and most loyal supporters, for they saw him as spiritually one of them."[22]

Ignoring the anti–Semitic defamation of one of their own, a number of Jewish chiropodists, proud a Jewish chiropodist had been socially intimate with the revered President, planned to erect a monument to Dr. Zacharie, "the great emancipator's chiropodist [and] a confident who was entrusted with several important missions during the civil war."[23] In support of the tribute, a Pennsylvania chiropodist noted the National Association of Chiropodists was currently attempting to have Congress establish a chiropody corps to accompany Northern armies in the field, just as the "far-sighted Jewish doctor of Civil War days had proposed."[24]

The *Boston Jewish Advocate* said it couldn't feel any enthusiasm for memorializing the Jewish chiropodist. Even if he had been Lincoln's foot doctor, "it is not very difficult to think of many much more suitable subjects for memorialization in American Jew history."[25] No monument was erected to Issachar, but he was "memorialized" in the 1939 *Jewish Contributions to Medicine in America*, albeit as a largely forgotten historical anecdote as Isachar Zacharie, "reputed to have been a skillful chiropodist, who attended the martyred President, Abraham Lincoln, and members of his cabinet."[26]

Although the statue was never erected, the publicity surrounding it created renewed interest about Lincoln's Jewish foot doctor. A year later, the *Pittsburg Post-Gazette* and many other papers carried a short article on Issachar's relationship with Lincoln, and reprinted Lincoln's comment about Issachar operating on his feet.[27] Dr. Zacharie's urging Lincoln to have trained chiropodists attached to each regiment in the army was a worthy idea, said the paper. The army "had chaplains take care for the souls of the soldiers, why not chiropodists to look after their soles!"[28]

Once World War II was over, Issachar's special relationship with Lincoln was again celebrated and oftentimes embellished. The *Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle* seriously claimed Lincoln relaxed from the heavy duties of the Presidency by playing a nightly game of pinochle in the White House with "his close friend, Dr. Isachar Zacharie, a Jewish chiropodist."[29] Other Jewish writers got carried away, inventing more intimate moments between Issachar and Lincoln. David Schwartz in *The Sentinel* imagined Lincoln "reposing on his bed and Dr. Zacharie working on his feet" while discussing Issachar's plan to meet with Confederate leaders to end the war. In their imaginary conversation, Lincoln asks Issachar, "why do you think an attempt to bring about peace now would succeed? And why do you think you would succeed at it? After all, you are a chiropodist, not a diplomat." "Mr. President," Issachar answers, "the present condition of things" stemmed from "the callousness of the people and you know we chiropodists are always dealing with callouses."[30]

Ten years later, in a longer essay, Schwartz affected a semi-serious tone. "We are apt to be a little contemptuous about toe doctors," he burbled. "We almost become mirthful at the mention of them, but Abe Lincoln was probably an exception in this regard. We know he had a decent respect for the position of the toe in society, as one should have." Schwartz imagined Issachar telling Lincoln, "this war is just caused by the North and South stepping on each other's toes." Lincoln was very conscious of this part of the anatomy, said Schwartz. "I think it was this foot consciousness (that led to his relationship with) Dr. Issachar Zacharie, the Jewish toe doctor of New York" and eventually to Lincoln sending him to talk peace with Judah Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of State, "who was also Jewish."[31] "Dr. Zacharie did not deliver a country, but who knows, he might conceivably have done so, if his advice had been followed. Anyway, he tried hard."[32]

Issachar resurfaced again in the 1950s following his prominent place in Bertram Korn's *American Jewry and the Civil War*. Korn wrote a lengthy biography of Issachar and reproduced many of the letters Issachar wrote to Lincoln and vice versa.[33] Citing Korn's book, podiatrist Eugene Friedberg beamed, "much new material has been brought to light recently concerning Dr. Issachar Zacharie, Lincoln's chiropodist, who was one of the most colorful figures in chiropodical history."[34] Friedberg said he couldn't point to any tangible effects Issachar had on podiatry because of the major improvements in the profession since his time. "Nevertheless, the great amount of sound publicity he obtained materially helped our profession to sink a firmer and deeper root than would have been possible otherwise."[35]

In 1950, a series of articles in the newspapers dwelled on what seems to have been a growing problem with the nation's feet. The *Honolulu Star-Bulletin* ran a page one story headlined "It Seems Abe Lincoln Had Foot Trouble, Too."[36] The same story was headlined "Abe Lincoln's Feet Hurt Too" in the *Bloomington* (Indiana) *Pantagraph*. Lincoln had so many corns and calluses, said the *Pantagraph*, he had a personal foot doctor, "a chiropodist named Zacharie."[37] Other papers noted Issachar giving "the President great relief by a foot operation in 1862."[38]

Issachar also made a brief appearance in 1955 in Christopher Morley's comical article "Lincoln's Doctor's Dog" in *The Saturday Review*. Lincoln's family physician, Dr. Stone (his -real-life doctor), confides to Lincoln he wasn't as sensitive about feet as he used to be "since that corn-doctor, Dr. Zacharie was here." Recounting the exaggerated claims of other chiropodists, Stone praises Dr. Zacharie as having come "here with an introduction from Napoleon III" and having "attended all the crowned heads of Europe." "I wanted to tell him," says Stone, "he must mean the crowned feet, but I was too polite."[39]

Issachar was never memorialized in bronze, but he was memorialized in a different way. In 1960, the California Podiatry College established an annual four-year tuition scholarship, "Zacharie Scholarships in Podiatry," "to honor Dr. Zacharie, Chiropodist General to the United States Army as appointed by President Abraham Lincoln."[40]

Schwartz continued writing about Lincoln's ties to America's Jews, and Issachar in particular, in the 1960s. "Everybody wants to get into the act and stake a little claim on Lincoln…. We Jews would claim Lincoln as a Jew," he quipped, "except for the fact that we know if he had been a Jew, his name would have been Arnold Lincoln." As far as he was concerned, Schwartz took "pleasure in the fact that Lincoln's corn doctor Dr. Isodore Zacharie, was a Jew." "I would build a monument to him," he mused, not knowing a monument had been planned but had never materialized. "I am tired of all of these monuments to military heroes and even to many of the -so-called statesmen, standing with their arms against their breasts. Give me the stature of a corn doctor."[41]

As part of the Civil War centennial observance, several papers carried articles about the role of Jews in the Civil War, including Lincoln's unique relationship with Issachar. "With all the excitement over the Civil War Centennial," *the Fort Myers News-Press* editorialized, "it probably is inevitable that we would at last work our way around to Abraham Lincoln's corn doctor."[42] The *Rapid City* (South Dakota) *Journal* told its readers, "Lincoln's Corn Doctor Gets Recognition He Deserved."[43] The *Palm Beach Post* proclaimed "Abe Lincoln's Corn Doctor Played Key Civil War Part."[44] In punning headlines, newspapers around the country heralded Dr. Zacharie, the corn doctor who "Kept Lincoln on Firm Footing,"[45] the "Expert Corn Surgeon

(who) Got Himself on Good Footing with Lincoln,"[46] and the "Corn Doctor [who] Used Abe's Feet to Prove His Worth."[47]

Except for a few brief notices, Issachar again slipped into obscurity during the rest of the 1960s and 1970s. An item in the *Arizona Republic* informed its readers "the tall president was miserable until a person who is identified only as a Dr. I Zacharie came along to ease his pain." In return, the grateful President, the *Republic* mistakenly said, appointed Dr. Zacharie "the first (and, insofar as we know) the only Chiropodist General to the United States Army."[48]

A decade later, the *Indianapolis Star* was more critical, calling Issachar "something of a - celebrity-hound foot doctor among the Washington set. Zacharie's reputation probably gained more than Lincoln's feet."[49] The indefatigable David Schwartz, who invented conversations between Lincoln and Issachar, lamented "the name Dr. Issachar Zacharie may arouse little in today's average American."[50] Reviewing Issachar's career as a chiropodist and spy, Harry Bloch, M.D., wrote in the *Journal of the American Podiatry Association*, that Dr. Zacharie "was not lacking in ambition and aggressiveness" and "possessed a flair for heroics."[51]

Noting Philadelphia was the birthplace of American podiatry, the *Philadelphia Inquirer* reported Dr. Zacharie was "one of the first and certainly the most zealous of podiatrists." "Lincoln sent him into the field ostensibly to treat generals' feet," said the *Inquirer*, surmising "podiatrists, like hairdressers hear all the gripes of their clients."[52]

The Civil War sesquicentennial anniversary once again put Issachar in the limelight as the most famous Northern Jew of the war. This time, Issachar's day was due to his prominent place in *Lincoln and the Jews*, a lavish and meticulously researched book by American Jewish historian Jonathan D. Sarna and Lincoln ephemera collector Benjamin Shapell. Among the many engaging aspects of their richly illustrated book are the high-quality reproductions of letters in Lincoln's own handwriting on behalf of Jews and to individual Jews, including Issachar, who Sarna and Shapell characterize as a man of "many mysteries."[53] Since the book is not solely about Issachar, much of his life before and after the war are only briefly mentioned, but his wartime activities, especially his espionage and diplomatic activities, are recounted, although often without context.

Steven Spielberg's 2012 movie, *Lincoln* and Sarna and Shapell's 2015 book created a posthumous fan club for Issachar. Since then, Issachar's grave site has become a tourist destination in London's Highgate Cemetery, where Issachar is buried. His monument is now in listed in the cemetery's guide, along with Karl Marx and George Eliot.[54]

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"What manner of man," Bertram Korn, author of *American Jewry and the Civil War*, asked, "was this chiropodist-envoy who sent baskets of bananas, oranges, and pineapples to the White House, conveyed his 'kind regards' to Mrs. Lincoln, and after two years of correspondence, began to address the President as 'My Dear Friend.'"[55] Issachar obviously possessed considerable personal and political skills. He was a prosperous businessman. He was a highly sought after in his profession. He was an epicurean, a connoisseur of fine wines. He was a high-ranking Mason. He was a liar and a self-promoting opportunist. He was a man who desperately wanted to be noticed.

Historical characters rarely warrant biographies if they are not complex and enigmatic. They have to be out of the ordinary. They have to have had flaws as well as accomplishments. They have to pique a biographer's curiosity to spend years trying to figure out "what manner of man

(or woman)" they were.

Lincoln had never heard of Issachar before he met him, and he only met him because he was pained by his corns. In the course of treating him, Issachar charmed him. Lincoln was not naïve. He was a fairly good judge of character. He had to have been aware Issachar was no paragon of virtue. He had only to look at him with his diamond stickpin to know the man was vain and meticulous about his image. From their conversations, Lincoln would have sized Issachar up as a political opportunist. So why did he befriend him? That inconsistency, writes historian Charles Segal, is one reason Issachar Zacharie is so enigmatic for Lincoln scholars and writers, especially in the field of American Jewish history.[56]

One reason Issachar was "the most favored family visitor at the White House"[57] is that Lincoln liked Issachar's bonhomie and wit. He had an innate sense of comfort that put him at ease with others. Issachar's wit was not as earthy as his own, but was still amusing enough for Lincoln to have liked Issachar's company. "Perhaps I'm somewhat like the Irish Biddy who remarked to the lady of the house," Issachar joked, by way of assuring Lincoln of his sincerity, "'Shurr Mistress darlent a poor gal that works hard likes to know if she gives satisfaction to youz.'"[58]

Issachar's humor and wit were touted as far away as Australia. Dr. Zacharie, the *Melbourne Argus* reported, was "a person of varied attainments, of refined manners, and of a persuasive address, with materials enough at the tip of his tongue to add a few supplementary sheets to the next edition of *Joe Miller's Jests* that any enterprising bookseller in the Old World or the New may think it profitable to publish. It is, perhaps, the last of these accomplishments that has recommended him to the congenial President."[59]

Issachar could not have gained the trust of the President of the United States merely by amusing him or offering free corn and bunion snips. Beyond Issachar's wit, charm, and glibness, Lincoln saw a Jew not unlike his Illinois friend, Abraham Jonas, someone with intelligence and ambition, someone Lincoln must have felt could be of use to him.

Issachar was no paragon of virtue. He could be "obsequious, oleaginous, and painfully solicitous," writes historian Gary Zola. "At other times, he could be self-congratulatory, petty, and critical."[60] Charles Segal had a similar unflattering estimation of Issachar. Dr. Zacharie, he writes, was "morally flawed."[61] Mitchell Abidor censured him for the "magnificent claims about his education" that were false and for plagiarizing another author's book on chiropody and replacing the author's name with his own. He was a salesman, says Abidor, whose main stock-in-trade was himself.[62]

Despite his flaws, writes historian Zola, Issachar Zacharie was nonetheless "a man of exceptional talent."[63] He lied about his training and his medical education, yet there is no doubt about his abilities as a chiropodist. His skills were endorsed by U.S. Senators like Henry Clay of Kentucky, John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, Lewis Cass of Michigan, Generals McClellan, Burnside, and Banks, Secretaries Seward and Stanton, and of course, the President of the United States. If those endorsements were not enough, the "proof of the pudding" was his lucrative practice. Neither could anyone deny his extraordinary intimacy with the President of the United States.

Issachar was a man with little or no introspection. He was so self-absorbed he never took time to reflect on his drive for recognition. On one of the few occasions in which he offered any glimpse into his own personality, he told a group of friends and admirers gathered to honor him that he had been "launched out into thse world a poor boy, with no friend save my God, without a penny in my pocket, and deprived of that which is so essential to the elevation of man in this

world, education." Like his professional exaggerations, it was an exaggeration. He was not "launched" into the world a poor boy. He came from humble beginnings, but his family was - middle-class. They had enough money to set him up in business when he was still a teenager. He chose to leave his family to pursue his career.

What was true, what he deeply felt, was his lack of education. He referred to it on more than one occasion. It was the reason he invented fictional apprenticeships with Aston Cooper and Valentine Mott. It was why he plagiarized his books. He was fully aware of his educational shortcomings, and he did his best to hide them. For Issachar, "The past is never dead. It's not even past."[64] Despite his fabrications about his professional medical training and books, no one denied his skill in treating foot problems.

What drove whatever successes Issachar had accomplished in public life, he said, was due to his boundless energy and ambition for recognition. Issachar's ambition in promoting himself goes to the heart of his character. He did not crave power. He craved recognition and admiration from those in power and from a grateful public at large. His ambition fed a growing sense of importance. He fantasized himself a kingmaker, bolstering General Banks' own presidential ambitions. When he first met Lincoln in 1862, he boasted he would get him reelected. If he wasn't reelected, Issachar said it would not be his fault.

Issachar felt he was destined for a much greater future than merely a confidante or "favored family visitor at the White House." He had so much energy and self-confidence, he believed he could do anything he set his mind to. When General Banks seemed to have a chance at being the Republican nominee in the 1864 election, despite his indebtedness to and friendship with Lincoln, Issachar saw an opportunity for fame and recognition and high political office, not unlike Judah Benjamin. Banks hoped he could realize his ambition through a military process. Military failure kept him from ever realizing his dream. Issachar felt he could achieve fame through negotiation. When Banks' prospects fizzled, Issachar threw himself wholeheartedly behind Lincoln in the upcoming election.

Issachar was an opportunist and a self-promoter. He had fortitude and ingenuity. Even though he had no formal education, he innately knew how to ingratiate himself with others. He too was large. Like Walt Whitman, he could say he celebrated himself and sang of himself. Like Whitman, he congratulated and humbled himself.[65] He learned a profession and worked on getting his name out as a corn cutter and more. And like Whitman, he concocted testimonials to himself.[66]

Had he been content merely to stand at the sidelines, history would never have heard of Issachar Zacharie. His ambition drove him. It made him friends as well as enemies. His ambition, his determination, his ingenuity, and his resilience made him the man he was. When he made his mind up, he refused to take "no" for an answer. His ambition led him to lie about his mentorship and his medical training. But he wasn't any more deceitful than Whitman, or his competitors, or present-day politicians, CEOs, bureaucrats, university deans, or football coaches who have padded their resumes with fake diplomas, or, for that matter, university coaches who took bribes in exchange for recruiting students as athletes, or the parents of those students who paid those bribes.[67] Compared to those captains of industry and education, Issachar's fabrications seem benign.

Issachar was undeniably a flawed character, but that is what makes him so interesting for a biographer. It is not his flaws that are celebrated, but his celebrity. In his own time, Issachar was talked about in some of the country's major newspapers. His death was likewise noted in newspapers across the country. Mitchel Abidor considers him merely a "minor sideshow" in the

whole scheme of the war. For a minor sideshow, he certainly garnered considerable news coverage in his own lifetime and beyond. Few figures from the Civil War, other than those in government or the military, have had as much written about them in his own time. His efforts did come to naught. So eventually did Judah Benjamin's and the efforts of many of the country's leading generals. Like Judah Benjamin, "navigating affairs of state for a responsive President,"[68] Issachar asked why, "in this republican and enlightened country," shouldn't an Israelite "be elevated to a high position by his government."[69] It is very much the question behind the story of the Jews in America.

Issachar was an "Israelite" in solidarity, not belief. He was never observant. He married a gentile girl. He did not raise his children as Jews. With one exception, none of his children married Jews. He is not known to have contributed to any Jewish benevolent society. He is not buried in a Jewish cemetery. But he always considered himself an "Israelite"[70] and was always described as such by his detractors.

More than any other Jew of his day, Issachar was the visible embodiment, the public face, of the integration of the Jew in America. At a time when influential leadership roles were denied them in other parts of the world, writes historian Zola, Issachar's extraordinary relationship with President Lincoln made him a *beau ideal* for Jews then and an exemplar to Jews today. Lincoln's befriending and selecting an immigrant Jew as a high-level envoy and reconnaissance agent for the good of the country demonstrated that Jews "could achieve a political distinction in America that was denied them elsewhere."[71]

1. Jewish Messenger, June 20, 1890, 5.
2. Adams, Politics, 6.
3. Ibid., 139.
4. Jewish Messenger, June 29, 1877.
5. Simon Wolf, Selected Addresses and Papers of Simon Wolf (Cincinnati: Union of Hebrew Congregations, 1926), 105.
6. Isaac Markens, The Hebrew in America (New York: privately published, 1888).
7. Ibid., 130–131.
8. Wolf, American Jew as Patriot.
9. J. M. Rogers, "Jewish Soldiers in the Union Army," North American Review 153 (1891), 761–762.
10. Markens "Lincoln," 109–165.
11. Ibid., 163.
12. Ibid., 164.
13. Isaac Markens, "Jews Close to Lincoln," The Advocate: America's Jewish Journal (February 28, 1914), 89.
14. Ibid.
15. Louis Sterne, Seventy Years of an Active Life (London: privately published, 1912), 72.
16. Sander L. Gilman and Steven I. Katz, Anti-Semitism in Times of Crisis (New York: New York University Press, 1993), 10.
17. Leon Spitz, "Reflections on Lincoln," Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, February 9, 1945, 1.
18. Ibid.
19. Bertram Jonas, "Exploding a Myth," The Sentinel, February 8, 1934, 6. Jonas was rumored to be a pseudonym for Philip Hochstein, editor of the Newark Star Ledger and the New York Jewish Week. Michael E. Staub, Torn at the Roots: Jewish Liberalism in Crisis (Columbia University Press, 2002), 188. Jonas wrote several other articles defending Jews against their enemies (e.g., "If Broadway Went Aryan," American Jewish World, January 17, 1936, 5) and continued writing up into the 1970s: "When El Fatah Goes to Shul," Jewish Week, September 2, 1971, 1; "Refugees from the Jewish Pulpit," Canadian Jewish Chronicle, October 18, 1945, 5, 16; "When Lincoln Fought Bigotry," Jewish Spectator, 1938, v, 33–35.
20. Ibid.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid.
23. Alberta A. Woldman, "Lincoln's Jewish Doctor," B'nai Brith National Jewish Monthly, February 1937, 189; 1938, 248; Fort Myers (Florida) News-Press, March, 9, 1940, 3; Detroit Free Press, March 9, 1940, 4; Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, March 22, 1940, 6; Cleveland Plain Dealer, March 9, 1940, 14.
24. The Sentinel, March 28, 1940, 35.
25. Quoted by the Indianapolis Jewish Post, April 6, 1940, 5. As those more worthy, the Advocate cited. among others, Judah Benjamin, "U.S. Senator from Louisiana, and one of the heroes of the Southern Confederacy."
26. Louis Gershenfeld, The Jew in Science (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1934) 182; Solomon R. Kagan, Jewish Contributions to Pittsburg Post-Gazette Medicine in America from Colonial Times to the Present (Boston, MA: Boston Medical Publishing Co., 1939), 274.
27. Pittsburg Post-Gazette, March 27, 1941, 2; Greenfield (Indiana) Daily Reporter July 30, 1941, 8; Corpus Christi (Texas) Caller Times, March 17, 1941, 3; Winchester (Kansas) Star, August 22, 1941, 3; Urbana (Virginia) Southside Sentinel, September 11, 1941, 7; Aiken (South Carolina) Standard, August 22, 1941, 3.
28. Pittsburg Post-Gazette, March 27, 1941, 2.
29. Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, February 8, 1946, 7. The pinochle game was also reported by the Indianapolis Jewish Post, February 8, 1946, 17.
30. David Schwartz, "Abe Lincoln and Zion. His Thoughts on a Jewish Home," The Sentinel (February 10, 1949), 11.
31. Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, February 6, 1959, 7.
32. Ibid., September 30, 1959, 1.
33. Korn, American Jewry, 230–239. An earlier history by Charles Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," had also highlighted Issachar's now forgotten career and relationship with Lincoln, but that biography was mainly read by academic historians.
34. Eugene Friedberg, "Issachar Zacharie," Journal of the National Association of Chiropodists 44 (April 1954), 36.
35. Ibid., 38.
36. Honolulu Star-Bulletin, April 28, 1950.
37. Bloomington (Indiana) Pantagraph, May 6, 1950, 7.
38. Cleveland Plain Dealer, September 20, 1950, 19; Seattle Daily Times, August 16, 1950, 27; Canton (Ohio) Repository, July 28, 1950, 16; St. Louis Obispo Telegram-Tribune, July 27, 1950; Lexington (Kentucky) Leader, August 1, 1950, 7.
39. Christopher Morley, "Lincoln's Doctor's Dog," The Saturday Review 38 (February 12, 1955), 9–10, 40–42.
40. Petaluma (California) Argus-Courier, July 1, 1960), 2.
41. David Schwartz, "Lincoln's Corn Doctor," Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, February 12, 1960, 7.
42. Fort Myers (Florida) News Press, April 23, 1961, 5.
43. Rapid City (South Dakota) Journal, April 23, 1961, 2.

44. Palm Beach (Florida) April 23, 1961, 34.
45. Minneapolis Star Tribune, April 23, 1861, 13.
46. Hartford (Connecticut) Courant, April 23, 1961, 4.
47. Corpus Christi (Texas) Caller-Times, April 23, 1961, 6.
48. Arizona Republic, May 1, 1964, 1; March 15, 1967. The Hudson Country Podiatry Society said it had tried unsuccessfully "to revive interest in restoring the office in today's modern army." Jersey City (New Jersey) Journal, February 11, 1970, 22.
49. Indianapolis Star, June 18, 1978, 18.
50. Wisconsin Jewish Chronicle, February 10, 1967, 8.
51. Harry Bloch, "Issachar Zacharie (1827–1900): A Chiropodist of the 19th Century," Journal of the American Podiatry Association 61 (May 1971), 180–185.
52. Philadelphia Inquirer, April 5, 1987, 59.
53. Jonathan D. Sarna and Benjamin Shapell, Lincoln and the Jews, A History (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2015), 126.
54. https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/150822.
55. Korn, American Jewry, 201.
56. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 122.
57. New York World, September 24, 1864, 4.
58. New York Herald, October 3, 1862, 2; Zacharie to Lincoln, February 19, 1863, ABL LOC.
59. Melbourne Argus, April 14, 1865, 7. Joe Miller was an English actor in the early 18th century whose name became an eponym ("Millerism") for current and bawdy jokes. John Mottley, Joe Miller's Complete Jest Book: Being a Collection of the Most Excellent Bon Mots, Brilliant Jests, and Striking Anecdotes in the English Language (London: H. N. G. Bohn, 1859).
60. Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 45–46.
61. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 122.
62. Mitchel Abidor, "Honest Abe and the Children of Abraham. Much Ado About the Inconsequential," Jewish Currents, http://jewishcurrents.org/honest-abe-and-the-children-of-abraham-e7756, accessed July 28, 2015).
63. Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 53.
64. The phrase, with a change of tense, is from William Faulkner's Requiem for a Nun.
65. Walt Whitman, "Song of Myself," 1.1, https://whitmanarchive.org/published/LG/1891/poems/27.
66. Whitman appended "anonymous" reviews to the end of his 1860 edition of Leaves of Grass, praising his own greatness. James Franco, "'Song of Myself' Why Walt Whitman Was the Original Kayne West," https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/8gdne5/walt-whitman-was-the-original-kanye.
67. Businessinsider.com, May 7, 2012; New York Times, April 26, 2019.
68. Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 53.
69. Jewish Messenger, May 13, 1864, 141.
70. Ibid. Issachar's name is listed in the 1850s among the new member of Congregation Mikveh Israel in Savannah when he visited his parents (Rubin, Third to None, 129), and he kept abreast of national and international events affecting Jews through his subscription to the Jewish Messenger. Historian Charles Segal contended that Issachar was a Jew in name only. Segal considered him an "oddity" rather than a figure of importance in American Jewish history (Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 122).
71. Zola, We Called Him Rabbi, 53.

Appendix: Zacharie's Accounts

The United States

In Account with I. Zacharie M.D.

1862			
Decr.	26	For expenses	6.00
	27	" Do	5.00
	28	" Pr. Services	10.00
	"	" Expenses	5.00
	29	" Pd. girl for information	10.00
	30	" Expenses	4.00
1863	"	" Pd. for information	10.00
Jany	1	" Expenses	3.50
	2	" Do	4.50
	3	" Pd. for information	10.00
	"	" Expenses	1.50
	4	" Do	2.00
	5	" Do	5.00
	6	" Pd. Marquis Men	10.00
	7	" Expenses	4.50
	8	" Do	3.00
	9	" Do	2.50
	10	" Do	1.50
	11	" Do	3.00
	12	" Do	1.00
	13	" Do	1.00
	15	" Do	3.25
	16	" Expenses	2.00
	19	" For information at Lake	5.00
	21	" Pd Marques men	10.00
	23	" Expenses	3.00
	24	" Do	1.00
	25	" Do	1.50
	26	" Do	2.00
	28	" Do	3.50
	29	" Do	1.00

	30	" Do	1.50
	31	" Do	1.50
"	" Pd. board as per bills		117.00
"	" " Lewis Bach for services		100.00
"	" " C. Johnson "		150.00
"	" " Services of self to date		300.00
			$800.50

Approved
N.P. Banks M.G.C.

Received payment
I, Zacharie

1863

July 1st	For 2 months & 13 days services From April 17 to date	730.00
	For 2 months & 13 days services Of C. Johnson as secretary	365.00
	For rent of rooms & board as Per bills	342.00
		$1,437.00

Received the above in full
(signed) I. Zacharie
Approved N. P. Banks, M. G. C. 2nd July 1863

New Orleans March 6th 1863

1863

Feby 4	For amt. paid Mr. Collins, trip to Mobile	100.00
20	" " for information respt.salt	10.00
Mar 6	" " bills St. Charles Hotel	121.00
"	" " Chas. Johnson services	150.00
	" " services of self to date	360.00
		$741.00

Approved N. P. Banks M. G. C.
Received payment
Zacharie

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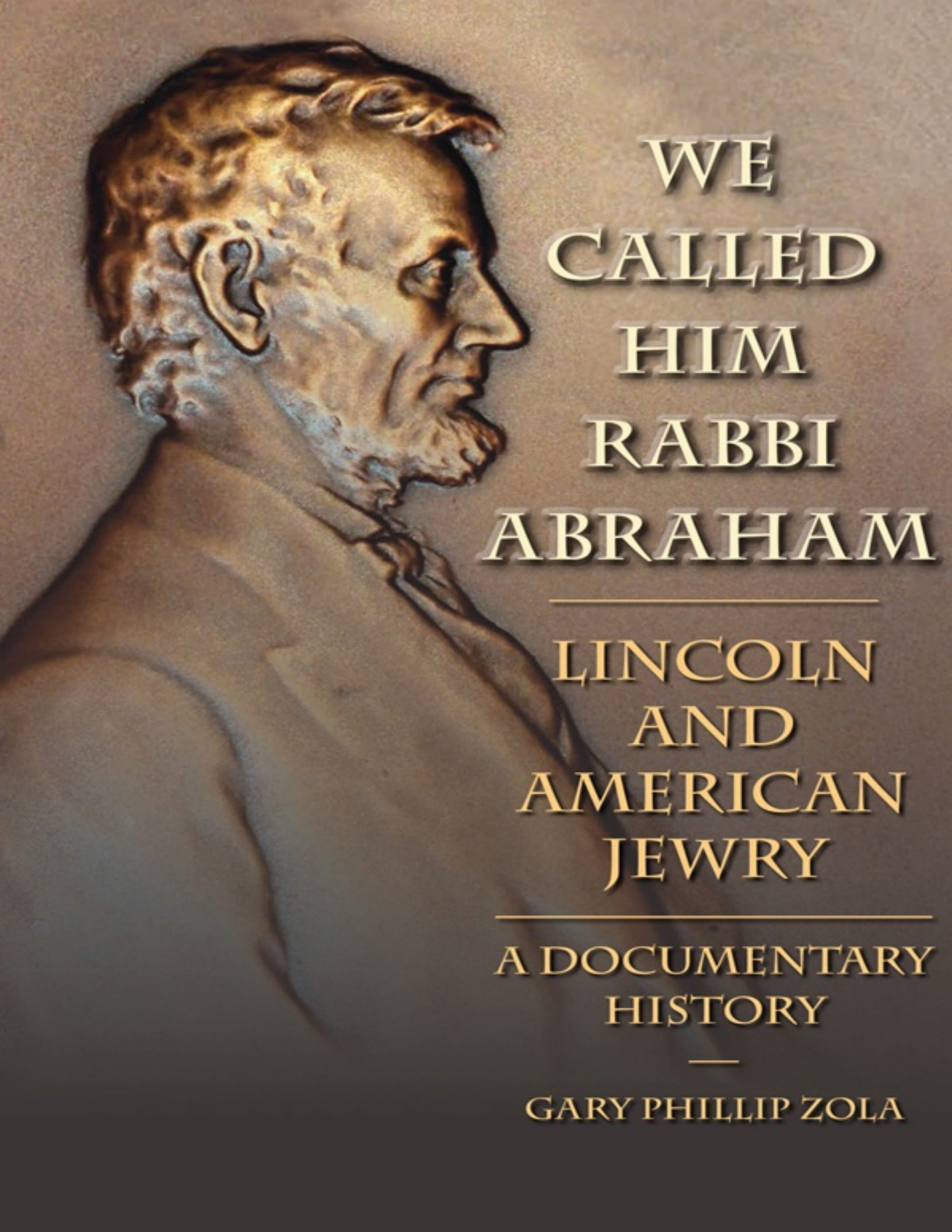

WE CALLED HIM RABBI ABRAHAM

LINCOLN AND AMERICAN JEWRY

A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

GARY PHILLIP ZOLA

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A DOCUMENTARY HISTORY

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTIONS BY
GARY PHILLIP ZOLA

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To my parents
Roy M. Zola
Estelle C. Zola
Sidney Rothberg
Sylvia Rothberg

"We cannot escape history"
—Abraham Lincoln, second annual message to Congress

To my darlings
Mandi
Jory
Jeremy
Samantha

"The struggle of today…is for a vast future also"
—Abraham Lincoln, second annual message to Congress

And to my dearest
Stefi

"Throughout that long period, [s]he has constantly been the most loved"
—Abraham Lincoln's eulogy on Henry Clay, 1852

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Acknowledgments

Those who are born and raised in Illinois understand from an early age, almost by osmosis, that they live in the state that claims Abraham Lincoln as its favorite son. There can be little doubt that the root of my interest in Abraham Lincoln comes from the fact that my formative years—the first two decades of my life—were spent in the "Land of Lincoln," where the sixteenth president's name and image are ubiquitous. A number of my friends in junior high school had attended Lincoln Elementary, one of our family's favorite eateries was on Lincoln Avenue, and the synagogue my family attended—Temple Beth El—was adjacent to a suburb known as Lincolnwood.

My earliest recollection of Lincoln and Judaism explicitly intersecting in my life stems from the time that one of my parents' friends gave me a bronze bust of Abraham Lincoln on the occasion of my becoming a Bar Mitzvah on January 30, 1965. My parents gently recommended that I return the bust to Marshall Field's department store and purchase something more "useful"—something more suitable for a thirteen-year-old boy. To my parents' astonishment, I dismissed the suggestion out of hand. I had no intention of returning my Lincoln bust, I told them. One day, it would look very impressive on my desk. Although the bust does not sit on my desk, it remains in my possession to this day.

It was my teacher and mentor, however, the late Jacob Rader Marcus—the dean of American Jewish historians—who first introduced me to Lincoln's singular place in the annals of American Jewish history. I can still see myself sitting in his American Jewish history class at Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in Cincinnati, and, if I close my eyes, I can hear his distinctive voice recounting the details surrounding the promulgation of Ulysses S. Grant's General Orders No. 11, the only time in U.S. history that Jews "as a class" were banished from American soil. Marcus taught us about a Jew named Cesar Kaskel, who had been expelled from his hometown of Paducah, Kentucky. Kaskel traveled to Washington, D.C., to ask President Lincoln to revoke Grant's odious order. Marcus described how Kaskel managed to procure a personal interview with the president, at which time he implored Lincoln to revoke Grant's order and thereby protect American Jewry's rights under the U.S. Constitution. Lincoln immediately rejoined with his often-repeated (though historically undocumented) pledge: "And this protection you shall have at once." Lincoln revoked Grant's order then and there.

I was completely mesmerized.

Years earlier, Marcus had urged his star pupil, Bertram W. Korn, to research the history of American Jewry and the Civil War and, specifically, Abraham Lincoln's relationship with his fellow Jewish citizens. I read Korn's book from cover to cover that year, and I learned that there was much more to the story of Lincoln and the Jews than the revocation of Grant's order. Years later, in my own courses, I taught my students about Lincoln, relying on the knowledge I had acquired from Marcus and Korn. For years, I assumed these scholars had unearthed most of what there was to know about Abraham Lincoln and American Jewry.

All of these experiences may well have played a germinating role in the origination of this particular work, but my decision to write an entirely new book on Lincoln and American Jewry first began to take shape in 2006, the year I was invited to serve on the Academic Advisory Council of the U.S. Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission (ALBC).

As a member of the ALBC's Academic Advisory Council, I had the privilege of meeting some of the nation's most accomplished and distinguished Lincoln scholars. Although I was familiar with their publications, it was overwhelming to see my own name on an academic roster

that included people such as Michael Beschloss, Richard N. Current, Eric Foner, John Hope Franklin, Doris Kearns Goodwin, James M. McPherson, and many others. After all, at the time I was appointed to the council, I had not published even one sentence of original research on Abraham Lincoln.

Many of the meetings of the ALBC featured academic colloquia where outstanding Lincoln scholars such as Harold Holzer, Frank J. Williams, and Gabor S. Boritt lectured. I quickly realized how little I knew about Abraham Lincoln in general, and I decided that my own personal contribution as a member of the ALBC's Academic Advisory Council would be to dedicate myself to studying and teaching about Lincoln and American Jewry.

As a specialist in American Jewish history, I was familiar with the major works that had already been published, including Isaac Markens's *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* (1909), Emanuel Hertz's edited volume *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (1927), and Bertram W. Korn's *American Jewry and the Civil War* (1951). My studies began with these works and fanned out from there. It did not take long for me to realize that there was much more to say about Lincoln and American Jewry now that more than half a century has passed since Korn first published his meticulously researched volume. With the publication of this book, I have fulfilled a promise I made to myself nearly seven years ago.

My professorial beau ideal, Jacob Rader Marcus, always began his acknowledgments by emphasizing, “No book writes itself.”[1] How true! Without the help and encouragement of dozens of individuals and institutions, it would be impossible for any author to produce a publication of this sort. It is no exaggeration to say that this volume in particular would never have appeared had it not been for the unhemmed support and generous assistance I was given by so many men and women. I am grateful for the opportunity to express my genuine gratitude to those who responded so graciously to my many appeals for help in bringing this work to completion.

I am everlastingly indebted to my colleagues at The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (AJA). No matter how eloquently framed, words cannot possibly express the extent of my appreciation to Dana Herman, the center's academic associate and managing editor of the *American Jewish Archives Journal*. Dana's editorial expertise can be seen on literally every page of this volume. She subjects herself to the highest standards of excellence in her work at The Marcus Center, and her general editorial assistance was invaluable. She cared for this manuscript as if it were her own. To simply say, “Thank you, Dana,” seems unforgivably inadequate, but I offer her my earnest gratitude with the deepest sincerity.

Sonja Rethy has checked and rechecked each and every document in this volume in an effort to ensure the highest level of accurate transcription. In doing so, Sonja's close reading of the manuscript has unquestionably resulted in a final product that was significantly improved in both style and content. I am grateful for her meticulous efforts and her exceptionally fine editorial contributions. Phil Reekers, the AJA's talented digitization and graphic design staffer, originally keystroked all of the documents in this volume. His manifold contributions to this project have consistently gone above and beyond the call of duty, and I sincerely appreciate his loyal support and his dedication to every facet of his work at The Marcus Center.

Those who have had the opportunity to conduct research at the AJA, or have ever had an occasion to ask one of the AJA's archival professionals for scholarly assistance, will confirm the assertion that the AJA sets an extremely high bar when it comes to being “research friendly.” I believe it is fair to say that I received the same outstanding archival assistance that every AJA patron enjoys, and I am profoundly grateful to the following members of the AJA archival staff

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I now turn to my friend and colleague of nearly three decades, Lisa B. Frankel, director of programs and administration at The Marcus Center. It is literally impossible for me to express all that I owe her. Again, I imitate my own mentor when I thank Lisa “for her years of service, experience, and tolerance!” Thank you, thank you, thank you, Lisa!

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to all who have helped me on this particular journey.

The great American orator and politician Robert G. Ingersoll—himself a Civil War veteran—framed beautiful, resonant words that capture my final heartfelt expression of gratitude: “Love is…the air and light of every heart—builder of every home, kindler of every fire on every hearth…. It is the perfume of that wondrous flower, the heart, and without that sacred passion, that divine swoon, we are less than beasts but with it, earth is heaven.”[2]

With these sentiments in mind, I wish to offer my deeply felt appreciation to my own family for their countless sacrifices—always offered up and given with love—that have enabled me to complete this task. To them, I gratefully and lovingly dedicate this work.

Introduction: Abraham Lincoln and American Jewry

On Wednesday, April 19, 1865, Lewis Naphtali Dembitz, a prominent lawyer, Jewish communal leader, and longtime activist in the Republican Party, ascended the pulpit of Beth Israel Synagogue on Green Street in Louisville, Kentucky, to participate in the congregation's obsequies for Abraham Lincoln. He began his lament with these remarkable words: “You often called him, jocosely, Rabbi Abraham, as if he were one of our nation—of the seed of Israel; but, in truth, you might have called him ‘Abraham, the child of our father Abraham.’ For, indeed, of all the Israelites throughout the United States, there was none who more thoroughly filled the ideal of what a true descendant of Abraham ought to be than Abraham Lincoln.”[1]

Lincoln's familiar nickname, “Father Abraham,” was popularized in the Union army. The country's soldiers enjoyed seeing the president when he visited the camps. He called them “my boys,” and they called him “Father Abraham.” In doing so, they playfully associated the biblical patriarch Abraham, the father of monotheistic faith, with their American “father,” Abraham Lincoln, the nation's president.[2] American Jewish soldiers undoubtedly also referred to Lincoln as “Father Abraham.” Yet it is an indisputable fact that some Jews—as Dembitz's eulogy demonstrates—whimsically referred to the president as *Rabbi* Abraham, “as if he were one of our nation.”

Over the course of American history, Jews have held many American leaders in high esteem, but American Jewry's emotional bond with Abraham Lincoln can be described only as sui generis. From the time of his presidency to the present day, American Jews have persistently believed that Lincoln was one of their own. They continuously conceived of Lincoln as a Jewish sojourner and, in certain respects, a Jewish role model. But how did Lincoln acquire this exceptional status, and how, over the past century and a half, did this interesting relationship evolve?

One facet of this special bond may be traced back to the fact that Lincoln and his Jewish contemporaries interacted on a personal level. Lincoln knew some American Jews, and some American Jews knew Lincoln. The sixteenth president was arguably the first man to arrive in the White House having long fraternized with a considerable number of Jews prior to assuming the presidency. During the 1850s, Lincoln patronized Jewish businesses, worked shoulder to shoulder with Jews who were actively involved in local politics, and made friends with a noteworthy number of Jews while he traveled across Illinois's Eighth Judicial Circuit. In addition, a considerable number of Jews considered Lincoln to be a personal friend or, at the very least, a personal acquaintance. Jews had had political associations with Lincoln for years, and some took part in helping Lincoln to secure his party's nomination in 1860. After he was chosen to head the Republican ticket, numerous American Jews participated enthusiastically in his election campaign. In short, among Lincoln's many friends, there was a band of Jewish Lincoln loyalists.

Interestingly, had Abraham Lincoln been running for president in 1840 instead of 1860, this relationship might never have been possible. This is because, demographically speaking, American Jewry had become a perceptible communal presence at the very time that Lincoln's political career was unfolding. Between the mid-1830s and the 1860s, thousands of Jews from German-speaking lands, as well as Jews from the Baltic region, immigrated to the United States. A considerable number of these immigrants settled in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin. Many of them had been activists in the liberal revolutionary movements of their native lands. The failure of these revolutions and the subsequent reactionary political

response drove them to emigrate in search of a better life. Economic opportunity, American democracy, and the Constitution's promise of freedom pulled them from across the Atlantic to the New World. It did not take long for many of these seasoned activists to dive headfirst into the pool of local politics.

These Jewish newcomers discovered they were welcome to participate in the hurly-burly world of politics on the American frontier. Many took a keen interest in the intensifying debate over slavery in America. Those who had fought for civic enfranchisement in the Old World identified with the struggle to abolish slavery in the New. Typically, the Jews who were opposed to the institution of slavery did not associate themselves with abolitionist societies; the Christian evangelical rhetoric and the exclusiveness that dominated these associations were off-putting. They needed a way to participate on their own terms. Many immigrant Jews were attracted to the Republican Party and to Lincoln's candidacy for these very reasons.[3]

The interaction between Lincoln and the American Jewish community continued to evolve during his years in office. The president encountered a number of Jewish communal leaders—including many American rabbis—who made personal appeals to him on behalf of their constituents. He also engaged with various Jewish personalities who were soliciting a personal favor. Lincoln invited Jewish citizens to attend social functions held at the White House, and he even developed a personal association with a Jewish chiropodist who cared for his feet and whom he subsequently sent to New Orleans to serve as a special envoy for his administration. During the Lincoln presidency, Jewish newspaper editors reported on these various encounters.

In assessing Lincoln's attitude concerning the African American and civil rights, Mary Frances Berry argues that Lincoln had “no static, dead-hand view of the Constitution. [For Lincoln], the Constitution was a changing, evolving document yielding to necessity.”[4] It has been similarly noted that one of Lincoln's most admirable personality traits was his openness to change and his willingness to reassess his principles in the face of changing realities. As the distinguished African American historian Carter G. Woodson observed many years ago, Lincoln “gradually grew into the full stature of democracy.”[5] Lincoln's decisive actions in a series of highly publicized controversies concerning Jews and civil rights constitute another useful perspective on his view of the Constitution as well as on his ability to respond to changing social circumstances.

In July 1861, the U.S. Congress adopted a law that permitted each of the Union's regimental commanders, on a vote of his field officers, to appoint a chaplain who was “a regularly ordained minister of some Christian denomination.”[6] As the implications of this law dawned on the American Jewish community, an organized protest was brought directly to Lincoln. He immediately understood why this law was exclusionary and unfair, and he subsequently took steps to see that the law was amended so that Jews as well as Christians could become chaplains in the U.S. military. Similarly, his decision to immediately revoke Ulysses S. Grant's infamous General Orders No. 11—an order banishing “Jews as a class” from the military's Department of Tennessee—further enhanced his reputation as a man of fairness who was genuinely concerned about the welfare of the American Jewish community. The rise of an organized effort to install Christianity as the official religion of the United States by amending the Constitution was a particularly worrisome development for American Jewry. Again, Lincoln's skillful management of this movement sheds light on his political acumen as well as on his views on the Constitution.

The aforementioned controversies attracted widespread public attention during the Lincoln administration, and even Jews who had never been Lincoln loyalists would eulogize the fallen president graciously and describe him as a man who was earnestly sympathetic to American

Jewry's concerns and interests. Rabbi Morris J. Raphall of New York, for example, was never a Lincoln loyalist. Nevertheless, he did not hesitate to go to Washington and ask the president to grant his son a military promotion. Lincoln acceded to Raphall's request, and the rabbi left the meeting convinced that his request had been granted, in part, because Lincoln knew he "was a Jew."[7] Lincoln made a similar impression on Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise of Cincinnati. Wise was a loyal member of the Democratic Party and, from time to time, would criticize Lincoln harshly in the pages of his newspaper, the *Israelite*. Yet, after he met Lincoln personally to thank him for revoking Grant's odious order, Wise told readers of the *Israelite* that Lincoln "entertained no prejudices of any kind against any nationality, and especially against Israelites, to whom he manifested a particular attachment."[8]

As president, Lincoln definitely had his share of Jewish detractors and political opponents. In the South, there were those who wanted to assassinate him before he could take his oath of office. One of the most urgent warnings about this plot came from a man who may very well have been Lincoln's oldest Jewish friend, Abraham Jonas from Quincy, Illinois. Jonas had ten children, and some of them lived in New Orleans when Lincoln won the election. The Jonas children knew Lincoln well; he visited their father in Quincy on a number of occasions. They always spoke fondly of Lincoln, and this familial relationship may have prompted at least one of them to notify Jonas in Quincy that there were those in New Orleans who intended to kill Lincoln upon his arrival in Washington in order to prevent him from assuming office. Jonas promptly wrote Lincoln a letter of warning, urging him to take all necessary precaution. The fact that Abraham Jonas's children leaked the plot to their father, however, did not mean they were Lincoln supporters. To the contrary, four of Jonas's sons joined the Confederate army and remained lifelong loyal sons of the South.[9]

The vast majority of southern Jews were Confederate patriots who were ardently opposed to Lincoln's party and his politics. Arguably the most prominent Jewish Confederate of all, Judah P. Benjamin, once described Lincoln as the candidate "who denies me all my rights, openly and fairly."[10] As far as Benjamin and his peers were concerned, the die for secession had been cast once the nation elected a man who carried the banner of the Republican Party. Benjamin was undoubtedly speaking for thousands of fellow southerners—Jewish and non-Jewish—when, on December 31, 1860, he arose in the chambers of the U.S. Senate to defend the right of the southern states to secede from the Union. "An enslaved and servile race you can never make of us," Benjamin defiantly proclaimed; "Never! Never!"[11] Throughout the South, thousands of young Jewish men took up arms to defend their homeland once hostilities erupted.

President Lincoln had Jewish critics in the North, too. Jewish spokesmen like Wise, Raphall, and Isaac Leeser often spoke as though they were formally associated with the Copperheads—northern Democrats who opposed the government's war policy in favor of a negotiated peace settlement with the South. In their newspaper columns and from their pulpits, these men periodically berated the way Lincoln prosecuted the war, criticized his decision to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, and bemoaned his various political missteps. Yet, Lincoln's Jewish critics —whether in the North or the South—were also known to acknowledge his probity and earnestness.

In analyzing the Lincoln-Douglas debates, for example, Judah P. Benjamin concluded that it was "impossible not to admire [Lincoln's] perfect candor and frankness."[12] Similarly, at the very end of the war, when Lincoln made his famous visit to Richmond in April 1865—only days before his death—Gustavus A. Myers, a loyal southerner and one of the city's most prominent Jewish citizens, met with Lincoln in the hope of persuading him to be lenient with the South.

Lincoln impressed Myers with his friendly disposition and his “civility and good humor.”[13] In the wake of Lincoln's brutal assassination, Jews joined with the rest of the Union in exalting Lincoln and honoring his memory. Although there were a few instances where southern Jews literally celebrated Lincoln's death, most Confederate Jews chose to shun manifest expressions of rejoicing.

Even in death, Lincoln provided members of the Jewish community an opportunity to participate as equals in the affairs of the nation. In every city in the Union where there was a significant Jewish population, Jewish citizens and Jewish organizations figured prominently in the public obsequies held in Lincoln's memory. Jews marched as a collective in Lincoln's various funeral pageants and processions, and rabbis were invited to offer prayers in public memorial ceremonies that were subsequently organized. Eulogies for Lincoln were delivered in practically every Jewish congregation throughout the country. Like the hundreds of eulogies delivered in Christian houses of worship, a noteworthy number of the Jewish eulogies appeared in the community press or were later published in pamphlets for public circulation. In a sense, Lewis Dembitz was speaking for all of American Jewry when he told the Jews of Louisville, “I speak to you on this occasion not as a preacher—I am not a prophet nor a son of a prophet—but I stand before you as the chief mourner, thinking, as I do, that, among this congregation, none thought oftener or more than I did of the great dead, whose fate we today lament.”[14]

It was in the context of the Lincoln eulogies that American Jews first began to embrace Lincoln as a Jewish exemplar. Making specific mention of Lincoln's longstanding personal relationship with American Jewry and recollecting the tangible efforts the president made to safeguard Jewry's civil rights, Lincoln was repeatedly eulogized as an adoptive father of the children of Israel. Lincoln, these Jewish leaders explicitly declared, “was like one of us.”[15] Rabbi Max Lilienthal of Cincinnati declared, “A great man has fallen in Israel!” Rabbi Wise, also of Cincinnati, assured his people that Lincoln “preserved numerous features of the Hebrew race, both in countenance and character.”[16] In Baltimore, Rabbi Benjamin Szold dramatically proclaimed: “Even while [Lincoln] was not flesh of our flesh, he was spirit of our spirit and essence of our essence. His soul and heart, his entire nature…are all truly Judaic and truly Jewish in spirit.”[17]

The widespread promulgation of these assertions, and others like them, throughout the American Jewish community marked the beginning of a process that might best be called the Judaization of Abraham Lincoln. For American Jewry, this phenomenon incrementally transformed Lincoln from a great American president and national hero into a bona fide American Jewish icon.

Over the past century and a half, the Judaization of Lincoln has gone hand in hand with the Americanization of this country's Jewry. Jews eagerly participated in the process of memorializing and exalting Lincoln together with the rest of the American nation. They contributed funds to erect communal monuments and iconic statues in his honor. They continually played a leading role in the process of gathering and preserving Lincolniana and in publishing books about his life. As the custom of commemorating Lincoln's birthday took root during the last decades of the nineteenth century, American Jews dutifully marked these occasions and paid homage to his life in sermons and orations. In 1909, when the nation celebrated the centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth, American Jewry produced a torrent of lectures, sermons, essays, and programs in almost every Jewish community throughout the country. All through the twentieth century, Jews participated in the cultural construction of Lincoln's image. They composed music about Lincoln, they sculpted his image, and they painted

his likeness. In every conceivable way, American Jews have been active participants in what one rabbi called “the sacred memory of one of [the] true and faithful servants for the common good of all mankind and the honor of our land.”[18]

Yet, the image and ideal of Abraham Lincoln in the nation's collective memory has concomitantly influenced the Americanization and acculturation of American Jewry. It was Lincoln, more than any other personality in American history, who spoke to the nation's immigrant newcomers. A sociologist who studied Lincoln's influence on the nation's memory has observed that “beneath the immigrants' diverse experiences of Lincoln was the common belief that he would have understood and respected them in their singularity.”[19]

The legacy of Lincoln appealed to the millions of East European Jewish immigrants who poured into this country between 1881 and 1924. There was no one more authentically American than Lincoln, and, by revering Lincoln, immigrants were simultaneously embracing the nation's heritage. Through the world of Yiddish culture—stories, poems, and songs—immigrants learned about Lincoln and, in doing so, made him one of their own. He became meaningful to them as Jews *and* as Americans. Just as the biblical Abraham was a father to all the monotheistic faiths, so too was the memory of Abraham Lincoln an inspiration to all Americans, especially to the immigrant newcomers.

Yet, it has been aptly noted that it is very difficult to “distinguish the sense in which the Jews had assimilated Lincoln from the sense in which Lincoln had assimilated them.”[20] The symbiotic relationship linking American Jewry to Abraham Lincoln is particularly apparent in a genre of sermons and speeches that began to appear around the time of the centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth in 1909. Again and again over the course of the twentieth century, rabbis, educators, and Jewish communal leaders pondered the question, “What would Lincoln do if he were alive today?” The answer was inevitably the assertion that a Jewish lesson could be conveyed by Lincoln's personal example. Jewish liberals and conservatives, Jewish businessmen and laborers, Jewish socialists and capitalists, Jewish religious reformers and traditionalists all insisted that if Lincoln were alive, he would be urging them to pursue their particular mission because they were Americans *and* because they were Jews.

The foregoing generalizations are based on a careful study of the numerous primary source documents that have been assembled in the following chapters as well as on the accompanying secondary literature used to elucidate them. Although other scholars have written on this topic, this work constitutes the first thoroughgoing documentary analysis of Abraham Lincoln's historical relationship with American Jewry from its beginnings nearly two decades before he became a national figure through the first decade of the twenty-first century. Each chapter begins with a concise introduction, which adumbrates its thematic content, and contains a series of illustrative documents. Each item in this section of the chapter is introduced by a headnote that highlights the document's significance and places it in a historical context.

Chapter 1 describes Lincoln's earliest Jewish encounters, which began in the 1840s and continued to evolve up until he assumed the presidency in 1861. Shortly after his inauguration, Lincoln came into contact with one of the most complex and intriguing of his many Jewish associates, Isachar Zacharie. The story of Lincoln's relationship with Zacharie—a podiatrist who was destined to become Lincoln's friend and, ultimately, a furtive envoy for the Lincoln administration—is reconstructed in chapter 2.

Chapters 3, 4, and 5 focus respectively on three significant sociopolitical controversies concerning the Jews that transpired during Lincoln's presidency. Chapter 3 concentrates on the

so-called chaplaincy controversy that resulted from a law adopted by the U.S. Congress in July 1861 that permitted each of the Union's regimental commanders, on a vote of his field officers, to appoint a chaplain so long as he was "a regularly ordained minister of some Christian denomination."[21] Lincoln's response to a second crisis, brought on by the promulgation of General Orders No. 11, Ulysses S. Grant's infamous edict expelling "Jews as a class" from the Military Department of Tennessee—the only time in all of U.S. history when Jews were banished from American territory—is the subject of chapter 4. Chapter 5 deals with a third concern that worried the Jewish community during Lincoln's presidency: the rise of an organized effort to install Christianity as the official religion of the United States by amending the Constitution. In each one of these instances, representatives of the Jewish community addressed their complaints to Lincoln and urged him to side with them. He did not disappoint.

Chapter 6 contains a sampling of the many eulogies and obsequies that the Jewish community offered up in the wake of Lincoln's assassination. This is the first time that many of these addresses have been published in English, and they highlight the particularistic way American Jewry mourned the martyred president. Chapter 7 is entirely devoted to a "Shavuot controversy," an interesting situation that relates to the topic of Jewish communal mourning for Lincoln. This episode, which occurred on June 1, 1865—a month and a half after Lincoln's death—created a vexing moral dilemma for American Jewry when President Andrew Johnson proclaimed a national day of mourning on the Festival of Weeks (Shavuot), a day of Jewish rejoicing.

Abraham Lincoln maintained a close association with many Jews, and he also patronized Jewish businesses. Yet, as noted above, Lincoln also had a number of Jewish detractors. Chapter 8 brings these conflicting sentiments into bold relief by examining an assortment of the contesting views that Jews expressed during Lincoln's presidency and at the time of his death.

Chapters 9, 10, 11, and 12 explore the evolution of Lincoln as a unique cultural icon and a historical phenomenon for American Jewry from the time of his death in 1865 to the present day. In Chapter 9, I examine the ways in which American Jews began to Judaize Lincoln and embrace him as a unique amalgam of Americanism and Judaism. Chapter 10 focuses on the story of various American Jews who actively participated in the process of crafting Lincoln's image as well as of preserving his memory in American culture.

As the centennial of Lincoln's birthday approached in 1909, Americans first began asking themselves—in sermons, newspaper articles, addresses, and social commentaries—"What would Lincoln do?" if he were alive today. Chapter 11 explores how American Jews made use of this same rhetorical technique in order to assert that Lincoln would want Jews to embrace their own Jewish heritage and thereby become better Americans. Finally, chapter 12 explores a potpourri of topics, all of which relate to Lincoln's remarkable versatility as an American Jewish lodestar. This chapter concludes with an analysis of a popular Internet rumor maintaining that Abraham Lincoln was literally of Jewish descent.

Jewish sociologists have taken note of the fact that in the United States, Jews relate to their religion and their ethnicity in a particularly distinctive manner. As one scholar framed this point many years ago, American Jews "locate the source of their ethic in Judaism," though the "motive power for their making such an identification comes from the general [American] culture." More recently, another scholar has described this particular phenomenon as the coalescence of American and Jewish values. In other words, the practice of Judaism and the content of one's Jewishness in America are shaped by a foundational and immovable presupposition that Americanism and Jewishness are, for all intents and purposes, "almost identical."[22]

It is not always possible to distinguish clearly between the Judaization of Lincoln and Lincoln's role in Americanizing the Jew. This is why one scholar has suggested that in order to understand American Jewish culture, a historian must “negotiate between a dominant culture and a precarious deviation from it.” American Jewry's unfolding historical encounter with the life and symbolic image of Abraham Lincoln serves as a fruitful case study shedding light on how the cultural interchange between American ideals and Jewish historical traditions has functioned in the past and, most likely, will continue in the years ahead to influence the dynamics of the American Jewish experience.[23]

1

Immigrants and the Old Northwest: Lincoln's First Encounters with American Jewry

In the 1830s, dramatic demographic changes transformed American Jewry. The Jewish population began to grow, and prominent centers of Jewish life sprang up west of the Eastern Seaboard. By the 1860s, cities such as Cincinnati, Indianapolis, St. Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee, Louisville, and San Francisco each had between 800 and 2,000 Jewish citizens. Abraham Lincoln's political ascendancy occurred at this very time, when the immigrant population in the territories of the Old Northwest and the population of American Jewry were both undergoing a dramatic growth spurt. The mass immigration of Jews from Central Europe—primarily from present-day Germany and Austria—would come to play, as we will see, an important role in Lincoln's personal and political development.

Lincoln, Politics, Jews, and the Old Northwest

In 1809, the year of Lincoln's birth, there were very few population centers in the territories of the Old Northwest. Yet by the time Lincoln became president in 1861, almost a quarter of the nation's population—approximately 7 million people—resided in that section of the country. Before 1830, the vast majority of new settlers in the Old Northwest hailed from one of the original thirteen states. During the 1840s and 1850s, however, a wave of foreigners swelled that region's population, and by the mid-1840s, immigrants constituted 79 percent of the net migration to the Old Northwest. In the 1850s, that figure jumped to 88 percent. As one historian noted, “Lincoln, even if he would, could not help coming in contact with the few Jewish people in the part of the country which was then the Middle West. They were the same hardy pioneers… who trekked along with others to open up the country, ever westward-bound.” It would indeed have been difficult for any aspiring politician to ignore the rapidly increasing number of foreigners who migrated to this part of the country during the two decades that preceded the Civil War.[1]

What was it that made the Old Northwest so appealing to newcomers during this period? Even before territories became states, the region drew many settlers because it seemed so full of promise. Many of the vital freedoms enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights were safeguarded by the Northwest Ordinance, including freedom of religion, the inviolability of private contracts, and the legal right to convey inheritance to one's heirs. The availability of land for settlement, periodically encouraged by federal legislation, also attracted newcomers looking for a place to settle in the expanding nation. The Northwest Ordinance's ban on slavery, which was carried over into the states' constitutions, was particularly appealing to European immigrants. Above all, the region of the Old Northwest offered people promising opportunities to earn a dependable livelihood. For instance, many of the German and Irish immigrants who came during the 1830s found reliable work wherever the rivers, the various canal projects, and even the fledgling railroad lines carried them.[2]

As the number of foreign newcomers ballooned during the 1830s and 1840s, the number of Jewish immigrants who settled in the Old Northwest similarly rose. Beginning in the 1830s and continuing in waves throughout the course of the nineteenth century, a large number of Jews from Central Europe immigrated to the United States. The political, social, and economic

disabilities that plagued Jews in the Old World pushed them to emigrate, and America beckoned them to its shores. Eager to make a reliable living, many of these Jewish immigrants quickly left the East Coast cities where they originally disembarked and followed the settlement patterns of the general American population. To earn their livelihood, these immigrant Jews made use of their business skills and the various trades they had learned in the Old World. They contributed to the region's growing economic infrastructure by establishing shops and businesses or by working as skilled tradesmen. It was at this time that many Jewish immigrants were drawn to the fast-growing cities of the Old Northwest—cities such as Chicago, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Louisville, Milwaukee, and St. Louis. Others made their way into the smaller communities all across the vast Mississippi River basin, where they settled and remained for many years.

Abraham Lincoln's life unfolded in this region, just as all of these changes transpired. He not only was a firsthand witness to these demographic transformations but also was personally affected by them. In 1834, the year that the twenty-five-year-old Lincoln first won a seat in the Illinois General Assembly, there may have been only 5,000 or 6,000 Jews in all of the United States. However, by the time he campaigned for the U.S. Senate in 1858, there were approximately 15,000 Jews living in the states of Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio alone. In 1860, approximately 150,000–200,000 Jews lived in the United States. Lincoln, both as an aspiring politician and as a circuit-riding lawyer, became familiar with immigrants, foreign settlers, and the atmosphere of a rapidly expanding society. During these same transformational years, Lincoln encountered and, in some instances, befriended many of the Jews who settled in the Old Northwest.[3]

Cincinnati represents the most dramatic example of the Jewish population surge that occurred during the two decades that preceded the Civil War. In the early 1820s, there could not have been more than a dozen or so Jews in the town that Henry Wadsworth Longfellow would poetically crown the “Queen of the West” in 1854. By 1855, when Lincoln made his first (and famously unpleasant) visit to Cincinnati, he unquestionably encountered a burgeoning metropolis as well as a Jewish community that was growing so rapidly that it would soon become the second largest Jewish population in the United States. Walking down the streets of Cincinnati in 1855, Lincoln would have seen Jewish shop owners, businessmen, and even some political activists. He would have had a similar experience during this same decade when he visited other cities like Chicago, Indianapolis, Louisville, and Milwaukee, all of which enjoyed a noteworthy rise in their Jewish population as a result of the Jewish migration from Central Europe. In addition to his experience in these large cities, many of which had hundreds of Jewish citizens, Lincoln was unquestionably accustomed to encountering a colorful assortment of foreign immigrants, among them a handful of pioneering Jewish settlers who peddled and settled in many of the small towns he frequented while riding the Eighth Judicial Circuit.[4]

Lincoln's Encounters with Jewish Proprietors

As Lincoln rose to local prominence during the 1840s and 1850s, crowds of curious onlookers throughout the region of the Old Northwest would gather to hear this familiar local personality speak on issues of the day as he campaigned for party candidates or ran for office himself. It was during this period that Lincoln first established warm personal and professional associations with an array of immigrant Jewish businessmen. Years later, a number of these individuals would write about their contact with Lincoln in their memoirs. Considered collectively, these testimonies—some of which admittedly may have been retrospectively exaggerated—demonstrate that Lincoln frequently patronized Jewish shopkeepers and left them with the

impression that he was more than a transient customer; they remembered him as their friend.[5]

Julius Hammerslough (1831–1908) of Springfield, Illinois, owned one of the haberdasheries that Lincoln frequented and also claimed that Lincoln was a close personal friend. Julius immigrated to the United States from Germany with his family when he was a young boy. The Hammersloughs originally lived in Baltimore, but Julius and two of his three brothers, Edward and Samuel, moved to Springfield and opened a haberdashery in the 1850s. One of Hammerslough's two sisters, Augusta, married an immigrant from the city of Bünde in the Herford District of Westphalia named Samuel Rosenwald (1828–99).[6] Augusta and Samuel followed the Hammerslough brothers to Springfield and opened a dry goods store of their own. The Lincolns patronized the Hammersloughs and the Rosenwalds, and, as far as these two families were concerned, Abraham Lincoln was a personal friend.[7]

In 1861, Julius Hammerslough claimed that he traveled to Washington to attend Lincoln's first inaugural, and during Lincoln's term in office he insisted that he visited the White House on a number of occasions. Years later, Hammerslough remembered that the Lincoln family once entrusted him with the duty of escorting Mary Todd Lincoln's sister Elizabeth Porter (née Todd) Edwards from her home in Springfield to Washington.[8] According to Hammerslough, Lincoln always treated him like a friend, invariably greeting him by inquiring, “How are the boys?”—a reference to Hammerslough's brothers back home in Springfield. The bond of friendship between the Lincolns and the Hammersloughs was strong enough that, after Lincoln's assassination, community leaders in Springfield asked Julius Hammerslough to serve on the Springfield citizens' committee that accompanied Lincoln's remains from Chicago to Springfield on his final trip home in 1865.[9] Some months later, when the National Lincoln Monument Association was organized in order to raise the funds needed to erect a fitting memorial for the martyred president, Hammerslough was asked, as an official member of the association, to solicit his coreligionists. On May 30, 1865, he explained why American Jews should donate funds to such a project: “It is above all, fitting in this land where the Hebrews have won so proud a name and are so greatly respected and honored that they should thus show their love and veneration for the fallen chief of the nation, whose wisdom, honesty and purity of purpose were so highly appreciated by foreign nations and who was so beloved at home.”[10]

Henry Rice (1834–1914) was another Jewish immigrant who, like Hammerslough, considered Lincoln to be a friend and neighbor. Rice came to the United States from Germany in the late 1840s and by 1853 had established his own store in Jacksonville, Illinois—Henry Rice & Co., a haberdashery. Rice's business in Jacksonville prospered, and in 1861, after the Civil War broke out, Rice served as a military storekeeper—a sutler—for the Union army in Cairo, Illinois. In 1862, Rice relocated to Memphis, where he opened a wholesale dry goods store named Rice, Stix, and Company. Rice subsequently moved to West End, New Jersey, in 1866 and ran the eastern branch of his company, which moved its headquarters to St. Louis in 1879. In New Jersey, Rice remained active in numerous Jewish organizations, including the United Jewish Charities, which he led from 1874 to 1904.[11]

Rice recollected that Lincoln patronized his store whenever he was in Jacksonville and claimed he maintained a casual friendship with the tall country lawyer. Rice must have had confidence in Lincoln's legal abilities, too, for he recommended Lincoln as a “reputable lawyer” to friends who were in need of legal services. After Lincoln became president, Rice managed to persuade his friend, the president, to return the favor: he asked Lincoln to appoint him as the official sutler for the military district near Cairo. The post did come his way, but it seems the appointment may have been a brief one, because the following year, in 1862, Rice moved to

Memphis. Later in life, Rice insisted that Lincoln had made a great effort to grant his requests for patronage.[12]

Like Hammerslough and Rice, Louis Salzenstein (1811–84), who hailed from Halsdorf, Hessen, was also a Central European immigrant. He immigrated to the United States around 1831 and lived in Baltimore, Maryland, for a decade before settling in Athens, Illinois, in 1843. Salzenstein, who lived in Athens for nearly forty years, succeeded in business as a general store owner and a livestock trader. According to local legend, Lincoln patronized Salzenstein's store whenever he was visiting Athens. Today, Salzenstein's home houses the Abraham Lincoln Long Nine Museum, wherein visitors still learn about Lincoln's friendship with “Old Salty”: “Abraham Lincoln and Louis Salzenstein were close friends and Lincoln often stopped at his store and his residence. Mr. Salzenstein built a sort of bar room where liquors were dispensed. Most of the stores in that age were selling whiskey. It is a tradition that Lincoln stayed in the front part of the store and many times refused to accompany his friends to the bar room for a drink.”[13]

Salzenstein's son Myer claimed that Abraham Lincoln once borrowed an ax from his father's store in order to cut down a tree and catch a raccoon! According to Myer, Lincoln never returned the ax, though Honest Abe did offer to pay for the tool.[14]

There were also Jews, like Samuel Huttenbauer (1840?–83) of Cincinnati, who would regale their families with nostalgic reminiscences about their former associations with the famous president. Huttenbauer, who immigrated to the United States in 1857 from Mayence, told his children and grandchildren that when he was an eighteen-year-old peddler selling his wares in central Illinois, a lawyer named Abraham Lincoln made a point of purchasing suspenders and collar buttons from his pushcart.[15]

All of these examples suggest that Lincoln did indeed patronize immigrant Jewish business owners as he traveled along the legal circuit in central Illinois. These warm recollections suggest that Lincoln conducted himself in a manner that convinced Jewish midwesterners like Hammerslough, Rice, Salzenstein, and Huttenbauer that he bore Jews no prejudice; he treated them like any other fellow citizen. One particularly colorful illustration of Lincoln's openness and good nature toward strangers, including immigrant Jews, comes from his encounter with Samuel G. Alschuler (1826–82), an immigrant Jewish photographer from Urbana, Illinois.

Alschuler, who came to the United States in 1848 from Bavaria, opened a photography studio in Urbana in the mid-1850s. In April 1858, when Lincoln was positioning himself to be selected as the U.S. senator from Illinois, he came to Urbana to represent clients at the Champaign Circuit Court. Neophyte photographers were always eager to display photographs of notable figures in the hope of promoting their technical skills to the general public. Lincoln was likely aware that if he allowed Alschuler to take his picture, a copy of the print would undoubtedly be prominently displayed in the immigrant photographer's window for publicity purposes. Perhaps for this reason, or perhaps due to his good nature, Lincoln agreed to let Alschuler take his picture.

Samuel G. Alschuler, a Jewish immigrant who lent Lincoln his own coat prior to photographing him. Courtesy Jean Powers Soman.

Lincoln arrived at Alschuler's place of business wearing a rumpled linen coat—possibly the same unkempt frock coat that Edwin M. Stanton (1814–69) famously lampooned when the two men first met in Cincinnati in 1855.[16] Alschuler politely suggested that the photograph would turn out better if Lincoln wore a black coat, but Lincoln could not fulfill the request, since he had left his black coat at home. Hoping to make the best of the situation, the immigrant photographer offered his own black coat to the future president. Alschuler was much smaller than his subject, so Lincoln's arms extended through the sleeves of his coat “a quarter yard.” A fellow attorney, Henry C. Whitney, who had accompanied Lincoln to Alschuler's place of business remembered that Lincoln “was overcome with merriment” when the short coat “proved to be a bad misfit.” The awkward incident did not deter Lincoln from sitting for Alschuler again, this time when the immigrant photographer's subject was the president-elect.[17]

Lincoln's Jewish Political Allies

It was during this same period that Lincoln began to encounter Jews who were active in politics. Abraham Jonas (1801–64), a prominent political activist from Quincy, Illinois, appears to have been one of Lincoln's earliest and closest political associates. It is quite likely that Jonas and Lincoln first became acquainted with one another in the early 1840s when the two men were members of the Illinois Whig Party. Jonas was an English Jew who immigrated to the United States on the advice of his older brother, Joseph, who was among the first Jews to settle in Cincinnati. Abraham came to Cincinnati in 1819, but in 1826 he left his brother and moved to

Williamstown, Kentucky, where he worked as a shopkeeper. It was in Williamstown that Jonas began to take part in Kentucky politics. In 1837, Jonas moved his business to Quincy, Illinois, where he began to study law, involve himself in local politics, and emerge as a leader in both the Jewish and the general communities. He was one of the founders of the city's first Jewish congregations, B'nai Abraham, which met in a building that Jonas owned during its early years.[18]

Abraham Jonas, Lincoln's political ally and close friend for more than two decades. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

It was during this time that Jonas came into contact with a fellow Whig partisan, Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln had settled in Springfield the same year that Jonas came to Quincy and was then representing Sangamon County in the Illinois General Assembly. Jonas had the same aspirations and in 1842 made an unsuccessful bid to represent Adams County in the assembly. Then, in 1844, Jonas tried to win a seat in the Illinois Senate but was again defeated. Although Lincoln's legal work did not bring him to Adams County, the two men must have been together at numerous Whig gatherings because the correspondence that survives from the mid-1850s suggests that when Lincoln visited Quincy for the first time in his career, the two men had already long established a mutual respect and a close political alliance.[19]

Jonas was among those who beckoned Lincoln to Quincy in 1854 so he could endorse the Whigs' congressional candidate, whose Democratic opponent was to benefit from a personal appearance by Stephen Douglas (1813–61). In a letter urging Lincoln to come to Quincy, Jonas is obviously writing to a colleague he knows quite well: “Be assured that nothing will afford greater pleasure to your personal friends and the Whigs generally than you consent to visit us—and the Douglasites would as soon see old nick here as yourself.”[20]

In the mid-1850s, Jonas and Lincoln both abandoned the rapidly disintegrating Whig Party and joined the recently established Republican Party. In 1856, the two men took the stump for the Republicans' first presidential candidate, John C. Frémont (1813–90).[21] Evidently, Jonas was himself a compelling orator who was in demand, yet he admired Lincoln's oratorical skill and witnessed his ability to "effect wonders" from the speaker's platform. Jonas was one of Lincoln's earliest and most loyal boosters; he supported Lincoln in his unsuccessful bid to become a U.S. senator in 1858, and he served as the chair of the "Republican Committee of Arrangements" for the Lincoln-Douglas debate in Quincy.[22]

The reminiscences left by one of Jonas's sons, Edward (1844–1918), from the time of the Lincoln-Douglas debate in Quincy leaves one with a sense of Lincoln's playful personality as well as the spirit of friendship he felt for Jonas and his children:

> I saw Mr. Lincoln in my father's home in Quincy during the great Douglas-Lincoln Debates and during the same period, my father, who was taking part in the campaign, took me with him to various points where Mr. Lincoln was present. I was only thirteen years old and it was I think at August or Newcomb, Illinois. While my father was speaking, I, with a boy's curiosity was strolling about the speaker's platform on a tour of investigation when I suddenly felt a tickling behind my ear. Thinking it a bug or fly I slapped vigorously, but upon its being repeated several times, I became suspicious and turned suddenly and caught the fly. It was Mr. Lincoln with a straw in his hand. He made it all right at once by catching me up with his long arm, drawing me to his side and talking to me very entertainingly until his turn came to address the assemblage.[23]

By the late 1850s, Jonas had become "an influential leader in the Republican Party." He had earned the admiration of Illinois's fledgling Republican machine by distinguishing himself "in all the positions he occupied," and contemporaries testified to the fact that he was "a personal friend of Lincoln." Horace Greeley (1811–72), the well-known publisher of the *New York Tribune* and a Republican Party activist, came to Quincy in December 1858 to deliver a public lecture. Jonas was invited to be among those who would meet with the powerful publisher and strategize about the party's plans for the upcoming 1860 election.[24]

It was Henry Asbury (1810–96), one of Jonas's partners, who suggested that Abraham Lincoln—a man who was, relatively speaking, little known outside of Illinois—deserved serious consideration to head the party's ticket. According to the participants' recollections, most of those in attendance at the meeting, including Greeley, remained awkwardly mute, but Jonas waded into the embarrassing silence by saying, "Gentlemen, there may be more in Asbury's suggestion than any of us now think." Asbury and Jonas understood that by mentioning Lincoln's name to Greeley, they were giving their man's name a hearing that may otherwise not have occurred. As unlikely a presidential candidate as Lincoln may have been in January 1859, twelve months later Abraham Jonas was actively campaigning for Old Abe in the hope of procuring the presidential nomination at the upcoming Republican National Convention, scheduled to convene in Chicago in June 1860. In one of his many letters to Lincoln, Jonas assured his old friend that "we shall be able to carry the day [in Chicago] and in November proclaim *victory* to all the world" (emphasis in original).[25]

Fundamentally, Lincoln and Jonas were political allies, but their correspondence reveals an unmistakable bond of warm personal feelings between them as well. In an oft-quoted letter, Lincoln addresses Jonas as "one of my most valued friends," and this sentiment was

unquestionably reciprocal. After Lincoln secured the presidential nomination, Jonas became increasingly protective of his old friend. In July, he warned Lincoln that an arch opponent, Democratic congressman Isaac N. Morris (1812–79), was spreading the word that Lincoln had once been associated with the Know Nothing Party. If a rumor of this sort took hold, they worried, it could erode the precious support that Lincoln needed from foreign-born citizens and, of course, Jewish voters. Lincoln responded promptly to Jonas's letter of concern and provided him with political strategy and the information he needed to combat the rumor.[26]

A letter written by Jonas to President-elect Lincoln on December 30, 1860, reveals the strong bond of loyal friendship that linked these two men. Jonas reminded Lincoln that his six children "and a host of other near relatives" lived in New Orleans and had emotional "connections" to the South. One of these relatives—perhaps one of Jonas's own children—told Jonas that a large number of "desperate characters" from New Orleans planned go to Washington on March 4, 1861, in an effort to prevent the president-elect from taking office. These men were determined to succeed, Jonas wrote, and would even use "violence on the person of Lincoln," if necessary. Jonas was convinced that outgoing President James Buchanan (1791–1868), "the damned old traitor at the head of the Government," would not lift a finger to ensure a safe transition of power and suggested that the governors of all the states in the North that elected Lincoln band together and take collective "precautionary measures" to provide the president-elect with the security he needed. In any event, Jonas wanted Lincoln to have this information, and he conveyed his confidence that his old friend was the best person to decide "what ought to be done."[27]

During Lincoln's trip from Springfield to Washington, D.C., a few months later, the president-elect was once again informed that a plot on his life had been uncovered. Detective Allen Pinkerton (1819–84) and Lincoln's close advisors urged him to heed the warning. They wanted the president-elect to make an unannounced change to his publicized travel route in order to foil the plot of any prospective assassins. At first, Lincoln refused to cooperate, but ultimately he hesitatingly agreed to the plan.[28]

After the inauguration, Lincoln demonstrated his gratitude for Jonas's friendship by reappointing him postmaster of Quincy in 1861, a patronage office that Jonas had previously held from 1849 to 1853. He had wanted the reappointment, though he did not personally pursue the post. Even as president, Lincoln did not hesitate to rely on Jonas's dependability. For example, when he received an onslaught of appeals asking him to release a Missourian incarcerated in Quincy, Union army officers insisted the man was a traitor, but the man's petitioners denied the charge. In a note to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, Lincoln advised consulting Jonas and Henry Asbury and leaving the final disposition of the matter in their hands: "I know [both men] to be loyal and sensible."[29]

Jonas was firmly dedicated to the Union's cause, and he was devoutly patriotic. Only a few days after the Battle of Fort Sumter in April 1861, a home guard was quickly organized to protect the local population. Volunteer brigades were formed around ethnic groupings, and Jonas organized the Jewish men of Quincy "for the purpose of drilling and making necessary arrangements, to get ready for active service at a moment's notice." Once organized, the Jewish brigade was placed under the leadership of "Colonel" Abraham Jonas. The Jews of Quincy clearly played a prominent role in civic affairs. In February 1862, a notice was circulated inviting the entire community to come to the synagogue on the third floor of the Jonas Building and join them in commemorating George Washington's birthday. Abraham Jonas offered a special reading of Washington's Farewell Address to mark the occasion.[30]

In 1864, Abraham Jonas's health began to decline, and it became clear to his family that death

was imminent. These dire circumstances compelled them to do what Jonas typically eschewed doing: they appealed directly to Lincoln for a special favor. Despite Jonas's ardent loyalty to Lincoln and the Union, only one of Jonas's five sons, Edward, joined Jonas in support of the Union's cause. The other four—Benjamin Franklin, Julian, Samuel Alroy, and Charles Henry—had been sent to the South to pursue their education and fought for the Confederacy. Charles had been captured by the Union army and imprisoned, and the family asked Lincoln to intercede on Charles's behalf so that the young man could visit his dying father. Lincoln promptly agreed to the request, and Charles arrived just hours before his father died. The Confederate son was deeply grateful to his father's old friend, and he conveyed these sentiments in a touching thank-you note. Some weeks later, in another display of friendship, Lincoln appointed Jonas's widow to serve out the remainder of her late husband's unexpired term in office.[31]

Lincoln's Jewish Supporters

At the Republican National Convention of 1860, Jonas was one of many Illinois politicians who believed that Lincoln, a dark horse candidate, could ultimately manage to reel in the party's nomination. He was also one of a handful of Jewish politicos from around the country who ultimately lent their support to Lincoln. For example, a Jew named Moritz Pinner (1828–1911) was a member of the Missouri delegation to the 1860 Republican Convention. Pinner had been an outspoken opponent to American slavery since 1856. He worked directly with prominent leaders of the abolitionist movement, including Theodore Parker (1810–60), Wendell Phillips (1811–84), and William Lloyd Garrison (1805–79). In 1859, Pinner established an antislavery newspaper in Kansas City, the *Kansas Post*, and he played an influential role in the Missouri Republican Convention, where he actively opposed those who wanted Edward Bates (1793–1869) to become the Republican Party's presidential candidate. Although he had been a supporter of William H. Seward (1801–72) because of his strong antislavery stance, Pinner subsequently embraced the party's choice, and after Lincoln secured the nomination, Pinner worked diligently to send the Republican candidate to the White House. Pinner later contended that he and Lincoln had become very friendly, and, in return for his dedicated efforts, the president-elect offered to send Pinner to Honduras as the U.S. ambassador. Pinner claimed he declined the opportunity because he wanted to fight in the Union army, and he was appointed to serve as a quartermaster on the staff of Major General Philip Kearney (1815–62) by the Lincoln administration.[32]

Another Jew who played a key role in securing the nomination for Lincoln was Lewis Naphtali Dembitz (1833–1907), a lawyer who would go on to become a leading Jewish communal leader. Dembitz was born in Zirke, a province of Posen in Prussia, and immigrated to the United States in 1849. He studied law at the University of Cincinnati and then moved to Louisville, Kentucky, to set up his practice. Dembitz joined the fledgling Republican Party shortly after it took shape, and he was elected to occupy a number of Republican Party offices. In 1860, Dembitz served as a delegate to the Republican National Convention in Chicago, where Lincoln became the party's presidential candidate in 1860. In contrast to Pinner, however, Dembitz came to his party's convention as a Lincoln supporter and later maintained that he cast his vote for Old Abe on the first ballot.[33]

After the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska Act of 1854, which reignited Lincoln's interest in government office, the circle of his Jewish political acquaintances began to enlarge. Henry Greenebaum (1834–1914), a prominent Chicago banker who had recently been elected alderman, was introduced to Lincoln in 1855 by John Wentworth (1815–88), mayor of Chicago. Although Greenebaum was an ardent supporter of Stephen A. Douglas, his first exchange with Lincoln left

him “greatly impressed.”[34] On July 10, 1858, Greenebaum and his young cousin Caroline's husband, Simon Wolf (1836–1923)—a man who would become personally acquainted with Lincoln during his presidency—were both present when Lincoln delivered his famous speech at the Tremont House in Chicago. Wolf's recollection of the occasion testifies to Lincoln's unusual ability to win over new friends and to retain their loyalty:

> Mr. Greenebaum and I were admirers of the “Little Giant of the West,” Stephen Douglas, yet like all fair-minded people should ever be, we were open to conviction and concluded to hear Mr. Lincoln. It was the first time I had ever seen the Great Emancipator, and the first impression made was one that has never been obliterated from my memory. Tall, gaunt, with his clothes hanging loosely, solemnity about his features, his eyes beaming with an intensity born of conviction, he looked to me then, as he did many times afterwards, the personification of realism, strength of thought and purpose. We went away from that hall more patriotic than when we entered it, and while our political convictions had not been changed by anything that Mr. Lincoln had said, our love of the Republic was materially increased.[35]

Both Greenebaum and Wolf maintained their contact with Lincoln after the election. In early February 1861, Greenebaum visited with the president-elect in his Springfield home. He and Lincoln's other guests were on hand at the Springfield train depot on the morning of February 11 to bid Lincoln farewell as he began his trip to Washington, D.C.[36]

Lincoln's brief personal encounter with a Jewish immigrant named Abraham Kohn (1819–71) sheds light on Lincoln's artful ability to relate positively to Jews and their biblical heritage. Like so many of Lincoln's Jewish acquaintances, Kohn was a Bavarian-born immigrant who came to the United States in 1842. Following his arrival in New York, Kohn spent his first year as a struggling peddler meandering the states of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Connecticut, and New York. He moved to Chicago in 1843 and opened a haberdashery. His business flourished quickly, and by 1845 he was able to send for his younger brothers, his sister, and his aged mother. Together with a quorum of Chicago's pioneering Jewish citizens, Kohn helped to establish the city's first synagogue, Kehilath Anshe Ma'ariv (KAM), in 1847.

Kohn possessed a brilliant mind and taught himself to speak and write in English even prior to settling in Chicago. As his business flourished, he immersed himself in community affairs. He was active in the Democratic Party, and in 1860, Chicago mayor John Wentworth appointed Kohn city clerk. In 1860, Isaac Newton Arnold (1815–84), a bitter opponent to slavery who was a Republican candidate for Congress, brought Lincoln to meet Kohn at his store. According to Kohn's daughter Dila Kohn Adler (1850–1918), Arnold and the future president actually went to Kohn's store in order to meet him. Kohn's contemporaries described the city clerk as a man with “a truly religious cast” who vehemently despised slavery. Lincoln must have intuited that the Bible might be the key to Kohn's support. He told the Jewish city clerk that the Bible was “their book” because they were both men of faith and lovers of the American republic. By the time they had parted, Kohn was in Lincoln's corner. “It was this meeting that inspired Kohn with a feeling of admiration for his visitor and a conviction that he was the destined Moses of the slaves and the saviour of his country.”[37]

A few weeks later, Kohn sent the president-elect a special gift—a handmade silk American flag with verses from the Hebrew Bible inscribed in Hebrew on the thirteen bars. The biblical injunction he used was a spiritual message to Lincoln that may have been reminiscent of the conversation the two men had when they met in Chicago: “Be strong and of good courage; be

not affrighted, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."[38]

It seems that Lincoln had an extraordinary ability to win over new friends and attract loyal political supporters after a meeting or two. His gift for acquiring the confidence of Jewish activists, most of whom were Central European immigrants like Abraham Kohn, manifested itself repeatedly during the late 1850s, when Lincoln was quietly mapping out his plans for a presidential bid. Marcus Otterbourg (1827–93), a well-educated Jewish immigrant with a flair for languages, was introduced to Lincoln at this same time. He, too, would quickly become a Lincoln loyalist.

Otterbourg was born and raised in Landau, Germany. After completing his education, Otterbourg learned the cap-making trade, but he was eager to advance his studies in order to become an educator. In the 1840s, Otterbourg moved to Paris to live with his older brother, Solomon, a devout Jew who had become a respected physician. In Paris, Otterbourg realized he had a knack for acquiring languages. He became fluent in French and began supporting himself as a teacher. A few years later, he moved to England, where he taught French as he honed his fluency in English. He then returned to Germany, where he taught both French and English. In the early 1850s, Otterbourg immigrated to the United States and soon settled in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. After working for a brief time as a distiller of vinegar, Otterbourg began to work as a journalist, specializing in covering political news in Wisconsin. It was at this point in his career that he met Abraham Lincoln.[39]

Later in life, Otterbourg told a newspaper reporter, "I am a Hebrew by birth and belief, but I suppose I am called a liberal one in belief."[40] He was a liberal in politics, too, and while he was working as a political correspondent, he became closely associated with another liberal-minded German immigrant, Carl Christian Schurz (1829–1906), a man who would have an extremely distinguished career as a U.S. ambassador, a U.S. senator and, ultimately, secretary of the interior during the presidency of Rutherford B. Hayes. Like Otterbourg, Schurz had been one of the ardent liberalist activists in Germany who eventually immigrated to the United States in the aftermath of the failed revolutions of 1848. Schurz settled in Watertown, Wisconsin, where he became active in local politics and an outspoken opponent of slavery. In 1855, he joined the fledging Republican Party and, two years later, made an unsuccessful run for the office of Wisconsin lieutenant governor. It was during this period that Schurz and Otterbourg became close personal friends and political allies.[41]

Schurz was one of Lincoln's early supporters. He traveled around the Midwest to give speeches on Lincoln's behalf in German in order to boost his support among the immigrant population. It was Schurz who first introduced Otterbourg to Lincoln, and, deeply impressed by Lincoln's abilities, Otterbourg quickly became a Lincoln partisan. After Lincoln's assassination, Otterbourg described his assessment of Lincoln, saying, "A more kind-hearted, more noble minded, and patriotic man never graced the earth." Like Schurz, Otterbourg worked to elect Lincoln, and after the election, both men received political appointments in return for their support: Schurz became the U.S. minister to Spain, and Otterbourg was appointed U.S. consul in Mexico City. Having obtained his political assignment on August 10, 1861, it is probable that Abraham Jonas and Marcus Otterbourg were the first Jews to receive political appointments from the Lincoln administration.[42]

During the late 1850s, Lincoln won the loyalty of yet another Jewish politico, Abram J. Dittenhoefer (1836–1919). Dittenhoefer, a young New York lawyer, first met Lincoln on the night of February 27, 1860—the night he delivered his famous address at Cooper Union. A

native-born son of German-Jewish immigrants, Dittenhoefer recollected that he took note of Lincoln a few years before he ran for the presidency in 1860. Dittenhoefer followed the Lincoln and Douglas debates “with close attention,” and Lincoln's performance at Cooper Union in February 1860 enthralled Dittenhoefer and “strengthened” his determination to fight for the abolition of slavery. Many years later, Dittenhoefer recalled that Lincoln impressed him with an unusual charisma that, paradoxically, arose from his ungainly physical appearance: “He was a very homely man,” Dittenhoefer wrote many years later, but “after he began to talk he was awkwardness deified.”[43]

A few months later, Dittenhoefer was a “looker-on” at the Republican Convention of 1860. He went to Chicago not as a delegate from New York but as “a student of American politics.” Once Lincoln landed his party's nomination, Dittenhoefer traveled to Springfield to meet with him again. The Republican nominee immediately won young Dittenhoefer's loyalty by inviting him to his “modest home” to solicit his counsel. “What are the chances of my election?” Lincoln asked. Dittenhoefer confidently predicted that his candidate would carry the entire North “on account of the Democratic division between [John] Breckenridge and Douglas.” Lincoln agreed, but he shrewdly ingratiated himself with the young politico by courteously responding: “I am glad to get the views of everybody of experience in political matters.”[44]

Dittenhoefer dedicated all his energy to the Lincoln campaign in New York, and because Lincoln's victory made Dittenhoefer a political insider, he frequently called on Lincoln in the White House. In 1864, he devoted himself to reelecting Lincoln, who, Dittenhoefer noted, feared his party might decide not to renominate him. As he had done four years earlier, Dittenhoefer campaigned vigorously. In an important campaign speech, coincidentally given at Cooper Union, where he first heard Lincoln speak, Dittenhoefer's partisan support for Lincoln was unmistakable. After reminding the audience that Lincoln was the commander-in-chief of the Union forces, he told his listeners that Lincoln's opponent, General George B. McClellan (1826–85), was actually “the leader of the Confederate forces”: “Confederate bonds advanced on the announcement of McClellan's nomination. Every Southern sympathizer in the North, passive or active in his devotion to Jefferson Davis, will vote for McClellan…. Is it not then true that McClellan heads, in this campaign, the Confederate forces in the North?…Lincoln's re-election will banish all hope of triumph for the Confederacy. A firm and everlasting peace will follow, based upon a reconstructed Union and freedom everywhere.”[45]

Dittenhoefer's loyalty earned him the privilege of serving as one of the thirty-three members of the electoral college from New York after Lincoln's victory in November 1864. Some time prior to his second inauguration, Lincoln invited Dittenhoefer to the White House to express his appreciation for the work he had done on the reelection campaign. Dittenhoefer took the opportunity to show Lincoln a wooden block that read “President, Abraham Lincoln”; underneath, in brackets, were the words “[Abram J. Dittenhoefer] Elector.” The memento touched Lincoln, and he asked his young friend if he would give it to him as a “souvenir,” a request that Dittenhoefer fulfilled.[46]

On its way to Washington in 1861, Lincoln's train stopped in New York City. An immigrant lawyer named Sigismund Kaufmann (1825–89), born near Frankfurt-on-the-Main, was on hand to welcome the president-elect upon his arrival. Like so many of his peers, Kaufmann had fled the German states after the failed revolutions of 1848 and made his way to the United States, settling in New York. He studied the practice of law and became increasingly involved in politics. He joined the new Republican Party in 1856, and by 1860 he was prominent enough to be asked to serve as a member of the electoral college, where he would cast his vote for Lincoln.

After the 1860 election, Kaufmann was among the many leading citizens who gathered to greet the president-elect. According to Kaufmann, Lincoln's impish sense of humor manifested itself as soon as the two men met. “On [my] being presented to Lincoln, the president remarked, ‘I know enough German to know that Kaufmann means merchant.’ Then he added, as if to emphasize his linguistic accomplishments, ‘And Schneider means tailor. Am I not a good German scholar?’”[47]

Although president-elect Lincoln had a cadre of ardent Jewish supporters in 1860, it is important to note that there were some Jews, even in the northern states, who were among Lincoln's critics. First, many Jews—particularly in New York—had supported Stephen A. Douglas and the Democratic Party during the campaign, believing that the radical antislavery wing of the Republican Party made its candidates unelectable. Newcomers to the country were always eager to support those who would have power and influence in the government, and some Jews chose the Democrats because they appeared to be the party most likely to prevail. One prominent example of this tendency was the New York Jewish financier August Belmont (1813–90), who not only backed Douglas but actually managed the Little Giant's presidential campaign.[48]

Others, like Rabbi Isaac M. Wise (1819–1900) of Cincinnati, believed that a civil war would be unavoidable if the nation elected the Republican candidate. As Lincoln prepared himself to begin his first term in office, Rabbi Wise viewed the president-elect skeptically. Editorializing in his newspaper, the *Israelite*, Wise pointedly noted that it was impossible to determine “what Mr. Lincoln has done for this country in politics, warfares, science or art…[so let us] wait till he has done something, then show him the honor due.” Wise unquestionably was not alone when he wondered whether or not Lincoln was up to the job. Referring to Lincoln's emotional farewell speech at the train depot in Springfield, Wise remarked: “He wept on leaving Springfield and invited his friends to pray for him; that is exactly the picture of his looks. We have no doubt he is an honest man and, as much as we can learn, also quite an intelligent man; but he will look queer, in the white house, with his primitive manner.”[49]

For some Jews, skepticism about Lincoln and his ability to lead the nation was underscored by an infrequently quoted sentence he used in his first inaugural address. In an attempt to convince the South that, despite culturally based ideological differences, commonalities could still overcome the impending crises, Lincoln stated: “If it were admitted that you who are dissatisfied hold the right side in the dispute, there still is no single good reason for precipitate action. Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty.”[50]

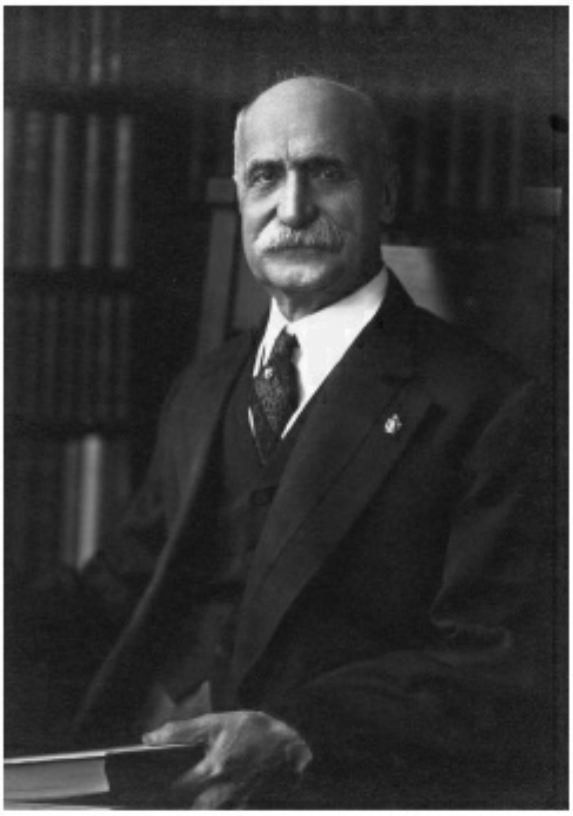
Lincoln's rhetoric was nothing unusual, and, as even Wise himself noted in an editorial rejoinder to worried readers, the word “Christianity” was understood by Lincoln and many others to be merely a synonym for the word “religion.” Yet the controversy about Lincoln's choice of wording lingered, and some newspapers contended that Lincoln was speaking expressly about Christianity. After all, they reasoned, Christianity was the religious bond that united all Americans. This sentiment infuriated Wise, and when the editors of the *Chicago Tribune* carried an article on this topic, Wise vented his spleen at the new president for “forgetting altogether his Jewish compatriots.”[51]

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, many prominent American Jews insisted that they had known Lincoln in their youth. George Schneider (1823–1905), an important Chicago banker and editor of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, later in life claimed he was one of the first organizers of

the Republican Party in Illinois and an early advocate of Lincoln's presidential bid. Isador Bush (1822–93), another German-Jewish immigrant, later insisted he was one of Lincoln's first supporters from Missouri. Bush claimed to have met Lincoln on a number of occasions and stated that Lincoln personally appointed him to serve as a captain in the Union army on July 20 and as aide-de-camp to General Frémont during the Civil War. The prominent lawyer and educator Moses Aaron Dropsie (1821–1905) recollected that his first meeting with Lincoln took place at the first Republican National Convention, which was held in Philadelphia. Dropsie later took pride in having been a financial supporter of Lincoln's presidential campaign.

The distinguished lawyer and diplomat Benjamin Peixotto (1834–90) famously backed Stephen Douglas for president in 1860, but he would later insist that he quickly became an ardent Lincoln supporter after the election. The New York banker Joseph Seligman (1819–80) claimed he visited the White House on a variety of occasions to discuss the nation's financial matters with Lincoln. Seligman did compose a written appeal to the president asking that the government provide Mary Todd Lincoln (1818–82) with a pension. Although many of these claims are staked on personal remembrances with little or no corroborative documentary evidence, these testimonies clearly demonstrate that American Jews were convinced that Lincoln maintained a wide variety of Jewish associations during the course of his life.[52]

Two Jewish leaders who lived in Washington, D.C., during the Lincoln administration established a bond with Lincoln after he became president. Their recollections of the various encounters they had with Lincoln have been frequently quoted, and their colorful anecdotes have been used to describe Lincoln's personality and character. Adolphus S. Solomons (1826–1910), a Jewish communal leader in Washington, D.C., established his publishing house, Philp and Solomons, in 1859. This firm held printing contracts with the U.S. government for several years. Solomons also owned a bookstore that featured a fine photographic gallery. He later published a number of his most interesting encounters with Lincoln.



Simon Wolf, a lawyer and Jewish communal leader who related his interesting encounters with Lincoln in published reminiscences.
Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Simon Wolf was one of the most distinguished Jewish communal leaders of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Raised in Uhrichsville, Ohio, Wolf studied law and, after his apprenticeship in Ohio, moved to the nation's capital to establish his own legal practice in 1861. He met Lincoln on a few occasions during those early years, and later in life when Wolf had become one of the most influential Jewish leaders and lobbyists, he flaunted these reminiscences to illustrate that his associations with U.S. presidents dated back to his warm encounters with Abraham Lincoln. Wolf spoke about his meetings with Lincoln on dozens of occasions, and most of them appear in his autobiographical volume, *The Presidents I Have Known from 1860–1918*.[53]

By the time Lincoln began his first term as president of the United States, he had already had numerous personal encounters with a diverse array of American Jews. He had frequented Jewish places of business, fraternized with Jews, and unquestionably considered Jews to be among his friends. Lincoln was arguably the first American president to have had this kind of personal contact with such a large number of Jewish citizens prior to assuming national office. Moreover, the demographic realities of life in the Old Northwest during Lincoln's formative years made him fully cognizant of the influential role that newcomers, immigrants, and social outsiders could potentially play in the world of American politics. Even before he became president, Lincoln had personal contact with “minority status” Americans, and these experiences certainly influenced his thinking when, as president, he was called to respond to a number of political issues that were deeply concerning to American Jewry.

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1. LINCOLN'S JEWISH PHOTOGRAPHER: SAMUEL G. ALSCHULER

The story behind photographer Samuel Alschuler's familiar photograph of Lincoln comes from Illinois judge J. O. (Joseph Oscar) Cunningham (1830–1917), who recounted the tale in a speech he delivered to the Firelands Pioneer Association in Norwalk, Ohio, on July 4, 1907. The sketch of this humorous encounter was drawn by Lloyd Ostendorf (1921–2000), an American artist devoted to the study of Lincolniana.[54]

The following is a description of the event from the speech "Some Recollections of Abraham Lincoln" and reprinted from the Firelands Pioneer *journal of December 1909.*[55]

> During the spring term of our circuit court, 1858, and but a few weeks before Lincoln entered with Douglas upon their celebrated debate, I was one morning in the rooms of an artist in Urbana whose business was to make pictures then known as ambrotypes, before the science of photography had become in general use in our place. Soon, in walked Mr. Lincoln with the remark to Alschuler, the artist, that he had been informed that he, Alschuler, wished him to sit for a portrait. Alschuler said that he had sent such a message to Mr. Lincoln, glancing at his subject, who was attired in a long linen duster, but that he could not take the picture in that coat, and asked if he had not a dark coat in which he could sit. Mr. Lincoln said he had not; that this was the only coat he had brought with him from his home. Alschuler said that he could wear his coat, and gave it to Mr. Lincoln. The arms of Lincoln extended through the sleeves of Alschuler's coat a quarter yard, making him appear quite ludicrous, at which he, Lincoln, laughed immoderately, and sat down for the picture to be taken, with great effort looking sober enough for the occasion.

Drawing, by Lloyd Ostendorf (1975), of Lincoln sitting for Alschuler. Most scholars agree that the Alschuler photograph of Lincoln was taken on April 25, 1858, in Alschuler's studio at 218 West Main Street in Urbana.

Courtesy Abe Lincoln Collectibles (www.abelincoln.com) and Lloyd Ostendorf.

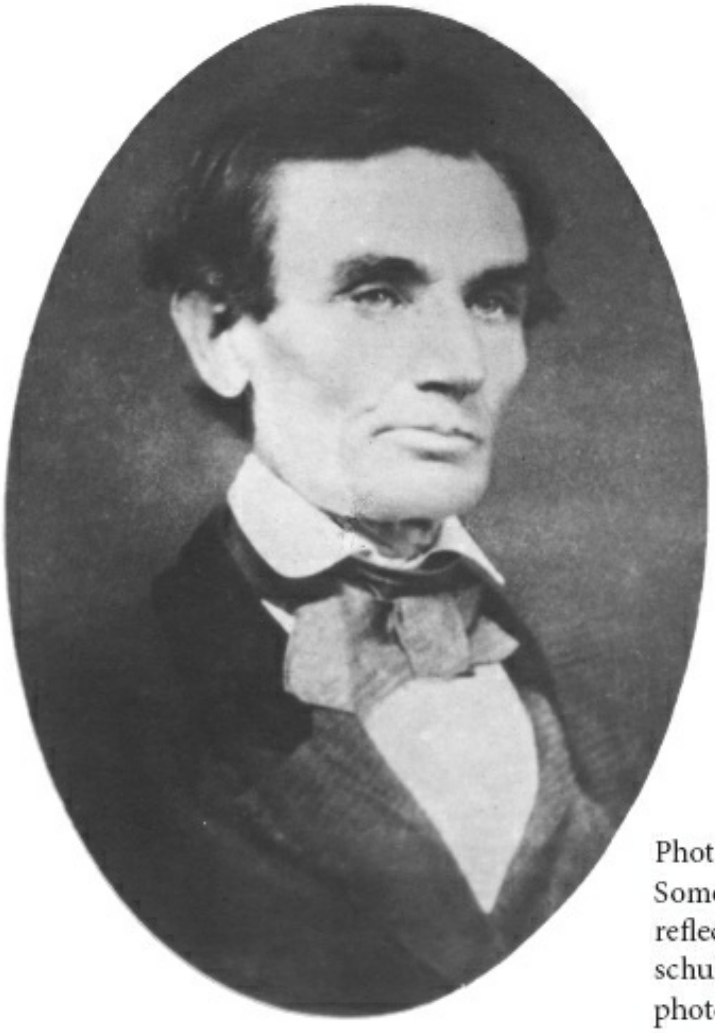


Photo of Lincoln taken in 1858 by Alschuler. Some suggest that Lincoln's expression reflects his bemusement in wearing Alschuler's ill-fitting coat while posing for the photographer. Courtesy Jean Powers Soman.

2. JEWS, TOO, WERE THE OBJECT OF LINCOLN'S WIT: CHARLES EDWARD PANCOAST'S ENCOUNTER WITH LINCOLN

Charles Edward Pancoast (1818–1906), a Quaker, was one of the thousands of Americans who raced to the West Coast in 1849 on account of "gold fever." In his memoirs he recalls his many adventures along this journey, including a fascinating encounter with a man who, years later, would become the sixteenth president of the United States.

Incidentally, Pancoast's autobiography provides us with a rather unrefined anecdote about Lincoln. Pancoast's tale reminds us that it was not unusual to come into contact with Jews in the Old Northwest and that Jews were not immune from being the target of Lincoln's wit.

> About December, 1841, I concluded to take a trip to Illinois to make some collections from delinquent Debtors. I took passage on a Stern Wheel Boat that ran up the Illinois River, for Meredosia (then a small but promising Town) where some money was owing us. I was landed there about twelve o'clock at night, the only Passenger that got off the Boat. Not a soul was to be seen anywhere, and I had no directions in regard to the Town. The extreme cold weather admonished me that I must speedily seek for shelter;

so I took up my Valise and proceeded to hunt for a Hotel. I had not wandered far before I discovered a Sign that read “Hotel.”

After rapping lustily for some time I succeeded in arousing a disgruntled Landlord, who came to the door with a Candle and in a very uncivil manner invited me into a cold Room. He informed me that he had no Bed for me, and I should have to lie on an old Settee. I could see the light of the Moon through cracks in the unplastered walls. The Room was so cold that my Blanket and Overcoat failed to keep me warm, and I procured but little sleep that night. Yet this was the best Hotel in Meredosia at that time.

In the morning I found a number of Guests in the House and we sat down to a welcome Breakfast of Ham and Eggs and strong Coffee. After I visited our Agent (who settled up with me speedily) we were ready to start. There were four of us in the Party: one, a wandering Jew, to be found everywhere throughout the universe; two Yankees, equally omnipresent wherever it has been my lot to travel; and myself, one of those Jerseymen who are also well scattered throughout the United States. We had expected to find the Steam Cars running to Jacksonville, but learned that the Road was not finished: this, I think, was the first Rail Road in Illinois.[56] As there was no other conveyance to be procured, we were compelled to travel to Jacksonville (about 40 miles from Meredosia) in an open Farm Wagon without Springs, with a full-blooded Illinois “Sucker” for a Driver. With this Rig we started on our Journey, with the Thermometer at Zero. My Clothing was anything but proper for such weather, as I had no Flannel Underwear; but I had a Spanish Cloak, then much worn by City Folks.

We had not travelled far before we struck an immense open Prairie, where the sweeping winds came down upon us with such force that we soon began to feel that they were more than we could endure in our sitting posture; so we proposed to the Driver to run with the Wagon. Three of us got out; the Jew, however, preferred to keep his place in the Wagon; and as my cumbersome Cloak would not permit me to run with ease, I loaned it to him. The Driver, being anxious to terminate his disagreeable Journey as soon as possible, had little mercy on us; he kept his Horses moving at a rapid rate, and we did the best running we had ever done. The Driver was so well wrapped with Buffalo Robes that he did not appear to be much affected by the cold, but the Jew complained very much; but although a young man, physically perfect, and as agile as any of us, he persisted in keeping his place in the Wagon. When we arrived we found his ears frozen stiff and his feet also badly frozen, and we had a sorry time with him that night. When he came to the fire his suffering was intense, and he did not bear it with Christian humility and submission.

We found a comfortable Hotel in Jacksonville, then a pleasant Town with a prosperous appearance, having 2000 inhabitants or more. I met here the Nation's Idol, Abraham Lincoln, then of little note except in that locality, where they spoke of him as their distinguished Attorney and excellent Citizen. The Landlord introduced me to him. He made only a few remarks: asked me where I came from, spoke of our freezing Journey across the Prairie and other commonplace remarks; and also remarked that he thought our Hebrew Companion was fortunate after all, for although his feet and ears were badly damaged he had saved his Stock in Trade. When I asked, “How was that?” he replied, “His Tongue was left intact.”[57]

3. TWO FRIENDS NAMED ABRAHAM: CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN LINCOLN AND JONAS

The following letters shed light on the friendship that linked Abraham Lincoln and Abraham Jonas of Quincy, Illinois.

In the letter dated February 4, 1860, below, Lincoln refers to Jonas as one of his "most valued friends." In the following letters, dated February 3, February 4, July 20, and July 21, 1860, the intense level of Jonas's involvement in Lincoln's campaign for the presidency in Illinois is readily apparent. Among the many interesting facets of this correspondence, we see that Jonas was genuinely concerned about Lincoln's public image. He informed the candidate that his political opponents were alleging that Lincoln associated with members of the nativist American/Know Nothing Party. Lincoln insisted that he was never in a Know Nothing lodge, but he shrewdly noted that he had more to gain, politically speaking, by ignoring the accusation and leaving it up to friends like Jonas to defend him publicly. The third letter is a hair-raising and touching warning from Jonas that he believed "desperate characters" in the South were plotting to prevent the president-elect's inauguration by perhaps "using violence upon the person of Lincoln."[58]

Quincy Feb 3/60

My dear Sir

I want to get a copy of the book publishing in Ohio containing the speeches of your self and Doug in the Campaign of last year, can you procure me a copy, or advise me, how and where I can get one—

Let me congratulate you on the election of Speaker—and indicators are that with proper exertions and judicious selections at Chicago in June, we shall be able to carry the day and in November proclaim victory to all the World.

Yrs &c A Jonas

Springfield. Feb. 4 1860
Hon: A. Jonas

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 3rd inquiring how you can get a copy of the debates now being published in Ohio, is received. As you are one of my most valued friends, and have complimented me by the expression of a wish for a book, I propose doing myself the honor of presenting you with one, as soon as I can. By the arrangement our Ohio friends have made with the publishers, I am to have one hundred copies gratis. When I shall receive them I will send you one by Express. I understand they will not be out before March, and I probably shall be absent about that time. So that you must not be disappointed if you do not receive yours before about the middle of that month.

Yours very truly,
A. Lincoln

"Confidential"
Quincy Ills. July 20/60

My dear Sir

I have just been credibly informed, that *Issac* [*sic*] *N Morris* is engaged in obtaining affidavits and certificates of certain Irish men that they saw you in Quincy

come out of a Know Nothing Lodge—the intention is to send the affidavits to Washington for publication—I do not know if there is any truth in the matter, neither do I care, but thought it best to let you know about it—the object is to work on the Germans—and Morris can get men to swear to any thing—my informant saw one of the affidavits or certificates—

Yrs truely
A Jonas

if it all false, let me know

Confidential
Springfield Ill July 21st 1860.

My Dear Sir—

Yours of the 20th is received. I suppose as good, or even better men than I may have been in American or Know-Nothing lodges; but in point of fact, I never was in one, at Quincy or elsewhere. I was never in Quincy but one day and two nights while Know-Nothing lodges were in existence, and you were with me that day and both those nights. I had never been there before in my life; and never afterwards, till the joint debate with Douglas in 1858. It was in 1854 when I spoke in some hall there, and after the speaking, you with others took me to an oyster saloon, passed an hour there, and you walked with me to, and parted with me at the Quincy House, quite late at night. I left by stage for Naples before day-light in the morning, having come in by the same route, after dark the evening previous to the speaking, when I found you waiting at the Quincy House to meet me. A few days after I was there, Richardson, as I understood, started this same story about my having been in a Know-Nothing lodge. When I heard of the charge, as I did soon after, I taxed my recollection for some incident which could have suggested it; and I remembered that on parting with you the last night, I went to the office of the Hotel, to take my stage passage for the morning, was told that no stage office for that line was kept there, and that I must see the driver before retiring, to insure his calling for me in the morning; and a servant was sent with me to find the driver, who after taking me a square or two, stopped me, and stepped perhaps a dozen steps farther, and in my hearing called to some one, who answered him, apparently from the upper part of a building, and promised to call with the stage for me at the Quincy House. I returned and went to bed, and before day the stage called and took me. This is all.

That I never was in a Know-Nothing lodge in Quincy, I should expect could be easily proved, by respectable men who were always in the lodges and never saw me there. An affidavit of one or two such would put the matter at rest.

And now, a word of caution. Our adversaries think they can gain a point if they could force me to openly deny the charge, by which some degree of offence would be given to the Americans. For this reason it must not publicly appear that I am paying any attention to the charge.

Yours Truly
A. Lincoln

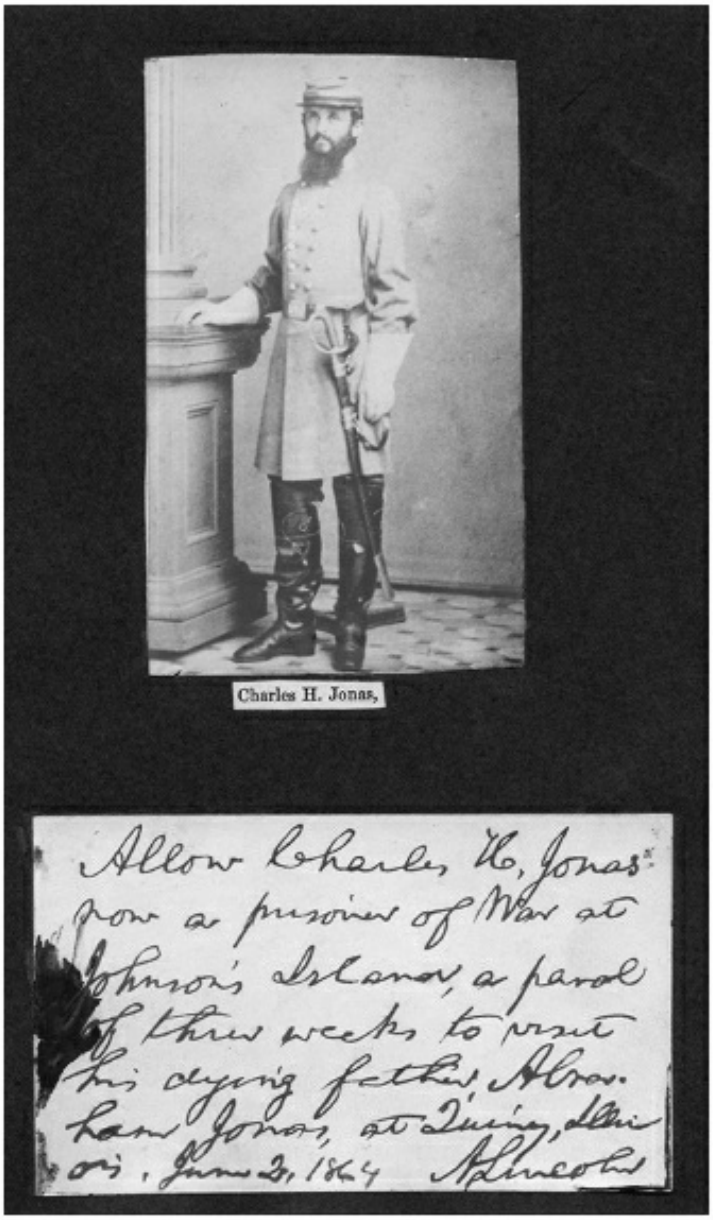


Photo of Charles H. Jonas and Lincoln's note. Charles H. Jonas, one of Abraham Jonas's sons, was a captain in the Confederate army. Lincoln granted the imprisoned rebel "a parol [*sic*] of three weeks to visit his dying father." Courtesy American Jewish Historical Society, New York, N.Y., and Newton Centre, Mass.

4. A FINAL ACT OF FRIENDSHIP

*Charles H. Jonas (1831–1910) was a son of Lincoln's longtime friend from Quincy, Illinois, Abraham Jonas. Thanks to Lincoln's short note dated June 2, 1864, the young Charles—then a captain in the Confederate army who had been captured by Union forces and incarcerated—was granted "a parol [*sic*] of three weeks" to visit his dying father. Over the years, Charles Jonas praised Lincoln for his compassion and the loyal friendship he showed to his father.*

5. SIMON WOLF REMEMBERS LINCOLN'S MERCY

Lawyer and Jewish communal leader Simon Wolf took pride in having met every president of the United States from Lincoln through Woodrow Wilson. He enjoyed regaling listeners with his reminiscences of Lincoln, many of which have been cited over the years.

Lincoln's penchant for granting pardons to deserters and disobedient soldiers was well known, even during his lifetime. Wolf's story illustrates this trait. According to Wolf, Lincoln was persuaded to pardon a Jewish soldier once he learned the circumstances that prompted the young man to go AWOL.

> I have on several occasions given the history of the Jewish soldier whom he pardoned at two o'clock in the early morning. While seated in my office prior to going to my home I received a telegram from a town in New England asking me to wait for a letter that was coming by express. The letter came, and it stated that a young soldier, American born, of Jewish faith, had been condemned to be shot and the execution was to take place the next morning. It was in the crucial days of the war when every soldier was needed at the front and when Edwin M. Stanton, Secretary of War, had threatened to resign unless the President would stop pardoning deserters. It seemed this soldier could not get a furlough. His mother, who was on her death bed, had begged for his return, to lay her hands lovingly on his head and give him a parting blessing. The filial love was superior to his duty to the flag, and he went home, was arrested, tried and condemned to be shot. For a moment I was dazed and uncertain as to the course to be pursued. Night came on apace, and finally I concluded to call on the Hon. Thomas Corwin of Ohio who was on intimate terms with the President. Mr. Corwin, as ever, was most gracious, but said, "My dear Mr. Wolf, it is impossible to do anything in this direction. The President has been maligned for being too generous and liberal in this respect." But I begged so hard that finally Corwin sent word over to the White House, inquiring whether an interview could be secured. The word came back, "Later in the night," and it was two o'clock in the morning before we reached the President.
>
> The whole scene is as vividly before me as in those early hours of the morning. The President walked up and down with his hands hanging by his side, his face wore that gravity of expression that has been so often described by his historians and biographers, and yet he greeted us as if we were his boon companions and were indulging in an interchange of anecdotes, of which he was a past master. Corwin told him why we had come. He listened with deep attention, and when Corwin had exhausted the subject the president replied, "Impossible to do anything. I have no influence with this administration," and the twinkle in his eye was indescribable: "Stanton has put his foot down and insists upon one of two things, either that I must quit or he will quit." Corwin turned to me and said, "I told you, my dear friend, that it was hopeless," and was about leaving the room. I said, "Mr. President, you will pardon me for a moment. What would you have done under similar circumstances? If your dying mother had summoned you to her bedside to receive her last message before her soul would be summoned to its Maker, would you have been a deserter to her who gave you birth, rather than deserter in law but not in fact to the flag to which you had sworn allegiance?" He stopped, touched the bell; his secretary, John Hay, who time and again spoke of that occurrence, came in; he ordered a telegram to be sent to stop the execution, and that American citizen of Jewish faith led the forlorn hope with the flag of his country in his hands at the battle of Cold Harbor and was shot to death fighting heroically and patriotically for the country of his birth. When months afterward I told the President what had become of that young soldier, he was visibly moved and with great emotion said, "I thank God for having done what I did." It was an impressive scene, one full of pathos and sublime humanity, and is engraved on the tablets of

memory as no other incident of my whole life.[59]

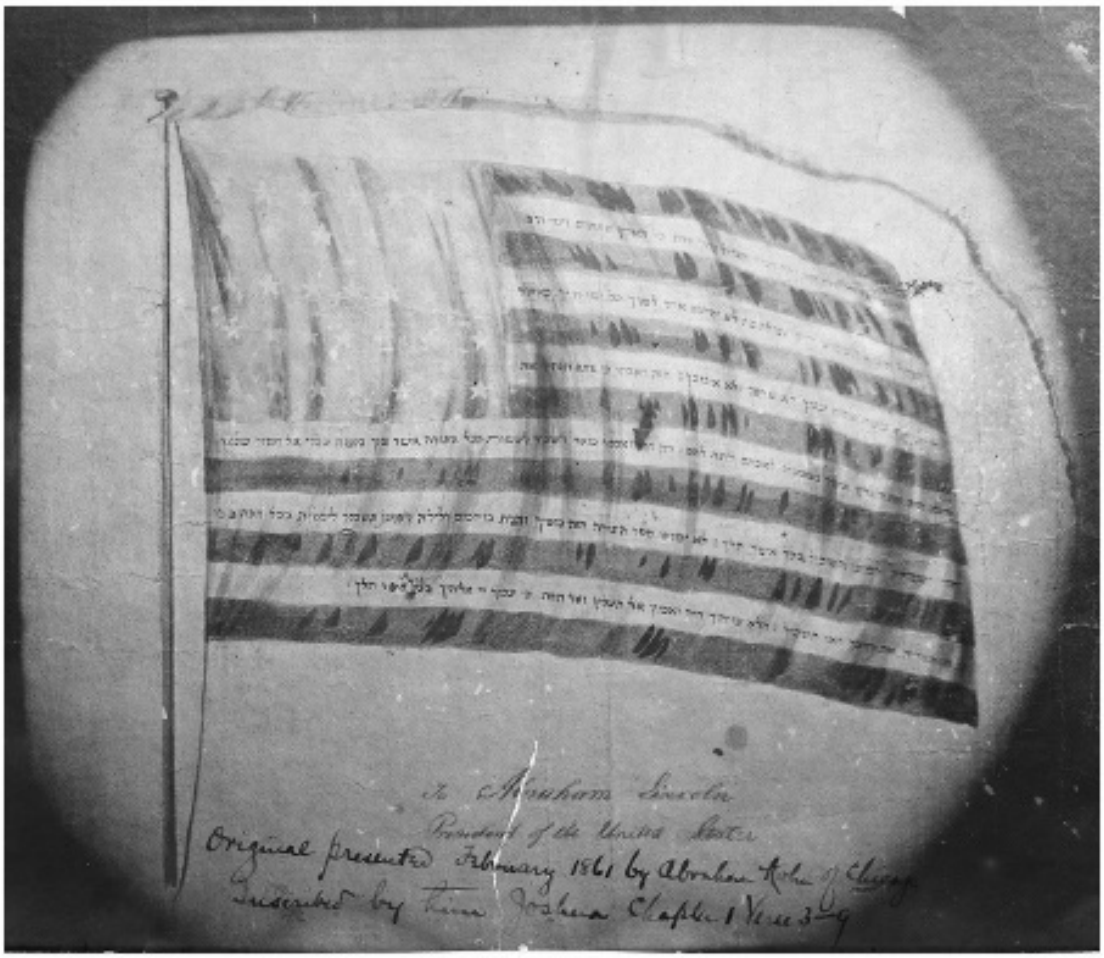
6. ABRAM J. DITTENHOEFER'S IMPRESSIONS OF LINCOLN

Abram J. Dittenhoefer, a New York Republican and enthusiastic supporter of Lincoln, played an active role in both of his presidential campaigns. A few years prior to his death, Dittenhoefer published his memoirs, How We Elected Lincoln: Personal Recollections of Lincoln and Men of His Time.

Yet even before he published his own reminiscences, Dittenhoefer shared many of his firsthand impressions of Lincoln in a letter to Isaac Markens (1846–1928), the first independent scholar to reconstruct Lincoln's Jewish associations. Markens published excerpts from Dittenhoefer's letter in his pioneering 1909 publication, Abraham Lincoln and the Jews. *In Dittenhoefer's memory, his friend Abraham Lincoln was a man who was intrinsically "melancholy" and "genial."*

> While an air of melancholy seemed always to suffuse his features, I always regarded President Lincoln as the most genial of men. I often found him sitting in the business office of the White House having on a black, threadbare, alpaca coat, out at the elbows and in slippers. I could always notice when he was about to indulge in a jest, which he frequently did in the midst of the most serious conversation; a sort of half suppressed smile would appear on that strong face for a brief interval before the jest was given, as if he was anticipating the pleasure it would give in the hearing of it. I remember distinctly presenting to him the ballot I had cast as one of the Presidential electors for him in the New York college of electors. Looking at it a few minutes, he said, "It represents the power and dignity of the American people and the grandeur of American institutions." In thanking me for giving it to him he said he would leave it to his children as a memento. I saw him in Washington a few days before his death. He seemed then to be in the best of spirits and spoke of the great work that was before him in completing the restoration of harmony and peace between the North and the South.[60]

Abraham Kohn, a prominent civic leader in Chicago who became a Lincoln supporter when the two first met in 1860. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.



Kohn's Hebrew flag. This print, made from an old glass negative, is the only known image of the flag that Kohn painted for Lincoln in 1861.
Courtesy Spertus Institute, Chicago.

7. ABRAHAM KOHN PRESENTS THE PRESIDENT-ELECT WITH A HEBREW FLAG

The picture reproduced above is the only known image of the famous flag with Hebrew letters that Abraham Kohn, also pictured above, painted for President-elect Lincoln. At the bottom of the image, one can discern a dedication: "To Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States." This picture comes from an old glass negative that was found in the archives of the Kehilath Anshe Ma'ariv Temple by Joseph Levinson (1904–93), chairman of the Archives Committee of KAM Temple. Kohn had served as president of KAM, and when he first met Lincoln, he was the city clerk of Chicago.

Also provided is Isaac Markens's detailed description of the circumstances surrounding Kohn's presentation of the extraordinary gift, including a letter of appreciation sent to Kohn by Lincoln's longtime friend Jonathan Young Scammon (1812–90).[61] *Finally, a letter written to Abraham S. Cohen (d. 1867) from Abraham Lincoln's private secretary John Hay (1838–1905) is reproduced. Cohen, then the editor of New York's* Jewish Record, *had written a letter to President Lincoln asking him about the Kohn flag. Hay's response confirms the fact that Lincoln*

kept the Kohn flag in the White House.[62]

Isaac Markens on Kohn's Flag

It was during the Presidential campaign of 1860 that Abraham Kohn, City Clerk of Chicago, first met Lincoln, the acquaintance being formed in the store of Kohn, at that time a merchant. Kohn was a Bavarian, then in his 42d year, a man of excellent education, well versed in Hebrew literature and known and respected as a public-spirited citizen. He had been for several years President of the Hebrew Congregation Anshe Maariv (Men of the West). In politics Kohn was described by the Democratic press as "one of the blackest Republicans and Abolitionists." Kohn's popularity and influence had probably been brought to Lincoln's attention, and the latter, consummate politician as he was, recognized in Kohn, presumably, an ally whose acquaintance would prove a valuable asset in the pending election. Lincoln was introduced by Congressman Isaac N. Arnold who accompanied him and it was this meeting that inspired Kohn with a feeling of admiration for his visitor and a conviction that he was the destined Moses of the slaves and the saviour of his country. Thus says his daughter, Mrs. D[ila] K[ohn] Adler, in a letter to the writer. Lincoln in the course of the conversation spoke of the Bible as their book and Kohn, being a devout Jew as well as an ardent patriot, conceived an intense admiration for Lincoln. This found expression in his sending to the president-elect before his departure for Washington a silk flag, the work of his own hands, painted in colors, its folds bearing Hebrew characters exquisitely lettered in black with the third to ninth verses of the first chapter of Joshua, the last verse being:

> Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage; be not afraid neither be thou dismayed; for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest…

Mr. Lincoln at once wrote to Mr. Kohn thanking him for his gift. His letter was sent through a mutual friend, John Young Scammon, a prominent citizen of Chicago, who delayed its delivery until six months after Lincoln's departure from Springfield, when he wrote to Mr. Kohn as follows:

Chicago, August 28, 1861

Abraham Kohn, Esq.

My Dear Sir: The enclosed acknowledgment of the receipt of your beautiful painting of the American flag by the President got among my letters or it would have been sent to you before. Regretting the delay, I am,

Truly your friend,
J. Young Scammon[63]

Letter from John Hay to Abraham S. Cohen[64]

Washington. November 28, 1862

My Dear Sir:

The paragraph to which you refer was altogether erroneous.

The "flag" referred to was a small painting of the American banner, inscribed in

Hebrew characters with a passage from the 1st Chapter of Joshua, from the 4th to the 9th verse. It was presented to the President in February, 1861, before his departure from Illinois, by Abraham Kohn City Clerk of Chicago, who had himself painted it. It has been in the Executive Mansion ever since the President's inauguration.

Your obt. [obedient] Servant,
John Hay,
Assist. Priv. Sec.
A. S. Cohen & Co.

8. "COULD ANYTHING HAVE GIVEN MR. LINCOLN MORE CHEER?" EXCERPTS FROM WILLIAM A. MCKINLEY'S SPEECH

Although the Hebrew flag that Kohn gave to Lincoln has been lost for over a century, there is no doubt that the flag once existed and was kept in the White House during Lincoln's presidency. Admiral George H. Preble made mention of the Kohn flag in his History of the Flag of the United States.[65] *In his famous volume* The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier, and Citizen, *Simon Wolf claimed that William McKinley (1843–1901) read about the Kohn flag in Preble's book. According to Wolf, the then governor of Ohio and aspiring presidential candidate was inspired by the story of Kohn and the flag, and he often made use of the anecdote when he delivered campaign addresses. Evidently, just prior to the publication of Wolf's book in 1895, the* Reform Advocate *published the text of a speech McKinley gave in Ottawa, Kansas, on June 20, 1895. Wolf cited excerpts from McKinley's speech in which he made special reference to the Hebrew flag. He also cited a few sentences from a letter that McKinley subsequently wrote to Kohn's daughter Dila in response to a letter she had written upon reading that the governor had made reference to her father's famous flag in one of his speeches.*

What more beautiful conception than that which prompted Abraham Kohn, of Chicago, in February, 1861, to send to Mr. Lincoln, on the eve of his starting to Washington, to assume the office of president, a flag of our country, bearing upon its silken folds these words from the first chapter of Joshua: "Have I not commanded thee? Be strong and of good courage. Be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed, for the Lord, thy God is with thee, whithersoever thou goest. There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life. As I was with Moses so shall I be with thee. I will not fail thee nor forsake thee."

Could anything have given Mr. Lincoln more cheer, or been better calculated to sustain his courage or to strengthen his faith in the mighty work before him? Thus commanded, thus assured, Mr. Lincoln journeyed to the capital, where he took the oath of office and registered in heaven an oath to save the Union. And the Lord, our God, was with him, until every obligation of oath and duty was sacredly kept and honored. Not any man was able to stand before him. Liberty was the more firmly enthroned, the Union was saved, and the flag which he carried floated in triumph and glory from every flagstaff of the republic.

In a reply to a letter addressed to him by the daughter of Abraham Kohn, Mrs. Dankmar Adler (whose husband, the architect of the Auditorium building and one of the architects of the Columbian Exposition, had fought through the war and been wounded at Chickamauga), Major McKinley wrote:

The incident deeply impressed me when I first learned of it, and I have taken occasion to use it, as in my speech at Ottawa, to which you refer. I am very glad to have been able to give publicity to this striking incident, and I am sure that the family of Mr. Kohn should feel very proud of his patriotic act.[66]

9. HENRY WENTWORTH MONK VISITS LINCOLN AT THE WHITE HOUSE

It is impossible to verify the facts relating to the unusual encounter between President Lincoln and the highly eccentric Henry Wentworth Monk (1827–96), the Canadian-born mystic and millenarian who was passionately committed to the idea of creating a state for the Jews in the ancient homeland.

To publicly demonstrate his prophetic abilities, Monk, in 1863, agreed to submit to a "test" initiated by the English art critic and social thinker John Ruskin (1819–1900). Ruskin had proposed that Monk travel to Washington to meet with Lincoln and present him with his plan to end the Civil War. Monk claimed to have done so and stated that during his interview he also urged Lincoln to establish a Jewish homeland in Palestine, which was, Monk told him, a necessary precondition for world peace.[67]

Monk's account of Lincoln's response to his recommendation is all the more enthralling in light of Mary Todd Lincoln's firm insistence that her husband had confessed to her his keen desire to visit Jerusalem in the near future.[68]

At the White House, Henry Wentworth Monk wedged himself into a perspiring, chattering, gesticulating queue of soldiers, contractors, news-papermen, officials, sightseers, women and children that filled the ante-room outside the President's office. Some carried papers and petitions; others talked loudly of their grievances, or rehearsed the requests they intended to make. Sometimes a messenger or secretary would enter or leave the President's room, and then everyone would fall silent, and watch him open and shut the door as if it might be possible to peep through. After nearly three hours of waiting some of the visitors grew hungry, and produced sandwiches or cake which they ate in a hurry, as if fearing interruption.

Suddenly at midday there was a stir in the office. The door was flung wide open, and one of the President's secretaries whispered inaudibly to the nearest visitor. All knew the signal; and in a moment the crowd was jostling and elbowing its way into the President's room. Mr. Lincoln was seen completing the signing of some papers; and he did not look up till the room was full. Then, he began brief interviews with visitors chosen more or less at random.

Monk had taken up a position at the back of the crowd, near the door, where he could watch the proceedings and get his bearings. Most of the visitors, he noticed, were seeking favours—a commission, a concession, an appointment or a pardon. He considered that their attitude was mercenary, and that they showed small respect to their President. Lincoln looked care-worn and preoccupied, sometimes almost appearing not to hear what his visitor said. Then suddenly he would "come to." His expression would change, a smile would play on his lips, and he would crack a joke. These rapid transitions in the President's mood from melancholy to humour seem to have fascinated Monk, who now began to press forward a little so as to obtain a better view of Mr. Lincoln. Perhaps in his usual impetuous fashion he made more of a stir than he intended, for he soon became aware that the President was looking squarely at

him, with an expression of part amusement, part curiosity. Seeing the direction of the President's stare, the people now parted a little, so that Monk was forced to move forward towards the desk.

According to a letter addressed subsequently by Monk to his friend, Chewett, Mr. Lincoln spoke first, and asked him who he was; and then, on hearing that he was a Canadian, rose and beckoning him forward, shook his hand warmly. He asked Monk how he liked Washington. “I took this as an opportunity to tell him why I had come,” wrote Monk. “I explained to the President that I was a friend of Mr. Ruskin and Mr. Hunt, and that many Englishmen and Canadians, like myself, while applauding his Emancipation Proclamation, could not but hope that a way might be found to terminate this terrible war before it was too late, and ruin had overtaken the civilization of North America. The President replied, Amen to that, in a quiet and rather sad manner; then asked me whether I had any plan to propose for bringing peace about. I replied that the South was fighting, not merely for its independence but for its property in slaves. Let the North, which in the past had shared in the profits from slavery, generously compensate the South for emancipating its slaves. ‘It will be less expensive,’ I added, ‘to pay this compensation than to fight the war to a finish.’ Mr. Lincoln nodded, but immediately asked me whether I had any reason to suppose that the South would return to the Union on these terms. I assured him that, once slavery were abandoned, secession would die a natural death, particularly if the South would be left to itself for a few years to find out that machinery could do the work which slave labour had done up till now. ‘Thus,’ I said, ‘all the blood and treasure which the war has already cost will not have been spent in vain. For the world will thereby have been led to take a great step forward in social, intellectual and moral progress.’ My suggestion appeared to amuse the President, for he now gave our conversation a jocular turn. ‘Your plan,’ he said, ‘reminds me of the outcome of a fight between two friends of my son at school, Bill and Tom. One day I saw Tom with his face bloody, limping along and doubled up as if in pain. I asked him if he had been fighting, and he replied, “Yes, Sir, but I won the victory!” “And how did you do that?” I said. “Why,” answered Tom, “when Bill swung a hard right, I stopped it with my nose. When Bill delivered a vicious kick, I stopped it with my stomach. I certainly gave him a trimming.” Now it seems to me that your plan is like Tom's victory—it is all self-sacrifice.’

“But to be serious,” went on the President, “do not you Canadians consider my Emancipation Proclamation as a great step forward in the social and moral progress of the world?” “Indeed we do,” answered Monk, “only it does not go far enough. Why not follow the emancipation of the Negro by a still more urgent step—the emancipation of the Jew?”

“The Jew—why the Jew? Are they not free already?”

“Certainly, Mr. President, the American Jew is free, and so is the English Jew—but not the European. In America we live so far off that we are blind to what goes on in Russia and Prussia and Turkey. There can be no permanent peace in the world until the civilized nations, led, I hope, by Great Britain and the United States, atone for what they have done to the Jews—for their two thousand years of persecution—by restoring them to their national home in Palestine, and making Jerusalem the capital city of a reunited Christendom.”

“That is a noble dream, Mr. Monk,” said the President, “and one shared by many

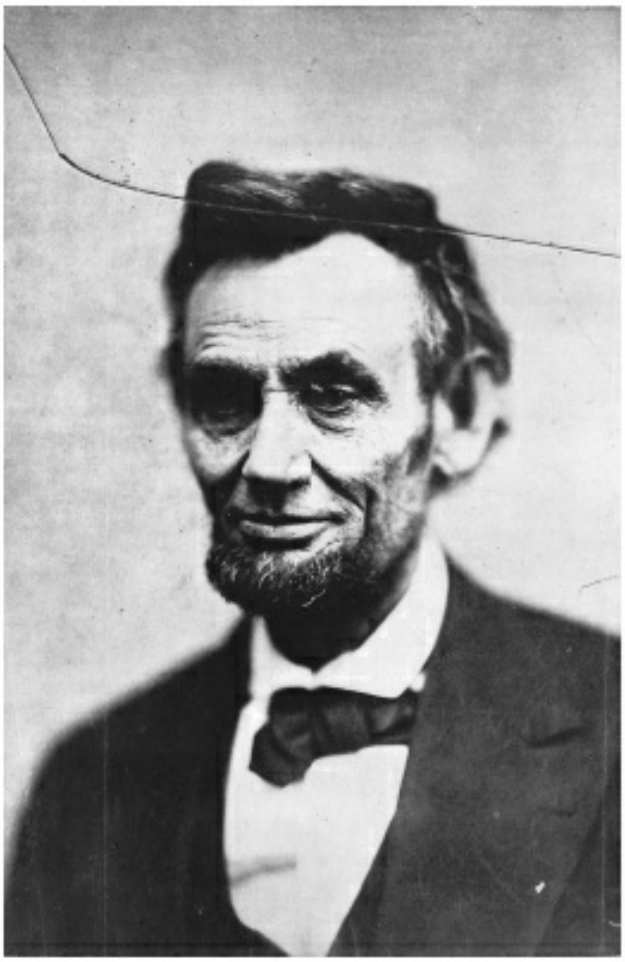
Americans. I myself have a regard for the Jews. My chiropodist is a Jew, and he has so many times ‘put me upon my feet’ that I would have no objection to giving his countrymen ‘a leg up.’ But the United States is, alas, at this moment a house divided against itself. We must first bring this dreadful war to a victorious conclusion, which no compromise can do—and then, Mr. Monk, we may begin again to see visions, and dream dreams. Then you will see what leadership America will show to the world!”[69]

10. ADOLPHUS SOLOMONS'S ACCOUNT OF THE “CRACKED GLASS” PHOTOGRAPH OF LINCOLN

Adolphus S. Solomons was a prominent entrepreneur and Jewish communal leader in Washington, D.C., during the Lincoln administration. Born and raised in New York City, Solomons moved to the nation's capital in 1859 and established a publishing firm under the name Philp and Solomons. As a member of Washington's social elite, he received invitations to attend social functions at the White House, and, according to his memoirs, he developed a warm personal association with Lincoln.[70]

According to Solomons, the last images of Lincoln were taken by the photographer Alexander Gardner (1821–82)[71] *on the premises of “Philip and Solomons”*[72] *on “the second Sunday previous to the Friday night” of his assassination—Sunday, April 2, 1865. This data is erroneous since we know from many sources that Lincoln was away from Washington at that time. Traditionally, the last photos of Lincoln were believed to have been taken on Monday, April 10, 1865, so today the Gardner photos can only be called* some *of the last photographs of Lincoln from life, because research has convinced many scholars that the session with Gardner took place in February 1865, and therefore one or two other photographs of Lincoln were apparently taken subsequently. In any event, Solomons allowed the* American Hebrew *to print one of the photographs taken during that sitting.*[73]

Nearly half a century later, Solomons provided the editors of the American Hebrew *with a detailed account of that photographic session. Like the dating of the photo session itself, it is difficult to gauge the accuracy of Solomons's reminiscences. What is beyond question, however, is the fact that Solomons contended that he and Lincoln enjoyed a very warm and personal association. Solomons explained that the president arrived at his studio in a sorrowful mood, and consequently some of the photographs did not do him justice. Lincoln seemed to sense his friend's disappointment, Solomons recollected, so he asked for “one of [Solomons's] funny stories” in the hope of lightening his mood and producing a more natural photograph. “I complied as best I could,” Solomons declared, and the result was the photograph that accompanied the publication of his memories on the pages of the* American Hebrew.



Alexander Gardner's "cracked glass" portrait of Lincoln. Many have insisted that this photograph, taken probably in February 1865, is the last photograph of Lincoln before his death. The crack was later characterized as an ominous sign of impending disaster. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Facsimile of last Lincoln portrait, taken for Mr. Adolphus S. Solomons (owned by Mrs. N. Taylor Phillips). Washington businessman Adolphus S. Solomons insisted that this photo was the last taken of Lincoln before his death. In his reminiscences, Solomons claimed that the picture was taken in his studio by the prominent Civil War photographer Alexander Gardner. *The American Hebrew and Jewish Messenger* 84, no. 15 (February 12, 1909): 387.

As many statements have been made relating to the "last photograph" Mr. Lincoln sat for, I feel assured that the following disposes of the fact.

During the early 60s our bookselling and publishing firm of Philip and Solomons, located at 011 Pennsylvania avenue in this city, had a large photograph branch in the upper part of the building under the charge of Alexander Gardner who was well known for his celebrated Photographic Sketch Book of the war, in two oblong folio volumes, in which Mr. Lincoln was a frequent and conspicuous figure in camp in battle fields.

One day, while in his office, I casually remarked that I would like very much for him to give us another sitting, as those we had been favored with were unsatisfactory to us, and would he permit us to try again, to which he willingly assented.

Not long afterwards he sent word that he could "come on some Sunday," and a date was arranged, which was the second Sunday previous to the Friday night when the assassin, Wilkes Booth, in cold blood shot to death one of the most beloved men God ever created.

At the time named by appointment, he came, and, at my first glance, I saw, with regret, that he wore a troubled expression, which, however, was not unusual at that

eventful period of our country's fitful condition, and throwing aside on a chair the gray woolen shawl he was accustomed to wear, Mr. Gardner, after several squints at his general make-up, placed him in an artistic position, and began his work.

After several “snaps” during which the President, while making jocular remarks, had completely upset the operator's calculation, I followed Mr. Gardner into his “darkroom” and learned to my sorrow that he had not succeeded in getting even a *fair* expression of his mobile countenance, and therefore was much discouraged which, however, was but a repetition of former occasions.

I courageously named the result of my investigation to Mr. Lincoln, whereupon he, noticing, perhaps, my disappointment, said to me, “tell Mr. Gardner to come out in the open”—referring to the “dark room,”—“and you, Solomons, tell me one of your funny stories and we will see if I can't do better.”

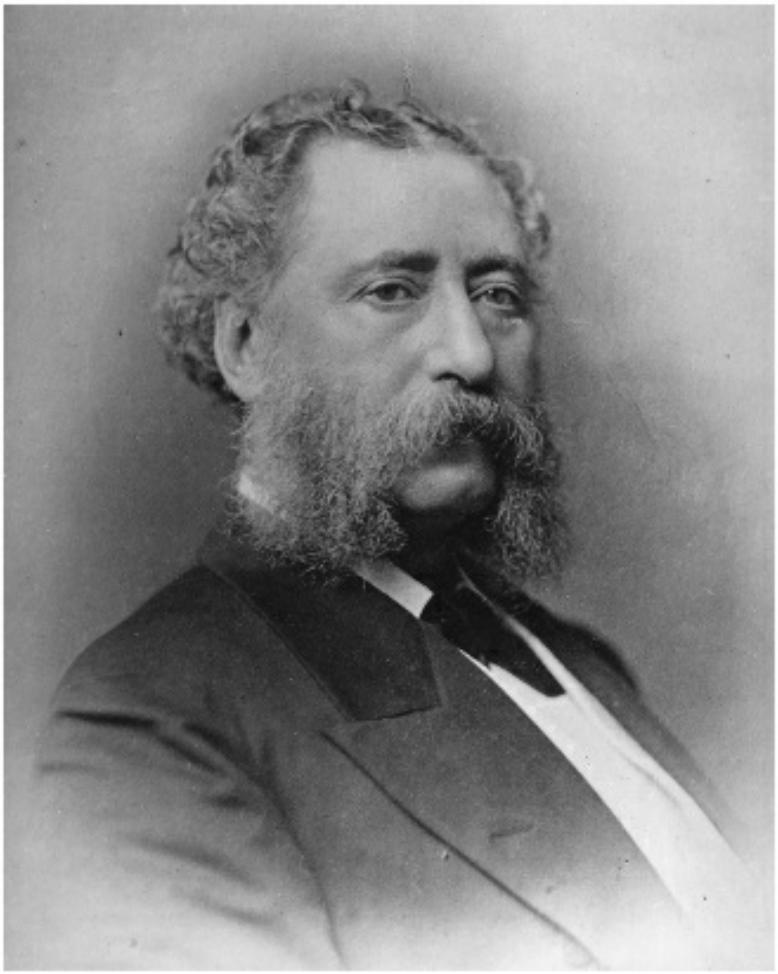
I complied as best I could, and the result was the likeness as reproduced in these memories.[74]

2

“The Most Favored Family Visitor at the White House”: The Enigmatic Relationship between Lincoln and Isachar Zacharie, M.D.

One of the most celebrated and intriguing of President Lincoln's many contacts with Jews during his years in the White House was the extraordinary relationship he had with a fascinating chiropodist named Isachar Zacharie (1827–1900).[1] Writing in 1951, Bertram W. Korn, the pioneering scholar of American Jewry and the Civil War, described Zacharie as one of Abraham Lincoln's “most enigmatic intimates.”[2] Who *was* Isachar Zacharie? Was Lincoln's chiropodist simply a “patriotic corn doctor,” or was he, as some have suggested, a mendacious “rebel spy”?[3]

Zacharie was born in Kent, England, in 1827. There exists evidence that Zacharie was already working as an apprentice to a distinguished medical scholar in 1837. Though he would have been only ten or eleven years old at that time, such things often happened in Victorian England. In this capacity, he may have been introduced to chiropody—a burgeoning profession and potentially a lucrative calling.[4]



Isachar Zacharie was Lincoln’s chiropodist and covert envoy for the administration. Courtesy American Jewish Historical Society, New York, N.Y., and Newton Centre, Mass.

Zacharie was seventeen or eighteen years old when he, his parents, and his siblings immigrated to the United States in the mid-1840s. Within a few years of his arrival, he was receiving kudos for his exceptional abilities to relieve his patients' discomforts by treating their corns, bunions, and ingrown toenails without inflicting pain or provoking subsequent infection.[5] Zacharie seems to have traveled extensively during his first decade in the United States,[6] and he cared for the feet of some of the most prominent Americans of the antebellum era, including U.S. senators Henry Clay of Kentucky, John C. Calhoun of South Carolina, Lewis Cass of Michigan, Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, and James A. Bayard of Delaware. At the conclusion of his treatment, Zacharie solicited and received flattering letters of commendation.[7]

Edwin M. Stanton appears to have been the man who first introduced Zacharie to prominent members of the Lincoln administration. Armed with a fistful of highly complimentary professional endorsements, the young foot doctor came to Stanton in 1862 and urged him to create an army corps of chiropodists who would tend to the podiatric needs of battlefield soldiers. Zacharie's proposal did not interest Stanton, but the “doctor's” skill impressed him. Within months, Zacharie's clientele included men like Secretary of State William H. Seward, General Nathaniel P. Banks (1816–94), General Ambrose E. Burnside (1824–81), General George B. McClellan, and many others. By the summer of 1862, Zacharie was trimming the toenails of the nation's first citizen—Abraham Lincoln.[8]

Lincoln, like many other contemporaries, was impressed by Zacharie's skill. He and Seward actually composed a joint letter of endorsement. Whether Lincoln actually came to think of Zacharie as a friend or whether he was merely being courteous to a helpful pedal servant is difficult to determine. We do know that the two men enjoyed a personal association that was neither superficial nor fleeting.

Contemporaries have left conflicting impressions of Zacharie's personality. A correspondent writing for the *New York Herald* described him as a “man of charm and grace”: “Dr. Zacharie is distinguished by a splendid Roman nose, fashionable whiskers and eloquent tongue, a dazzling diamond breastpin, great skill in his profession and an ingratiating address, a perfect knowledge of his business, and a plentiful supply of social and moral courage.”[9]

In stark contrast, George S. Denison (1833–66), a twenty-seven-year-old treasury agent in New Orleans (and cousin of Salmon P. Chase [1808–73], treasury secretary under Lincoln and later chief justice), characterized the Jewish foot doctor as a fop and a name-dropper: “His vest is flowered velvet—his hair beautifully oiled—and his presence distills continual perfume sweeter than the winds that blow from Araby the blest. In season and out of season, he fails not to announce himself as the *Confidential Agent* or *Correspondent* of the President.”[10]

Zacharie's copious correspondence with men like Lincoln, Seward, and Banks testifies to the fact that this man was a colorful personality. He could be obsequious, oleaginous, and painfully solicitous. At other times, he could be self-congratulatory, petty, and critical. His letters bespeak a personality always characterized by passion, energy, and assertiveness.

The true nature of Zacharie's relationship with Abraham Lincoln is genuinely inscrutable. On the one hand, various primary source documents suggest that the chiropodist was a toady, a self-promoter, and a dishonorable phony. In his many letters to Lincoln, Zacharie repeatedly flatters the president. “My desire is to serve you,” he wrote, “in such a manner that my services may rebound to your honor.” In another note, he insisted that “what I wish to do is for the benefit of yourself & my country.” Zacharie even made use of humor in order to reassure Lincoln that he was fundamentally a humble personal friend who wanted to prove he was also a faithful political ally: “Perhaps I'm somewhat like the Irish Biddy who remarked to the lady of the house, ‘Shurr

Mistress darlent a poor gal that works hard likes to know if she gives satisfaction to youz.'"[11]

Over the years, Zacharie sent a variety of presents to the Lincolns—a barrel of hominy, a box of pineapples, a case of oranges and bananas—but it is difficult to determine whether these gifts came from a shameless opportunist or from a man who genuinely cared about Lincoln and believed him to be a "dear friend." We do know, however, that Zacharie did more for Lincoln than merely trim his toenails. He ultimately became the president's personal envoy and a loyal partisan for Lincoln's reelection campaign.[12]

By the fall of 1862, Zacharie's relationship with the Lincoln administration became a matter of public discourse. He earned a considerable reputation as a powerful Washington insider, and on October 3, an exposé on the president's foot doctor appeared in the pages of the *New York Herald* under the tongue-in-cheek headline "The Head and Feet of the Nation." According to the article, Dr. Zacharie "enjoyed Mr. Lincoln's confidence perhaps more than any other private individual…[and was possibly] the most favored family visitor at the White House." Even if the article exaggerated the dimensions of the chiropodist's political clout, Zacharie's remarkable role in a covert diplomatic mission substantiates the fact that Lincoln held him in high regard.[13]

Zacharie's diplomatic duties for the Lincoln administration may very well have had their genesis in a series of political deliberations that culminated in the issuance of the so-called preliminary Emancipation Proclamation by Lincoln on September 22, 1862, a document that gave official notice to the states in rebellion that unless they laid down their arms and rejoined the Union by January 1, 1863, the president would emancipate their slaves.[14]

During the weeks leading up to the issuance of the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Zacharie frequently treated the president's feet. Was Lincoln thinking about this important matter while he was receiving pedal therapy? The answer to this question is unknowable, but on the very same day that he signed the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln issued another much less historic missive, this one validating Zacharie's podiatric skills: "Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with great success, and considerable addition to my comfort."[15]

The issuance of these two statements on the very same day may very well have been nothing more than an odd historical coincidence. Nevertheless, in light of the covert diplomatic activities that Zacharie would carry out for the Lincoln administration over the coming months, one cannot help but ponder whether the president discussed his plans to emancipate the Confederacy's slaves with his podiatrist and, moreover, whether the two men began to exchange views as to the possibility that the proclamation might spur the South's leadership to give serious consideration to a negotiated peace![16]

The day after Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, September 23, 1862, Edwin Stanton gave Zacharie permission "to pass with the lines of the United States forces around Washington and the Potomac for the purpose of operating upon the feet of the soldiers for corns, bunion's etc." Zacharie's efforts to help the Union soldiers must have been a noteworthy success because he soon received a different and much more significant assignment to carry out in New Orleans.[17]

In November 1862, Lincoln ordered General Banks to go to New Orleans and replace the roughshod Major General Benjamin ("Beast") Butler (1818–93) as commander of the Department of the Gulf.[18] Zacharie had already developed a personal bond with Banks, perhaps because Banks had been one of Zacharie's first patients in Washington, D.C. Nevertheless, with Banks's encouragement, Zacharie asked Lincoln and Secretary Seward to send him to New Orleans to work for Banks "in some capacity so as to render some service to the government." Zacharie assured Seward that he could help the government in its efforts to solidify the Union's

control over New Orleans, an erstwhile Confederate city.[19]

In an "official and confidential" letter, Banks outlined Zacharie's assignment while in New Orleans. He was to mingle freely with the people of New Orleans—"especially with [his] own countrymen." He was to work as an "informant," assessing the mood of the local citizenry and helping the Union win its loyalty. Banks also directed Zacharie to conduct secretive reconnaissance missions in the Confederate stronghold of neighboring Mississippi in order to ascertain the location, number, and preparedness of the enemy's troops as well as "the extent of their supplies and ammunition and the different organizations of which their army may be composed." Finally, Banks authorized Zacharie to employ qualified informants who could assist him in carrying out these important assignments.[20]

Zacharie arrived in New Orleans in mid-January of 1863, and thus began his brief but well-documented career as a U.S. intelligence official. Zacharie immediately began to establish relations with the Crescent City's social elite, including prominent leaders of the Jewish community. Zacharie gathered reconnaissance information, wrote reports, and worked diligently to curry favor with Jewish leaders by serving as something of a fixer for his coreligionists who may have previously been sympathetic to the Confederacy. According to General Banks, the courtesies that Zacharie showed to some of the key leaders in New Orleans endeared him to "leading men of the Rebel Government…and secured for him such endors[e]ments as will enable him to do that which other men cannot do, and which perhaps could not be given to a man of more commanding social or political position." Clearly, Zacharie's community relations campaign pleased and impressed Banks, and he assured Seward that Zacharie was "a zealous supporter of the Government."[21]

While he was in New Orleans, Zacharie worked under Banks, but he sent periodic briefings directly to Lincoln and Seward detailing the progress he was making. "Everywhere Union spirit is gaining in power," he wrote. He eagerly informed Lincoln that the general population in New Orleans—and particularly the Creoles—received him warmly. "I came here" he wrote, "to use my best efforts, humble though they be, in aiding to unite our country. Should I in any way be instrumental in consummating so great a result, my ambition will be gratified. For I shall know full well my name will not be forgotten either by the United States government or the people of Louisiana."[22]

Yet, Zacharie's espionage work for the Union must have annoyed some southern loyalists, and he wrote Lincoln to explain he had "made some enemies" who may have been surreptitiously accusing him of taking graft and profiteering. As for the accuracy of these accusations, Zacharie declared: "I most earnestly deny [them]."[23]

Zacharie's Jewishness became grist for the mill of his ardent detractors. One northern critic remembered him as "the lowest and vulgarest of Jew pedlars [*sic*]," and he expressed shock that "Mr. Lincoln [would] make a friend of such an odious creature." According to this same writer, General John G. Foster's (1823–74) wife refused to sit at the same table with a Jew like Zacharie.[24]

But Banks and Zacharie had a mutual admiration society. Zacharie stoked Banks's presidential ambitions with a steady stream of fawning compliments, though he ultimately supported Lincoln in the 1864 election. Banks told Seward that Zacharie had neither solicited nor received any "favors" for his efforts.

Zacharie's attempt to negotiate a peace treaty between the Union and the Confederacy in 1863 was arguably the most intriguing facet of his short diplomatic career in the Lincoln administration. His desire to become a peacemaker seems to have taken root in May 1863, in the

wake of the Union's pivotal victory over the Confederate forces at Vicksburg. Zacharie's Confederate informants told him that most "Southern people earnestly desired to have the war settled without further bother."[25] They told Zacharie they would help him meet with members of the Confederate cabinet if he could persuade Lincoln to pursue a negotiated peace plan.[26]

Banks, too, seems to have believed that the Confederate leadership could be enticed into peace negotiations, and he dispatched Zacharie to Washington, instructing him to deliver special reports and secret memoranda to Lincoln. Ten days later, on the eve of his departure for New Orleans, Zacharie wrote a letter to Lincoln wherein he confessed to being anxious over "the great responsibility" that the administration had given him. Nonetheless, once he was back in New Orleans and under the direction of General Banks, Zacharie began to conduct a series of secret meetings with his southern contacts in the vicinity of New Orleans.[27]

Zacharie believed that repairing the Union should be the administration's top priority and that the only formula for peace would be a plan that brought "*honour* to the *North,…without humiliation to the South*." According to the *New York Herald,* Zacharie thought that the U.S. government should agree to transport Jefferson Davis, the Confederate government, and 150,000 of the Confederacy's most ardent troops to the New Mexican Territory: "With this force [Jefferson Davis would] drive away Napoleon's hordes and proclaim himself President of the new Mexican republic. Simultaneously the seceded Southern States [would] return to the Union with whatever negroes [we]re left in them. This [would] end the war satisfactorily to all concerned."[28]

It was most unlikely that Lincoln, or any other member of his administration for that matter, would give serious consideration to such a plan. However impractical, this idea was based on the established fact that many Confederate leaders considered the New Mexican Territory to be vitally important to an independent southern nation. In fact, after General Robert E. Lee's (1807–70) capitulation, some Confederate troops actually fled to the New Mexican Territory in the hope of keeping Dixie's national flame aglow in the Southwest.[29]

According to Zacharie's correspondence, his initial entreaties were cordially received by the Confederate officials, but he quickly realized that the Lincoln administration was sending him mixed signals about the idea of negotiating a peace settlement with the Confederacy. According to Zacharie, Seward was urging him to continue his furtive conversations with the Confederates. The secretary of state told him, he asserted, that Lincoln was aware of his efforts and that he should continue to negotiate in accordance with his best judgment. Zacharie also reiterated, in a letter to Banks, that Seward continued to encourage his negotiations: "When the time came & all was ready" Zacharie assured Banks, "[Seward told me he] could clintch [*sic*] the matter."[30]

Lincoln's level of interest in Zacharie's plan may be gauged from the fact that silence reigned between the two men for three months during the summer of 1863. Then, inexplicably, Lincoln summoned Zacharie to Washington in early September. After two days of intense conversation, Lincoln gave his chiropodist the green light to go to Richmond and see if the Confederate leadership was truly ready to stop the "effusion of blood" and return to the Union.[31]

On Sunday evening, September 27, 1863, Isachar Zacharie met furtively with four high-ranking Confederate officials on the outskirts of Richmond: Stephen R. Mallory (1813–73), secretary of the navy; James A. Seddon (1815–80), secretary of war; General John H. Winder (1800–1865), provost marshal of Richmond, and, to Zacharie's surprise and delight, Secretary of State Judah P. Benjamin (1811–84).[32]

Until now, very little was known about this gathering. A letter from Zacharie to General Banks, written on October 9, 1863, identified the participants and summarized the meeting by

saying “the interview was of the most friendly nature.” Thanks to a recently resurfaced piece of correspondence between Zacharie and Benjamin written the day after the meeting, we now know definitively that this meeting occurred, and, more important, we have some indication of what transpired.[33]

Zacharie's tone was effervescent; he was evidently thrilled by his unexpected rendezvous with Benjamin: “I was so excited last night and overcome at the pleasure of meeting *you*, knowing that the confederate flag was waving over my head, that my heart was bursting with joy. I had so *much* to say and so *short* time to say it in, that I fear I have forgotten much, but I hope the day is not far distant when we shall meet again.”[34]

Astonishingly, it seems that in addition to discussing the prospect of a negotiated peace, Zacharie opened the meeting by soliciting a personal favor: he asked Benjamin to permit him to travel through the Confederacy in order to visit his elderly father in Savannah. Evidently, Benjamin declined the request on the spot, but Zacharie promised Benjamin in his letter that he would ultimately prove himself “worthy, not only of your confidence, but of the small favour I have asked.” Through his future efforts, he assured Benjamin he would convince him he was *not* a secret agent for the Union.[35]

With this personal matter out of the way, Zacharie returned to peace negotiations. He stressed he was not just sympathetic to the South; he portrayed himself to be, at heart, a true Confederate patriot: “I hope I have made a favourable impression—and that you have taken all I said in good part, as it came from a pure heart. I would gladly join the armies of the confederacy if I did not know that I could be of more service to you from where I am, I endeavoured to explain all to you last night, which I hope was satisfactory.”[36]

Finally, he assured Benjamin that he would “go immediately to Washington…[for] an interview with Mr. Lincoln…[and] assure him that no propositions of peace may be expected from the South.” Yet Zacharie's letter also implies that the rebel leaders gave him something with which to tantalize Lincoln: “I shall put matters in the right light, and I know [Lincoln] will listen to me, and my word for it. Some good must come out of our *unexpected meeting*. I cannot explain to you why I think so, but I conscientiously believe there will (*time will show*).”[37]

Although nothing more came of this peace initiative, this letter offers us a sense of what transpired. Not only does this document confirm the fact that two Jewish Americans tried to negotiate an end to the Civil War in 1863, it also strongly suggests that if the Union would have proposed a compromise that was framed “in the right light,” then the South might well have been receptive.[38]

In all probability, Zacharie tried to convince Seward that the administration should continue to negotiate with Benjamin. Nevertheless, despite Seward's previous promises and the behind-the-scenes encouragement Zacharie believed he had received from Lincoln, by the fall of 1863 it was clear that the administration had no intention of continuing these secretive negotiations with the Confederacy. Zacharie was peeved. In a letter to General Banks, he complained that the Lincoln administration had left him out to dry. The administration's disunity over the idea of pursuing peace negotiations made any ongoing efforts pointless. Zacharie wrote to Banks in exasperation: “Now what is the use of my going to see Benjamin, if we are not ready to do anything?”[39]

Although the Lincoln administration pulled the plug on Zacharie's diplomatic negotiations with Confederate leaders, leaving the podiatrist frustrated and insulted, he continued to try to curry favor with Lincoln. In 1864, Zacharie threw himself wholeheartedly behind the effort to reelect Lincoln. He traveled through Pennsylvania and New York electioneering for the

president, paying special attention to his Jewish coreligionists. “As regards the Isrelites [*sic*]…” Zacharie wrote Lincoln, “I understand them well.” He hired campaign workers who registered voters, and he took steps to ensure that the “Israelites” voted for Lincoln in accordance with their promise. In regard to his efforts to sway the Jewish voters of New York, Zacharie assured Lincoln he had been effective. As for his work in Pennsylvania, Zacharie was even more definitive. “If you knew *all*—you and your friends would give me much credit, for I flatter myself I have done one of the sharpest things that has been done in the campaign. Will explain it to you when I see you.” Though Lincoln feared he would lose his bid for reelection, Zacharie was confidence incarnate: “I hope to see you after the fun is over,” he wrote, “when I hope you will say ‘well done, My good and faithful servant.’”[40]

It is important to note that Zacharie's efforts to garner the “Israelite” vote for Lincoln in 1864 constituted an important turning point in the political history of American Jewry. As noted in chapter 1, the mass emigration of Jews from Central Europe during the 1840s and 1850s resulted in the growth of important Jewish communities in key urban centers throughout the states of the Old Northwest and, of course, in the seaboard states of New York and Pennsylvania as well. A large percentage of the Central European Jewish immigrants took an active interest in politics. Many of these migrants—Jews and non-Jews alike—had been ardent supporters of the liberal revolutions of 1830 and 1848, and it was the failures of those movements that had pushed many of these disheartened activists to emigrate. After settling in America, these erstwhile European liberal activists were eager to participate in American politics. The political sentiments of this foreign-born cohort, who described themselves as “Germans in America,” were summed up during the election of 1864 by the German American scholar and political philosopher Francis (Franz) Lieber (1800–1872):

> German working men! Why did you leave home, family, the friends of your youth, and seek this distant America? It was because you had heard that in the United States you would find a country wherein you and your children would enjoy all the rights of the free citizen; where skill and industry would surely find their reward, and where your children would never find themselves debarred from any merited attainment by the privileges of others…. Do not lend your aid to the party which would give up the Union to the dominion of the Southern landholders. For do you know what this slave-owning, would be oligarchy pretends to aim at? Perhaps you suppose they struggle only to retain possession of their negro slaves. The Southern slaveholders are fighting for that which was for so long a time the prerogative of the owners of the soil, the privilege of using the working man, whether white or black, as the instrument of their power, their pleasure, and their arrogance. The working man is to bear all the burdens of the state, but he is to have no rights in it. It is for him to obey, and for the rich man alone to rule.[41]

Zacharie's open assertion that he could persuade the majority of Jews in the northern states to vote as a bloc for Lincoln sparked an intense and interesting controversy. Evidently, Zacharie was not the only Jew seeking to organize a “Jews for Lincoln” campaign. Samuel A. Lewis (1831–1913), a Jewish communal leader from New York, was apparently working with Zacharie on behalf of the Jews for Lincoln's reelection effort in New York. Lewis wrote to Lincoln and warned him to be wary of any “parties representing themselves [as] ‘a committee from the Jews’…[who may] solicit contributions.” Lewis emphatically told Lincoln that American Jews had no desire to take money to support his candidacy. To the contrary, Lewis wrote, Jews

"propose to give—not to take."[42]

Other Jewish leaders quickly spoke out to discredit the "Jews for Lincoln" idea altogether. Until the election of 1868, when it became necessary to decide whether Ulysses S. Grant (1822–85) was essentially anti-Jewish, the vast majority of American Jews distanced themselves from even a whiff of group politics. Jews were expected to participate in politics as American citizens and certainly not as members of a Jewish caucus or constituency.[43] Zacharie and Lewis may have been Lincoln men, but that did not entitle them to speak for American Jewry as a whole. "The Jews, as a body, have no *politics*," wrote Myer Samuel Isaacs (1841–1904), coeditor of New York's *Jewish Messenger*; "…there is no 'Jewish vote.'"[44]

If Zacharie composed a written congratulation to Lincoln when he won reelection in the fall of 1864, a copy of that communication has apparently not survived. He did, however, send a congratulatory telegram to Lincoln on December 26, 1864, only five days after Savannah surrendered to the Union armies. Zacharie, whose father and relatives lived in Savannah, declared, "My family are [*sic*]crazy with joy." The following month, Lincoln asked Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to permit Dr. Zacharie to "go to Savannah, remain a week…, bringing with him, if he wishes, his father and sisters or any of them." Lincoln candidly explained to Stanton that by obliging him, the secretary would be sparing him from time-consuming appeals, in that Lincoln had "long ago" promised to help Zacharie reunite with his family "whenever Savannah should fall into our hands." For Zacharie's part, he was deeply appreciative. In a brief note to Lincoln written just prior to his departure for Savannah, Zacharie offered one final gesture of support: "If you have any matters that you would have properly attended to, I will consider it a favour for [you] to let me attend to it for you."[45] This communication appears to have been the last between the president and his chiropodist.

After Lincoln's death, Zacharie seems to have lost his thirst for public life and lived quietly in New York through the early 1870s. He cut back on his political involvement, though he remained somewhat active in local Republican politics for several years. In 1872, for instance, he was a public supporter of Horace Greeley's hapless attempt to prevent President Grant from winning a second term.[46] Two years later, Zacharie attempted to have the U.S. Congress Committee on War Claims pay him $45,000 in fees for the podiatric services he rendered during the Civil War. Even with written support from his friend General Banks, Zacharie's appeal was flatly rejected.[47]

Around 1875, Zacharie returned to his native England, where he continued working as a podiatrist. During the last decades of his life, he became a prominent leader of English Freemasonry as the founder of an English chapter of an American-based society called "The Order of the Secret Monitor." In 1887, his Masonic brothers chose him to be their "Grand Supreme Ruler." To this day, this order respectfully lauds this Jewish chiropodist and credits him for being a distinguished founder of its fraternity.[48] He died on September 16, 1900, at the age of 73.[49]

Isachar Zacharie was, as one historian summarized, a multifaceted personality—"a sycophant, court-jester, politician, spy, and friend." Yet he was no fool. He was a clever operator—a shrewd and ambitious personality who was ever ready to ingratiate himself if he thought there might be some benefit to be gained.[50] As he observed in a moment of frank self-assessment: "You know I lack Education, but I have managed to push smoothy [*sic*] thus far through the world, with many true friends who admire my Energy and true friendship—which I hope I shall always maintain."[51]

Zacharie *was* unquestionably a sycophant, but the surviving documents lead us to conclude

he was a man of exceptional talent. He was certainly an opportunist, and his work in New Orleans for the Lincoln administration demonstrated that he possessed a shrewd cleverness that concomitantly benefited his interests and those of the Union. Was he working both sides of the aisle—helping the South while working for the North? The surviving documents strongly suggest that he did whatever he could do to ingratiate himself with southerners only in order to succeed in his work for the North.

Above all, Zacharie had pride in his own abilities and in the attainments of the Jewish people. During the Lincoln administration, his activities betokened a belief that, in America, Jews could assume influential leadership roles that were denied them in other parts of the world. If the president of the United States selected an immigrant Jewish chiropodist to fulfill high-level envoy and reconnaissance work for the good of the nation, then it was self-evident that Jews could achieve a political distinction in America that was denied them elsewhere. Zacharie asserted this very point in a speech he delivered at a New York testimonial dinner held in his honor in 1864: "Let us look at England, France, Russia, Holland, aye, almost every nation in the world, and where do we find the Israelite? We find them taken into the confidence of Kings and Emperors. And in this republican and enlightened country, where we know not how soon it may fall to the lot of any man to be elevated to a high position by this government, why may it not fall to the lot of an Israelite as well as any other?"[52]

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1. TWO EDITORIALS ON ISACHAR ZACHARIE

Isachar Zacharie became a frequent visitor at the White House in the fall of 1862, when Secretary of State William H. Seward first recommended his services to President Lincoln. Zacharie's skill impressed Lincoln, and he gave the doctor a written testimonial stating, "Dr. Zacharie has operated on my feet with great success, and considerable addition to my comfort."[53]

The New York press took note of Zacharie's impressive list of clients, which, in addition to the president, included the secretary of state, the secretary of war, Generals McClellan, Banks, and

Burnside, and an array of Washington's social elite. As the following editorials from the New York Herald *demonstrate, Zacharie's meteoric rise proved to be excellent grist for the satirist's mill.*

The Head and Feet of the Nation

In the certificates furnished to the chiropodist by the President, Secretary Seward and other members of the Cabinet, and by Generals McClellan, Banks and Burnside, we have a cornucopia of information about the secrets of this war. The President has been greatly blamed for not resisting the demands of the radicals; but how could the President put his foot down firmly when he was troubled with corns? There have been rumors of personal animosities and ill-timed bickerings among the members of the Cabinet; but undoubtedly these have been caused by the honorable Secretaries inadvertently treading upon each other's bunions under the council board. Some of our generals have been reproached for their slow movements; but is celerity of motion to be expected of persons whose toe nails are growing into the flesh? No human being could be expected to toe the mark of our expectations under such circumstances…. General Pope, who by a singular paradox placed his head-quarters in the saddle, made a few rapid evolutions, during which he nearly succeeded in using up himself, the enemy, and our army; but Jackson's bare-footed rebels, who do not know the need or the value of a chiropodist, got the better of him at last…. It would seem, therefore, that all our past troubles have originated not so much with the head as with the feet of the nation. Dr. Zacharie has shown us precisely where the shoe pinches.[54]

More Important Negotiations for Peace

We have already been favored with a large crop of independent peace negotiators. First there was poor Greeley, who corresponded with Count Mercier and Vallandigham. Then there was J. Wesley Green, who reached Richmond via the penitentiary, and obtained a hundred dollars or so from the War Department. Then there was Chase Barney, who was taken prisoner by the rebels, and subsequently negotiated himself out of captivity and into oblivion. Then there was Louis Napoleon, who could not get the shrewd Palmerston to join him, and was consequently rebuffed by Secretary Seward. Then last, but not least there was the Chevalier Jewett,[55] who turned Colorado, Europe and the rest of the world upside down to find a chance for peace, and who is now cooling himself off under the Falls of Niagara. Indeed, almost the only amateur diplomats who have not negotiated and intrigued for peace are the Chevaliers Weed and Wikoff. They have busied themselves solely with contracts and gunnery and musketry, and the former is now buried under a load of Charleston stone and election matters, while the latter is ornamenting and delighting metropolitan society, as usual.

But a rival to all these distinguished personages has now appeared in the person of the renowned Dr. Zacharie. We remember when the Doctor made his debut upon the national stage. Just after the war was fairly inaugurated Dr. Zacharie went to Washington, resplendent with diamonds and surgical instruments, and cut the corns of the President, the Cabinet, General McClellan and the entire Army of the Potomac. For some time after this the movements of the administration and the soldiers were astonishingly rapid. Now, alas? Both our administration and our armies stick in the mud. The corns have evidently grown again and need cutting. However, Dr. Zacharie

did the country a service then, and Mr. Lincoln and Secretary Stanton were not ungrateful. They sent Dr. Zacharie to New Orleans to cut the corns of General Banks and his bravo corps. Zacharie performed this operation with his usual marvelous skill, and the result was the almost immediate capture of Port Hudson. This fact shows Zacharie's value as an ally in the vigorous prosecution of the war. But Dr. Zacharie did more than this. He talked with a great many friends and adherents of Jeff Davis in New Orleans, and he learned that the Southern people earnestly desired to have the war settled without further bother. With this intelligence the acute and diplomatic corn cutter immediately started for Washington, and having escaped the foils of the rebel pirates, whom Rip Van Winkle Welles[56] allows to rule the wave, he arrived safely at the goodly but ungodly city.

Again in Washington, Dr. Zacharie called upon his friend, Secretary Stanton, who, mistaking him for some visionary fellow, like Greel[e]y or Jewett, refused to listen to his story. The Doctor then left Stanton and went to the President. The moment Zacharie entered the President's private reception room, the Chief Executive held out his foot and complained of his corns. Zacharie removed the corns and told his tale at the same time. Old Abe was greatly comforted and interested, and gave Zacharie a pass to go to Richmond. Zacharie took the pass, went to Fortress Monroe and embarked upon the flag of truce boat. At some point near the rebel capital he had interviews with Jeff Davis, Secretary Memminger, of the rebel Treasury, and Secretary Benjamin, of the rebel State Department. He agreed with these rebels upon a plan of peace. It is this:—Davis, the rebel Cabinet and the rebel armies are to go to Mexico. Our government is to furnish them with transportation to that favored land and with rations on the way. Jeff Davis calculates to land in Mexico with one hundred and fifty thousand veteran fire eaters, each of whom can devour a Frenchman at a meal, without salt and without the slightest injury to his digestion. With this force he will drive away Napoleon's hordes and proclaim himself President of the new Mexican republic. Simultaneously the seceded Southern States will return to the Union with whatever negroes are left in them. This will end the war satisfactorily to all concerned. Such is the plan which Dr. Zacharie has arranged with the Southern leaders, and he is not only waiting for the President and the Cabinet to ratify it in order to carry it into instant effect. If he succeeds he will be the greatest man of the age, and neither Talleyrand nor Metternich can be compared to him. Strange as this narrative may appear, there is a great more in it than most people think, and perhaps the skeptical will soon have to acknowledge the corn and the corn doctor.[57]

2. ZACHARIE BRIEFS LINCOLN ON CONDITIONS IN NEW ORLEANS

A fine collection of Isachar Zacharie's correspondence with President Lincoln appears as an appendix to Bertram W. Korn's authoritative volume American Jewry and the Civil War.[58] *The following letters, however, do not appear in Korn.*

Writing on May 9, 1863, from his room at the St. Charles Hotel in New Orleans, Zacharie provided Lincoln with a status report on the attitude of the local citizenry in the occupied Crescent City. This particular missive is exceedingly interesting. Zacharie tells the president that most of the city's "rebels" are despondent over their cause, and were it not for the "female portion of their families," many were ready to declare their loyalty to the Union. He cited Rabbi James K. Gutheim (1817–86) as a case in point. According to Zacharie, it was Gutheim's wife

and not the rabbi who refused to pledge loyalty to the Union. Gutheim's decision to leave made him a southern hero when he returned to New Orleans after the South surrendered.

St Charles Hotel
New Orleans May 9th 1863

To his

Excellency A Lincoln

President of the United States

Washington DC
Dear Sir

An intense excitement has pervaded this city for the past few days. First the issuing of General Banks' order notifying “registered enemies” to leave the Department by the 15th inst. Then the arrival of the invincible Illinois Cavalry at Baton Rouge, having performed the most brilliant feat of the war, again the news of [David D.] Porter joining [David G.] Farragut.[59] You can form no idea of the joy which overcomes the hearts of all loyal people.

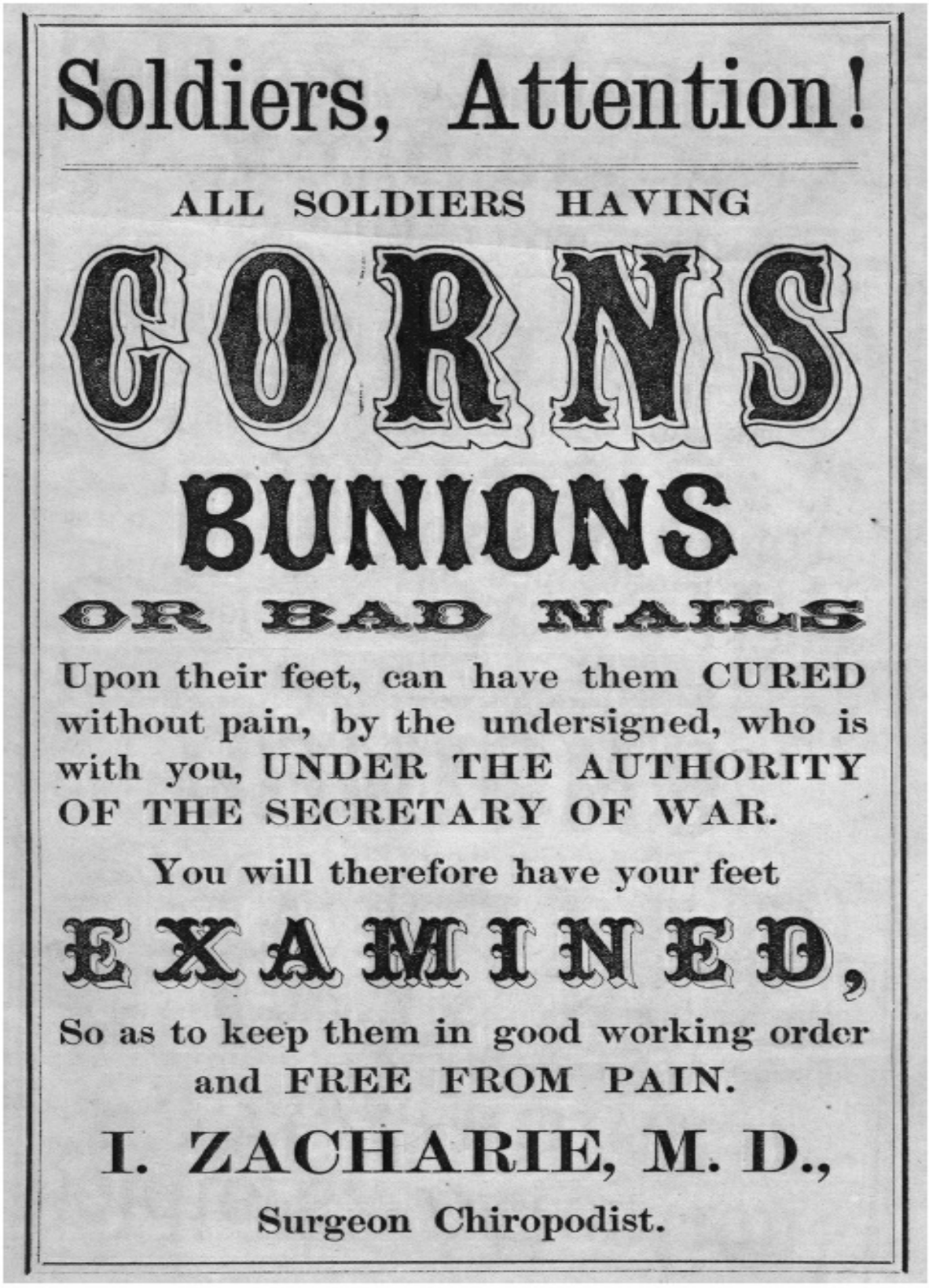
As for the rebels, I can see their despondency, not only for themselves but their cause, was it not for the female portion of their families, who I fear have become perfect monomaniacs, they would in many instances take the oath.

Rev Doctor Gutheim minister of the Portuguese Israelite Congregation of this city —registered enemy—called yesterday to see me & spoke most feelingly. In his heart he wishes the Union restored for he says under its Government the Israelite has lived and prospered—why then should he leave? It is his wife who influences him. Another thing he took the oath of allegiance to the Confederacy & could not satisfy his own conscience to take it now to the Government, but as I said before at heart his [*sic*] for the Union & I believe his going out will do good.

Col Gardner commanding the Illinois Cavalry is now here on a few days furlough, he is one of the most modest unassuming gentlemen I have ever seen. You should make him a General as he possesses the true mettle.

A friend with Schooner left here yesterday on mission to Pemberton. I look for him back in ten or fifteen days when I expect to go over. Please inform M. Seward of this fact. While writing Commander Farragut has arrived from above Port Hudson. Porter took possession of Alexandria on the morning of the 6th thus [illegible] the advance column of General Banks reaches them. Thus the work goes bravely on.

Very Respectfully
Your most obd Servt [obedient servant][60]



A broadside (ca. 1862) advertising Zacharie's skill as a podiatrist. Courtesy Collections of Maine Historical Society (www.VintageMaineImages.com).

3. “PATRIOTIC CORN DOCTOR” OR “REBEL SPY”?

Until recently, little was known about Zacharie's September 27, 1863, secret meeting with four prominent Confederate officials: Stephen R. Mallory, James A. Seddon, John H. Winder, and Judah P. Benjamin.[61] *Historians have studied a letter from Zacharie to General Banks, written on October 9, 1863, which identified the names of those who participated in the meeting and summarized the gathering's overall atmosphere by saying “the interview was of the most friendly nature.”*[62] *Thanks to the recent discovery of a letter that Zacharie wrote to Judah P. Benjamin the day after the meeting, we now have a clearer sense of what may have transpired.*

confidential

Steam Boat New York aff [off?]
City Point Sept 28th 1863

Dear Sir,

Since my interview with you last night, I have had time to meditate upon what transpired. And now let me again assure you of my sincere friendship towards you and the confederacy.

I was so excited last night and overcome at the pleasure of meeting *you*, knowing that the confederate flag was waving over my head, that my heart was bursting with joy. I had so *much* to say and so *short* time to say it in, that I fear I have forgotten much, but I hope the day is not far distant when we shall meet again.

Should not that—I hope I have made a favourable impression—and that you have taken all I said in good part, as it came from a pure heart. I would gladly join the armies of the confederacy if I did not know that I could be of more service to you from where I am, I endeavoured to explain all to you last night, which I hope was satisfactory.

I am much disappointed at not receiving permission to visit my old father but I am a strong believer in the old adage (*that every thing happens for the best*) and who knows but our meeting may lead to beneficial results. God grant it may; more unlikely things has [*sic*] transpired, one thing is sure that I shall continue to hope and toil on, if not to win, to prove to you that I am worthy, not only of your confidence, but of the small favour I have asked, but unless I can visit the confederacy without the least doubt of my sincerity towards you all, I would rather sacrifice Father Sister and all, in fact my honour is at stake, and without that, man is worth but little, if however you are satisfied of my sincerity towards you all and you can say at any time grant me the permission to visit Savannah or Macon, I shall be under everlasting obligations.

I shall go immediately to Washington from here, shall have an interview with Mr. Lincoln, shall talk to him (as but few can) I shall assure him that no propositions of peace may be expected from the South, I shall put matters in the right light, and I know he will listen to me, and my word for it. Some good must come out of our *unexpected meeting*.

I cannot explain to you why I think so, but I conscientiously believe there will (*time will show*.)

I will write to you immediately all that transpires, but shall have to be very careful how I write. Should any thing important transpire, I shall come myself. So if I write or telegraph to you at this point, come immediately to me. You will know it is of

importance.

Should you know any person visiting New York in whom you have implicate [implicit] confidence in, write to me and I will post you up on all you wish to know. Be careful not to sign your name. I will know who it comes from. Should I write I will sign (thus,) [Zacharie drew a square box with a dot in the center] unless I return on flag of truce which I can as I know all the officers.

Do not think me to[o] anxious to serve you. *I do it from pure motives* and you I hope, will never regret the interview we had last night. Wishing you every success,

I am with much Respect
Your obt. Servant
I Zacharie MD
760 Broadway
New York

to Hon. J. P. Benjamin
Sec of State
Richmond
V.A.[63]

4. LINCOLN WAS "DELIGHTED" WITH ZACHARIE'S REVELATIONS

In this letter to General Nathaniel P. Banks, dated October 9, 1863, Zacharie reports on his recent activities to his immediate superior, the commander of the Department of the Gulf. He informs Banks that President Lincoln was "delighted" with his report on the top-secret meeting he conducted with various Confederate leaders, including President Jefferson Davis. Zacharie had discovered, much to his astonishment, that Lincoln had kept his mission a secret from Secretary of State William H. Seward. Consequently, the South's openness to discussing a negotiated peace settlement placed Lincoln in an awkward spot. If he wished to pursue the matter, what would he say to Seward? According to Zacharie, Lincoln was like a man who won an elephant in a raffle and does not know what to do with it!

Clearly eager to ingratiate himself with his superior, Zacharie assures the general that he had urged Lincoln to select Banks to negotiate a peace treaty with Judah P. Benjamin, secretary of state for the South. The shrewd Lincoln thanked his foot doctor for the "happy thought" and told him he would ponder the matter further. Although Lincoln dropped the idea of negotiating peace with the Confederacy, Zacharie left Lincoln that day entirely convinced that the president was "perfectly delighted with [his] success."

Willard's Hotel
Washington. Oct 9th. 1863

My Dear General

I wrote to you from Fortress Monroe, the day I started South. I now write to inform you of my success. I can write but little as the mail is on the eve of closing. Enough to say that Mr. Benjamin, Mr. Mallory Mr. Siddon [Seddon] & Genl Winder came to City-point to receive me. The interview was of the most friendly nature. Benjamin was anxious for me to return to Washington as it would not be safe for me to pass through the Southern states, unless I could take the oath of allegiance. So I heard all they had to say & returned here, and now comes the rub. It seems that Mr. Lincoln has done

everything for me on his own responsibility, and did not say a word to Mr. Seward until I returned, which seems I think to have displeased the Premier, but the President is true and is perfectly delighted with my success. But how to act he does not know. *He reminds me* of the *man* that *won the Elephant* at a *Raffle*. He does not know what to do with it. On my first arrival Mr. Lincoln detained me 2 hours, locking his doors and preventing any person from having access to him. He seemed to be delighted with my revelations. From what I can understand the subject has been brought before the Cabinet and bitterly opposed by Mr. Chase—Mr. Lincoln seemed in my interview with him to be desirous of effecting something, but still unwilling to give me his *proyromise* [*sic*] but stated, much good would grow out of it. But it required time to give it shape & life. He asked me if I had any thing to suggest, by which something could be effectively done, this gave me an opening to make this suggestion,

Send for Genl Banks, he is your friend and you can trust him with your Confidence in carrying out any negotiation, and let me go down and tell Benjamin that you will be sent to represent the President so soon as you can be got here. He replied that is a happy *thought*. Let me reflect and come and see me tomorrow. Thus the matter stands. I have not time to give you my conclusions.

The Herald to my great surprise yesterday in a leading article, recited that negotiations were being considered by the Cabinet, for a Peaceful termination of our troubles, and that the information could be relied upon. I find that my interview with the Chief of the Confederate Governt. is already known to many, which leads me to believe, that these revelations have been purposely made, with a view of throwing obstructions to prevent the consumption of this most desirable movement.

I will write you more by next mail.

Yours in haste
I. Zacharie. Md

P.S. Much credit is due to Mr. Martin Gordon for paving the way for me.[64]

5. "I AM SORRY TO SAY HE LACKS STABILITY"

On October 16, 1863, one week after informing General Banks that he had urged Lincoln to pursue a negotiated treaty with the South, Zacharie wrote again from the nation's capital. Lincoln's inaction frustrated Zacharie, and he exasperatingly contended that Lincoln "has it in his powers to stop all fighting in 24 hours if he would follow out my program." In his letter to Banks, Zacharie's fawning nature and opportunistic instinct come into sharp focus.

Willards Hotel
Washington Oct 16th 1863

My Dear General,

I wrote you by the last mail. Sent the letter to New York to be mailed, *for certain reasons*. Hope you received it. Since which time nothing has been done. Mr. Lincoln has refused to send for you but has not given me his reasons, but can see through it—it will make you to[o] popular. But my opinion is, that if anything is to be done, that they must send for you as I am determined that no person shall have the Eclaim [Acclaim?] but you. As I remarked to Mr. Lincoln, if it had not been for you, I could have accomplished nothing, I know one thing that no person will be received by Benjamin, except myself, as he pledged his word to me that if any thing was to be done that I

should have all the honour. I forgot to mention in my last that both Benjamin & Mallory spoke of you in the *kindest manner*, and Benjamin said that he was under many obligations to you for your kindness towards his *sister*.

I wish you was [*sic*] here to advise me how to act, as I cannot talk to any person. I need not tell you that Mr. Lincoln has done all on his own hook, and has a hard road to travel, as he did not say a word to Seward until I returned. I do not know if anything will be done or not. I should like you to know all, but I am afraid to write for fear the letter will not come to hand. Should of taken a trip to *see you*, but do not know how to act. Mr. Lincoln is in great trouble, fighting is going on in the front, in fact I think matters look bad.

I am sorry to say he *lacks stability*. He has it in his powers to stop all fighting in 24 hours if he would follow out my program, it was a misfortune that I did not see you on my return before I saw the President, you could of arranged everything. However it is not too late. I wish you would advise me how to act. Write to me at my residence 760 Broadway New York. Hoping to hear from you by return of mail.

Yours Respectfully
I. Zacharie. Md

To Major Genl. N. P. Banks

New Orleans[65]

6. A RARE LETTER FROM LINCOLN TO ZACHARIE

*Among the Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, one finds thirteen letters from Isachar Zacharie to Lincoln, but only one letter from Lincoln to Zacharie, dated September 19, 1864, survives in the collection. At this time, Zacharie was working to reelect Lincoln. Is Lincoln expressing his appreciation for Zacharie's efforts on his behalf and promising Zacharie that his "friend" will be "fully and fairly considered" for a patronage post at the proper time? It is impossible to know for certain, but Zacharie promptly replied to the president and told him his note "had the desired effect, with the friends of the Partie [*sic*]."*[66]

Executive Mansion
Washington, Sept. 19, 1864

Dr. Zacharie
Dear Sir

I thank you again for the deep interest you have constantly taken in the Union cause. The personal matter on behalf of your friend, which you mentioned, shall be fully and fairly considered when presented.

Yours truly
A. Lincoln[67]

7. MR. LINCOLN'S UNIONISM AND BUNIONISM

On September 21, 1864, Zacharie informed Lincoln that he planned to leave the following day to visit "the interior of Pennsylvania" and, perhaps, Ohio. He intended to "impress on the minds of [Lincoln's] friends…not to be to[o] sure."[68] *Presumably, Zacharie was among the many who felt that Lincoln's reelection was far from a certainty. Evidently, the chiropodist never left New York.*

Newspapers reported he had been shot in a quarrel with his business partner. The violent incident made Zacharie newsworthy, and on September 24, 1864, this highly critical and humorously sarcastic article concerning Zacharie's influence on President Lincoln appeared in the New York World.

> Doctor (?) Isachar Zacharie, the corn-doctor who was shot on Thursday in a quarrel with his partner (the particulars of the fracas were published in our columns yesterday), is a man who has enjoyed Mr. Lincoln's confidence perhaps more than any other private individual. He has visited the conquered cotton districts, armed with autograph letters from the President, by the aid of which he obtained special privileges which have inured greatly to his advantage. (These speculations are usually on joint account with *somebody*.) At New Orleans, soon after its capture, he was courted, feted, flattered, by high officials, because of these autograph missives of Mr. Lincoln. Dr. Zacharie is perhaps the most favored family visitor at the White House, and the President has often left his business-apartment to spend an evening in the parlor with this favored bunionist. The following illustration (one of many) may possibly suggest a reason for this remarkable intimacy between an obscure toe-nail trimmer and the chief executive of a great nation. About a year ago a Mr. Mordecai and friend, from Charleston, were arrested in Washington for having passed through our military lines. Mr. Mordecai's father is the rich Charlestonian who gave ten thousand dollars to aid the rebellion when it began—the first gift of any magnitude to the confederate cause. Dr. Zacharie and Mr. Mordecai were united in the golden bonds of friendship. Dr. Zacharie asked of the President the release of young Mordecai and it was promptly granted, but his friend (probably not having this golden influence) is still confined in a military prison. The evidence against both is precisely the same; but the President and the Secretary of War have refused the release of Mr. Mordecai's companion. Do the public interests demand such a distinction? Why were not both imprisoned or both released? What consideration had Mr. Lincoln (or his son “Bob”) for this favoritism?[69]

8. “WE PROPOSE TO GIVE—NOT TO TAKE”

Samuel A. Lewis was a prominent Jewish communal leader and political activist in New York City. Evidently, Zacharie notified Lewis that “a committee from the Jews” had approached the president to solicit funding in support of their efforts to reelect him. Writing on October 26, 1864, Lewis vehemently assured Lincoln that these individuals did not represent the American Jewish community and had come to Lincoln “against the wish” of Lincoln's Jewish friends. Lewis concludes by categorically insisting that “nothing shall be wanting on the part of your friends here towards carrying the Union Cause.”

> New York, Oct 26th 1864
>
> His Excellency A. Lincoln
>
> President
> Sir
>
> Having understood through our friend Dr Zacharie that some parties representing themselves “a committee from the Jews” had called on you to solicit contributions, I hasten to inform you that it is entirely against the wish of your Jewish friends here to take any money from outside committees or others—

We propose to give—not to take—I would esteem it a favor should any *Jewish committees* call on you or the Union Committee in Washington, if you would send them to me (as Dr Zacharie will be away frequently between now and the election) and I will furnish them such amounts as we see can be used to advantage—

Be assured nothing shall be wanting on the part of your friends here towards carrying the Union Cause,

I Remain, Sir,
Very Respectfully
Your Obdt Servt
Saml. A. Lewis[70]

9. NO SUCH THING AS A "JEWISH VOTE"

Myer Samuel Isaacs, a distinguished Jewish communal leader in New York, worked closely with his father, Samuel Myer Isaacs (1804–78), in the founding and editing of the Jewish Messenger *(established 1857) and also on the Board of Delegates of American Israelites (1859), the first successful attempt at organizing American Jewry in furtherance of the civil and political rights of Jews.*[71]

Isaacs was concerned about Isachar Zacharie and Samuel Lewis's assertion that they would be able to secure the support of the Jewish community on behalf of Abraham Lincoln's reelection in 1864. Although he was a Republican and a firm supporter of the Union, Isaacs was strenuously opposed to the suggestion that there was a "Jewish vote" in America. In his letter to Lincoln, Isaacs noted that most American Jews (in the North) were indeed pro-Lincoln and pro-Union, but this support, he explained, derived from the fact that Jews were—above all else—"advocates of the cherished principles of liberty & justice, and must inevitably support and advocate those who are the exponents of such a platform."

Private

"Jewish Messenger" Office

119 West Houston Street,
New York, October 26th 1864.

Your Excellency:

As a firm and earnest Union-man, I deem it my duty to add a word to those that have doubtless been communicated to you from other sources, with reference to a recent "visitation" on the part of persons claiming to represent the Israelites of New York or the United States and pledging the "Jewish vote" to your support, and, I am informed, succeeding in a deception that resulted to their pecuniary profit.

Having peculiar facilities for obtaining information as to the Israelites of the United States, from my eight years' connection with the Jewish paper of this city and my position as Secretary of their central organization, the "Board of Delegates"—in which capacity I have had the honor heretofore of communicating with yourself and the Departments—I feel authorized to caution you, sir, against any such representations as those understood to have been made.

There are a large number of faithful Unionists among our prominent coreligionists—but there are also supporters of the opposition; and, indeed the Israelites are not, as a body, distinctively Union or democratic in their politics. In the conduct of our Journal

for example, while, from the first firing upon our national flag, there has been a steady support of the government in its efforts to maintain the integrity of the Union and crush the unhallowed rebellion, there has also been a studied persistence in the expression of what is an implicit belief, that the Jews, as a body, have no *politics*: and while we have earnestly counselled & implored attachment to the Union at whatever cost, we have refrained from interfering with the private political views of individual readers. This is predicated on our direct knowledge of the character and opinions of our coreligionists.

Therefore, sir, I am pained and mortified to find that you had been imposed upon by irresponsible men, animated, I am sure by mercenary motives; and I wish to inform you with all promptitude, that such acts are discountenanced and condemned most cordially by the community of American Israelites—As an illustration that an influential class of Jewish citizens are warm adherents of the administration, you have the fact that a Hebrew will cast for you the vote of a New York city congressional district. A single Union meeting this week presented these facts: the chairman of the Executive Committee & Committee of Arrangements, the gentlemen who presented the resolutions, two principal speakers and many prominent persons upon the platform, were Jews.—I refer to the German Union Mass Meeting on Monday night.

It is because I sympathize heart and soul with the action of government in using every means to restore the Union and overthrow the machinations of those who seek its disruption, that I am the more regret this attempt to deceive you. There is no "Jewish vote"—if there were, it could not be bought. As a body of intelligent men, we are advocates of the cherished principles of liberty & justice, and must inevitably support and advocate those who are the exponents of such a platform—"liberty & Union, now and forever."

Pardon the liberty I take in thus trespassing on your attention, but I pray that you will attribute it to the sole motive I have, that of undeceiving you and assuring you that there is no necessity for "pledging" the Jewish vote which does not exist—but at the same time that the majority of Israelite citizens must concur in attachment for the Union and a determination to leave no means untried to maintain its honor and integrity.

With the expression of high esteem, I am, sir,
Yours Most Respectfully,
Myer S. Isaacs[72]

10. "ABOUT JEWS"

Historians have wondered why President Lincoln thought to begin his January 25, 1865, memorandum to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton with the fragment "About Jews." In this memorandum, Lincoln requests that Dr. Zacharie be granted a pass to visit his family in Savannah. The note also makes reference to Major Leopold Blumenberg (1827–76), a war hero who was "crippled" during the Battle of Antietam and subsequently appointed to serve as provost marshal of the Third Maryland District. Evidently, Blumenberg had been summarily dismissed, having been accused of "cruelty in gagging men to make them confess they were deserters."[73] *Lincoln politely reminds Stanton that Blumenberg had "suffered" for the Union and should not be "dismissed in a way that disgraces and ruins him without a hearing" just "for being our friend."*

Why did Lincoln introduce these two matters with the words "About Jews"? Does this

peculiar opening reveal something about Lincoln's attitude toward Jews? The passage from Naphtali J. Rubinger's Abraham Lincoln and the Jews *explicates some of the interpretative difficulties Lincoln's strange remark engendered.*[74]

> Executive Mansion
> Jan. 25, 1865
>
> Hon. Secretary of War,
> My dear Sir,
>
> About Jews. I wish you would give Dr. Zacharie a pass to go to Savannah, remain a week and return, bringing with him, if he wishes, his father and sisters or any of them. This will spare me trouble and oblige me—I promised him long ago that he should be allowed this whenever Savannah should fall into our hands.
>
> Blumenberg, at Baltimore, I think he should have a hearing. He has suffered for us and served us well—had the rope around his neck for being our friend—raised troops—fought, and been wounded. He should not be dismissed in a way that disgraces and ruins him without a hearing.
>
> Yours truly,
> A. Lincoln[75]

Lincoln's Strange Remark

Many have been puzzled as to why Lincoln chose such an odd form of reference, "About Jews," for his opening phrase. Was this an indication that Lincoln regarded Jews as a nuisance or that off the record he shared and harbored prejudice against them? Korn, in his analysis of this problem, discounts the possibility of Lincoln being in any way intolerant. He points out the many instances when Lincoln dealt with kindness and justice toward Jews. If there was an intent to be conveyed by the phrase "About Jews," it was intended as a rebuff to those who disliked Zacharie, and perhaps Jews in general. Bertram W. Korn concludes:

> It is my personal opinion therefore, that when Lincoln wrote "about Jews" he was in effect saying to Stanton, who disliked Zacharie (perhaps on account of his Jewish origin) and had previously denied him a pass to Savannah: "I know there is prejudice against the Jews. I know that there is intolerance toward them. Therefore, I label these two men as Jews. I want you to know that they are Jews. I anticipate any objection based on their religious affiliation. Just because they are Jews I want to be generous to them."

It should be noted, however, that Lincoln repeats this stylistic oddity at the beginning of the second paragraph of this same letter when he noted, "Blumenberg at Baltimore." Zacharie himself used similar phraseology in one of his letters when he wrote: "As regards the Isrelites [*sic*]." Possibly Lincoln penned this phrase in conjunction with a personal memo that may have been marked "About Jews," and "Blumenberg at Baltimore." In either case it can not be asserted that the phrase reflects any ill feelings on the part of Lincoln toward the Jew.[76]

11. FREAKS OF LEGISLATION

On January 14, 1896, the New York Times *criticized those who submitted claims to the U.S.*

Congress requesting financial compensation for "questionable" services. The case at hand involved none other than Dr. Isachar Zacharie, who had presented a petition to Congress requesting payment of $45,000 for the podiatric treatment he provided to "15,000 men" in the Union army during the course of the Civil War.

The Committee on War Claims, chaired by former congressman Stephen W. Kellogg (1822–1904), was not impressed with Zacharie's claim. Although the aging chiropodist provided letters confirming he had the endorsement and support of Abraham Lincoln, William H. Seward, and Edwin Stanton, the committee concluded that "the claimant was plying his vocation and voluntarily sought to pursue the same in the lines of the Union Army." Not only had the foot doctor failed to substantiate the validity of his appeal, the committee saw no reason to pursue the matter further. The final recommendation was to let Dr. Zacharie's claim "lie upon the table."

> Washington, Jan. 13.—The document rooms of the Senate and House of Representatives are mines of the most interesting information if one only has the patience to delve through the indexes of volume upon volume of the claims and bills which have never been reported from the committees. Each Congress furnishes examples of "freak bills," which originate too often with the constituents of members who introduce them in the hope of recompensing the petitioners for the offices they didn't get. There are other classes of bills which are born and presented in a rational manner, but the nature of them and the manner in which the committees to which the bills have been referred have looked upon them in a jocular light, and the reports which have been submitted to the House and Senate are written in a vein of keen humor and satire.
>
> There is, perhaps, no better example of the case of a doubtful claim handled in a summary if amusing manner than that of Issachor Zacharie, a gentleman learned in the profession of extracting corns, who plied his trade during the war of the rebellion. The petition of Issachor was reported from the Committee on War Claims by Mr. [Stephen W.] Kellogg of Connecticut in June, 1874.[77] The report opens with the statement of Zacharie's petition; that he was by profession a chiropodist, practicing his profession in the City of New-York and elsewhere, and that in the year 1862, upon the recommendation of certain Surgeons of the United States Army and citizens of the United States, the claimant alleges that the following letter was written:
>
> Executive Mansion
> Washington, D.C., Sept. 23, 1862
>
> From numerous testimonials of the highest character, and from personal experience, we approve the very great success of Dr. I. Zacharie in operating upon corns, bunions, and other troubles of the feet, by which instantaneous relief is afforded, and we desire that the soldiers of our brave army may have the benefit of his surprising skill.
>
> A. Lincoln
> William H. Seward

In pursuance of this letter the following order was issued by the Secretary of War:

> War Department
> Washington, D.C., Sept. 24, 1862

Dr. I. Zacharie has permission to pass within the lines of the United States forces around Washington and on the Potomac for the purpose of operating upon the feet of the soldiers for corns, bunions, &c. this pass to continue for thirty days.

Edwin M. Stanton

Continued for sixty days by the order of Gen. Tucker Blake, Assistant Secretary of War.

Signed Nov. 21. 1862.

It appears that, under the authority conferred by these orders, Zacharie proceeded to Fort Monroe and operated upon the feet of numerous soldiers—according to his own report, at least 5,000 in number—under command of Gen. John A. Dix, with entire satisfaction, according to his own account, to the soldiers as well as to Gen. Dix. A letter was submitted by Zacharie to the committee purporting to have been written by Gen. Dix, the hero of "Shoot him on the spot" memory, but nothing was presented to establish its genuineness, and the evidence of the soldier whose pedal extremities are alleged to have been operated on was not given so that the committee in its consideration of the case reported itself as without that light and information necessary to make a careful analysis of the evidence which the character of the claim—not to mention its peculiarity—entitled it to receive.

Zacharie also alleged that, under a written recommendation from President Lincoln to Gen. Banks, then commanding the Department of the Gulf at New-Orleans, La., he proceeded to that city, with his assistant, and for a period of nearly ten months remained with the troops and operated upon the suffering members of about 6,000 men; that he then returned to Washington, and during the remainder of the years 1863–[*sic*] operated upon the feet of troops stationed at or near Washington, Baltimore, and other points, to the number of 4,000, making in all a total of 15,000 men. For these services and for other valuable services incidentally rendered during his connection with the army, the character of which was not stated, Zacharie alleged that he received no compensation. He made what he stated to be the very low and modest charge of $3 for each man operated upon. As he claimed that he had operated upon the feet of 15,000 men, the claim was, therefore, for $45,000.

The report of the committee is amusing.

"Primarily," the report says, "and to commence at the beginning, in order to fairly present the facts, it is not even pretended by Zacharie that the corns and bunions upon the feet of the soldiers of the Army of the Potomac operated upon by him were the results either of active military operations of said army, or that the same did not exist at the time of the enlistment of the soldiers who were the beneficiaries of the skill of the claimant…. Other commands, as, for instance, that of Gen. Sherman in his famous march to the sea, which traversed the country from the Mississippi River to the Atlantic Ocean, developing thereby, without doubt, numerous corns and bunions, were equally entitled to have their corns and bunions removed. Aside from the fact that the proof to establish the claimant's statements is wanting, that he did operate upon the number of men of the several commands stated for corns and bunions, is the important fact that the claimant rendered no account whatever to the proper authorities of the several commands as to the disposition of the said corns and bunions secured by him, provided the facts are as stated. Such a collection, supposing the facts to be as claimed by Zacharie, would be so valuable an addition to the Army Medical Museum that in

considering this claim your committee feels constrained to consider such loss to the museum in the way of recoupment or setoff as against the claim set up by Zacharie.

"The claimant was plying his vocation and voluntarily sought to pursue the same in the lines of the Union Army. He obtained from the proper authorities the necessary passport, but did not apply to the Quartermaster General—the officer charged with furnishing transportation to the troops, and which, if furnished, would have doubtless nipped, as it were, thousands of incipient corns in the bud—for a contract to do the work alleged by him to have been performed. The word corn is derived from the Latin *cornu*, horn, and is defined to be a hard, horn-like excrescence of induration of the skin on the toes or other part of the feet. The claim partakes somewhat of the character of the corn for whose alleged removal compensation is claimed, and the similarity is so evident that your committee refrains from comment in that respect. Besides the reasons above set forth, showing why the claimant is not entitled to compensation for the services alleged by him to have been performed, there is the further consideration that, were Congress to admit the justice of Zacharie's claim, it would thereby establish the principle that the Government was bound to remove the corns and bunions from the feet of the soldiers of its armies during the late war. And then, if soldiers are entitled to relief from corns and bunions at Government expense, why not sailors? And if sailors, why not civilian employees? And then the soldiers who suffered with corns and bunions, and who were not relieved therefrom, would naturally bring claims for damage thereby, flooding Congress with the same, and necessitation the appointment of a Standing Committee on Corns and Bunions, or the creation of a special commission composed of men skilled in chirurgery. Other reasons might be given for the rejection of this claim, but those above stated are, in the opinion of your committee, sufficient, and the petition is accordingly reported back with the recommendation that it do lie upon the table." So it happened that Issachor Zacharie did not get his claim.[78]

3

Lincoln and the Chaplaincy Controversy

Three significant and highly publicized controversies arose during Lincoln's presidency that captured the attention of American Jewry: the so-called chaplaincy debate; General Ulysses S. Grant's infamous order expelling all Jewish citizens from the Military Department of Tennessee; and the rise of a political movement that hoped to declare the United States a Christian nation by amending the text of the U.S. Constitution. Arguably, the core of American Jewry's solemn admiration for Lincoln may be traced back to the personal role he played in responding to these three hotly debated political issues. Although much has already been written about these important events, a brief review of how Lincoln handled these issues from a diplomatic point of view sheds light on why so many—even people who did not vote for Lincoln—came to regard the sixteenth president as American Jewry's compatriot and benefactor, an ardent defender of "justice and liberality."[1]

After Confederate forces attacked the U.S. military installation at Fort Sumter in South Carolina on April 12, 1861, Lincoln called on Congress to raise a volunteer army from each state. The ninth section of the proposed "Volunteer Bill" authorized regimental commanders to appoint military chaplains for the regiments' soldiers. However, the bill stipulated that all chaplain-appointees must be "regularly ordained minister[s] of some Christian denomination."[2]

It was Clement L. Vallandigham (1820–71), a man who would soon become one of Lincoln's bitterest congressional opponents, who was among the first to note on the floor of the House of Representatives that the bill's chaplaincy provision effectively barred Jewish chaplains from the Union army. On July 12, 1861, in the context of the congressional debate on the "Volunteer Bill," Vallandigham moved an amendment that would have replaced the bill's parochial phraseology (a "minister of some Christian denomination") with more universal terminology: "a member of some religious society." He explained his rationale for amending the bill on the House floor: "There is a large body of men in this country, and one growing continually, of the Hebrew faith whose rabbis and priests are men of great learning and piety, and whose adherents are as good citizens and as true patriots as any in this country."[3]

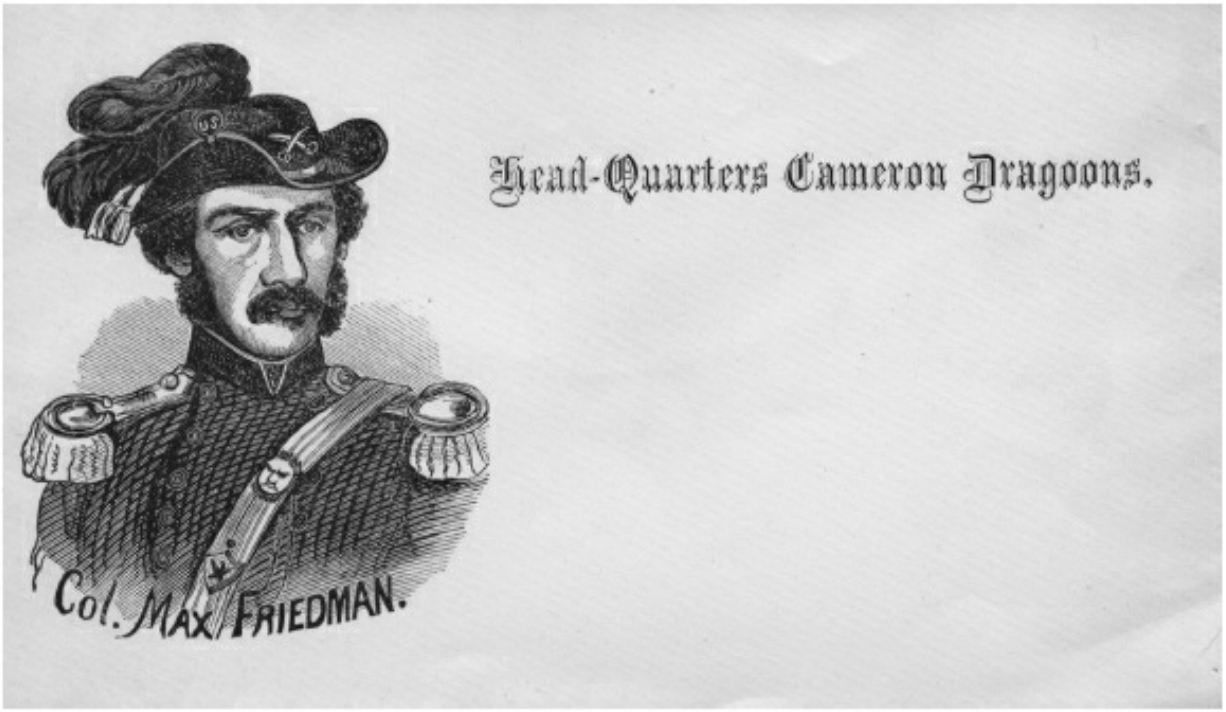
Insisting that the bill was "without constitutional warrant," Vallandigham proposed that the bill be amended so that Jews in the Union army could be served by their own religious leaders. The amendment failed and the bill became law once it passed the House of Representatives on July 22, 1861, and the U.S. Senate on August 3, 1861.

At this same time, the Sixty-Fifth Regiment in the Fifth Pennsylvania Cavalry (a regiment that was known as "Cameron Dragoons") contained a large number of Jewish volunteers and was led by a Jewish officer, Colonel Max Friedman (1825–1900). The men of this regiment elected one of their fellow enlistees, Michael M. Allen (1830–1907), to serve as their chaplain, a decision that made Allen the first Jew to serve in this capacity in the U.S. Army. It is likely that Friedman was unaware that the U.S. chaplaincy law forbade a Jew from serving as a regimental chaplain. Friedman and his regiment needed a chaplain, and Allen was a knowledgeable layman capable of leading worship services. Once the regiment elected Allen, he began ministering to his comrades as would any military chaplain.[4]

Only a month later, in early September 1861, a zealous YMCA worker from Philadelphia realized that Allen was illegally functioning as a chaplain for the entire regiment, Jew and non-

Jew alike. Once the illegality became public, it was almost a certainty that Allen would be dismissed. Before this could occur, though, Allen resigned his post on September 23, 1861, on account of poor health. Yet it seems that Colonel Friedman had no intention of letting the issue drop. He wanted a *Jewish* chaplain to minister to his mostly Jewish regiment, and if Michael Allen did not fit the bill, Friedman planned to find a suitable alternative.[5]

Since the Volunteer Bill approved the appointment of "regularly ordained ministers," Friedman recognized that he would need to identify a Jewish minister who would be willing to take on the duties of a military chaplain and serve as the trial case that would challenge the new law. Most likely, it was Colonel Friedman who first approached the Reverend Arnold Fischel (1830–94), a minister and teacher at New York's highly respected Congregation Shearith Israel, and urged him to submit a formal request to Secretary of War Simon Cameron for a chaplaincy appointment. There are a number of reasons why Friedman considered Fischel a likely prospect for this mission.[6]



Colonel Max Friedman, who led a platoon of Jewish soldiers in the Sixty-Fifth Regiment in the Fifth Pennsylvania Cavalry, invited Michael M. Allen to serve as military chaplain.
Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The forced resignation of the first unofficial Jewish military chaplain, Michael M. Allen, prompted American Jewry to appeal directly to Lincoln for relief. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

First, we know that later in life, Friedman became a prominent broker on Wall Street in New York. Although Friedman and his family immigrated to Philadelphia from Nuremberg when he was a very young boy, it is highly probable that Friedman had heard of Fischel even before the chaplaincy incident occurred. Fischel, a Dutch Jew, served as a lecturer in the Liverpool Old Hebrew Congregation in England before being engaged by New York's Congregation Shearith Israel in 1856. During his tenure in New York, Fischel became a lecturer of some note, and he regularly delivered learned orations to large crowds composed of Jews and non-Jews alike. Interestingly, Fischel seems to have been planning to leave his post at Shearith Israel even before this controversy arose. It appears he was seeking a different occupation that would accommodate his desire to spend more time researching, publishing, and lecturing. The prospect of becoming a chaplain for the U.S. Army might have arisen at just the right time.[7]

Even before his contract with Shearith Israel elapsed on October 31, 1861, Fischel wrote directly to Secretary Cameron on October 17, 1861, soliciting a commission to serve as a chaplain in the U.S. Army. Cameron promptly rejected Fischel's appeal in an apologetic memorandum dated October 23, 1861. The secretary of war explained that on account of legal “impediments,” he had no alternative but to decline the Jewish minister's appeal. Were it not for the law, Cameron explained, “the Department would have taken your application into its

favorable consideration." The news of this rejection quickly spread to every segment of the American Jewish community, sparking widespread outrage over a chaplaincy law that prohibited Jewish religious leaders, particularly a figure like Fischel, from serving his country together with Christian ministers.[8]

Jewish leaders and Jewish newspapers agitated vociferously, and an onslaught of letters, newspaper editorials, and protest petitions signed by both Jews and non-Jews demanded that the government amend what Rabbi Isaac M. Wise labeled as "that unconstitutional law."[9] Wise printed an array of protest letters and complaints in the pages of his paper, the *Israelite*. One of the most passionate of these appeals was penned by Jacob P. Solomon of Franklin, Indiana, who accused the Republicans of shamelessly pandering to religious abolitionists and suggested that the public vote the party out of office as soon as possible:

> If Catholics are allowed their priests and Methodists their preachers, why in the name of common sense should our congress prohibit Israelites from having a chaplain of their own persuasion to direct the religious services? Are the Jews less patriotic than the Methodists or the Presbyterians, the fact of there being nearly a regiment of them is sufficient evidence to the contrary?…Why should they be denied privileges which are granted to other denominations merely to gratify the bigotry and proselytizing proclivities of Abolition preachers? The Jews love this country as well as the Christians; the Constitution protects them as every body in their religion; but if the Republican party will persist in violating the Constitution and infringing upon the sacred rights of the people, we can only offer our protest against such proceedings and bid the people bide their time until the great Democratic party the defenders of the liberties of the people shall again control the affairs of government.[10]

The public outcry continued to snowball. If Jewish chaplains were barred from the field, was this law not tantamount to invalidating Judaism itself? The indignation was only exacerbated by the fact that *Confederate* law did *not* exclude Jews from serving as military chaplains.[11]

By the end of November 1861, the Board of Delegates of American Israelites (BODAI), the first national Jewish civil rights organization in the United States, resolved to assume responsibility for addressing this issue.[12] Since Fischel had already applied for the post, and in light of Cameron's written explanation that Fischel would have been appointed had U.S. law not restricted the appointment of military chaplains to Christian ministers only, the members of the Board of Delegates met and resolved that "Jewish ministers should be present in the camps & hospitals to administer consolation to Jewish soldiers" and, also, that the board should send Reverend Fischel to Washington to meet with President Lincoln and plead his case on behalf of the board. Fischel would be expected to "report the result" to a subsequent meeting of the Board of Delegates "without delay."[13]

Only a few months after Michael Allen had been forced to resign his commission, Reverend Fischel traveled to the nation's capital in early December 1861 armed with a briefcase full of documents, letters of introduction, and justifications rationalizing the need for his appointment. Fischel's mission may very well have been the first time that a national Jewish organization sent one of its representatives to the White House to submit an appeal for action on behalf of the American Jewish community.

Despite being told in advance that the president would not have time to discuss the matter, Fischel was determined to meet with Lincoln personally. He managed to procure an appointment

with Lincoln on December 11. According to Fischel's own detailed reports on this remarkable meeting, once he arrived he was ushered past “hundreds of people [who] were anxiously waiting for admission, some of whom told [him] that they had been for three days waiting their turn.” Lincoln greeted Fischel cordially, spoke to him respectfully, read Fischel's documentation, and listened carefully to the rabbi's appeal. Then, according to Fischel, Lincoln unequivocally stated that the rabbi's request was entirely proper. Lincoln maintained that “the exclusion of Jewish chaplains [was] altogether unintentional on the part of Congress, and [he] agreed that something ought to be done to meet this case.” He asked Fischel to give him a chance to sleep on the matter and invited the rabbi to return to the White House the following day. “If [I] have five minutes to spare, [I] will receive you and let [you] know [my] views.”[14]

Evidently, Lincoln did not have time to meet with Fischel the next day, but on December 15, 1861, Lincoln sent him the following memorandum in which he made known his plan of action: “I find there are several particulars in which the present law in regard to chaplains is supposed to be deficient, all which I now design presenting to the appropriate Committee of Congress. I shall try to have a new law broad enough to cover what is desired by you in behalf of the Israelites.”[15]

There is every reason to believe that Lincoln did just as he promised, because the legislative process for revising the status quo pertaining to the military chaplaincy began immediately. A week after Fischel met with Lincoln, on December 20, 1861, Indiana congressman William S. Holman (1822–97) submitted a resolution to the U.S. House of Representatives that called on the Committee of Military Affairs to submit a bill to the House that would enable regularly ordained ministers “of any religious society” to serve as military chaplains.[16]

Throughout the early months of 1862, Congress debated the text of the revised chaplaincy bill. The exact wording of the revision became an extremely important issue because some American citizens had expressed strong opposition to any wording that would suggest that the Jewish religion had parity with Christianity. Isaac M. Wise published a colorful sampling of this opposition in the pages of the *Israelite*. “Jews regard Jesus of Nazareth as an imposter, a deceiver, and one worthy of every term of reproach,” wrote the editor of the *Presbyter*, a Cincinnati-based Presbyterian newspaper. Should “this bill become a law…[the] government would, in effect, say that one might despise and reject the Savior of men, and thus trample under foot the son of God…and yet be a fit minister of religion.”[17]

Despite these objections, it was clear that Congress was working hard to find wording that would avoid diminishing the prominence of Christian chaplains while opening the door to chaplains from other religious traditions wishing to serve in a similar capacity. In April, however, even before Congress passed a revised version of the law that would legalize the commissioning of rabbinical chaplains, the BODAI informed Fischel that it could no longer afford to compensate him as promised for his activities in Washington. Without a stipend from the Board of Delegates, Fischel had no means of livelihood, and he promptly abandoned his lobbying efforts as well as his ministrations on behalf of the servicemen. He returned to his native Holland within a few months, where he lived out the remainder of his life. Despite his having played a central role in the controversy up to this point—including the important role he assumed as a rabbinical chaplain pro tem in the vicinity of the nation's capital during the first months of 1862—Fischel never received the appointment he worked so hard to obtain.[18]

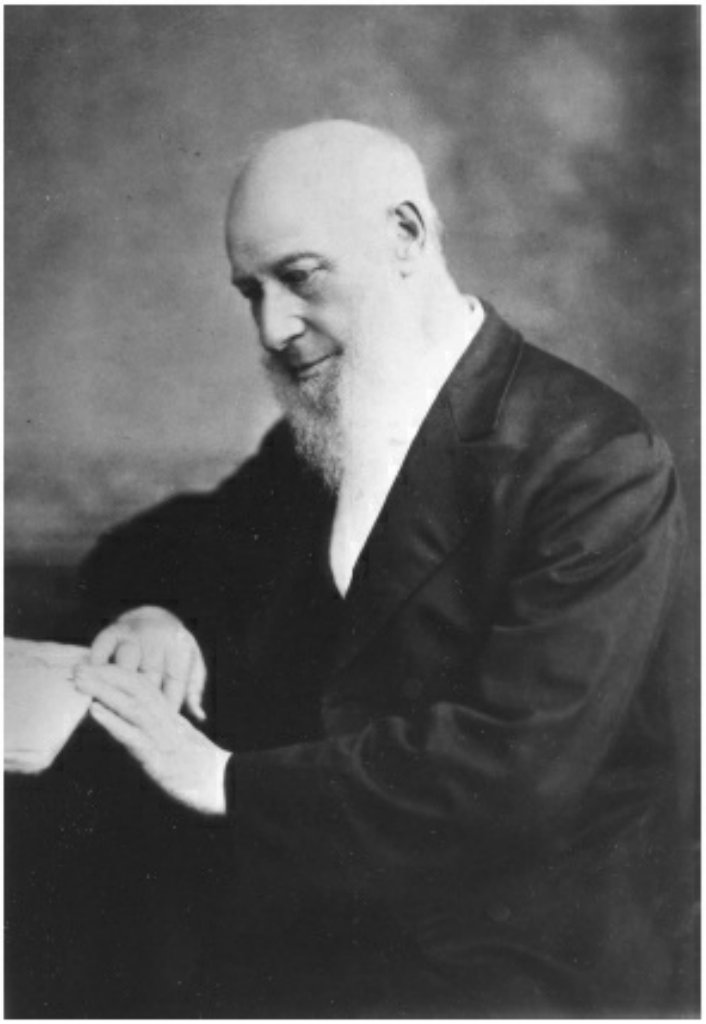
On July 17, 1862, Congress passed a new law declaring that “no person shall be appointed a chaplain in the United States Army that is not a regularly ordained minister of some religious denomination.” As far as the American Jewish community was concerned, Lincoln had made good on his promise, and it was only a matter of time before a Jewish religious leader submitted

an application for just such an appointment.[19] Yet the wording of the revised legislation also presented the Jewish community with a small administrative challenge. Not only was it necessary for a U.S. Army chaplain to be "a regularly ordained minister of some religious denomination," but the new law included an additional stipulation: a minister seeking appointment as military chaplain in the U.S. Army had to "present testimonials of his present good standing as such minister with a recommendation for his appointment as an army chaplain from some authorized ecclesiastical body, with not less than five accredited ministers belonging to the said religious denomination."[20]

In order to meet this requirement, Reverend Isaac Leeser (1806–68), a prominent Philadelphia rabbi, editor of the monthly periodical the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, and organizer of the Philadelphia Board of Ministers of the Hebrew Congregations, nominated a candidate for chaplain on behalf of the board so as to ensure he was meeting the new law's requirements. On August 21, 1862, Leeser informed Lincoln, in his official capacity as secretary, that the Philadelphia Board of Ministers of the Hebrew Congregations "deemed highly expedient to have a Jewish chaplain appointed by the President of the United States, to be invested with the privileges pertaining to ministers of other persuasions holding the same position."[21]

On September 6, 1862, John Hay, Lincoln's secretary, informed Leeser that the president had considered his request and was resolved to appoint a Jewish chaplain if the Board of Ministers of the Hebrew Congregations designated a candidate. What Leeser and the other members of the board did not know was that on the very day that Lincoln received Leeser's letter, he took concrete steps to fulfill the request. On August 23, 1862, Lincoln directed Hay to send Leeser's letter to Surgeon General William A. Hammond, M.D. (1828–1900), and asked what Hammond thought of the request of the Board of Hebrew Ministers. In order to make sure that the surgeon general knew where Lincoln stood, however, Hay added an important postscript: "If possible," Hay wrote Hammond, "the President would like this to be done." On September 5, 1862, Hammond returned Leeser's letter to Lincoln with a written assurance that he considered the board's request to be "both legal and proper." Having completed the diplomatic groundwork, Lincoln then instructed Hay to communicate with Leeser and ask the board to submit a name for approval.[22]

The Board of Ministers of the Hebrew Congregations wasted no time in nominating Reverend Jacob Frankel (1808–87), minister of Philadelphia's Rodeph Shalom Congregation, for the appointment. On September 18, 1862, Lincoln signed Frankel's commission, making him the first American rabbi to serve as a military chaplain for the U.S. armed forces.[23]



On September 18, 1862, a commission signed by Lincoln made Jacob Frankel the first American rabbi to serve as a military chaplain in the U.S. armed forces. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

DOCUMENTS

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1. THE BOARD OF DELEGATES RESOLVES TO ADDRESS THE CHAPLAINCY CONTROVERSY

Myer S. Isaacs, a New York lawyer, jurist, and Jewish communal leader, was only twenty years

old when he kept the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites. He carefully documented the BODAI's collective opinion that "Jewish ministers should be present in the camps & hospitals to administer consolation to Jewish soldiers."

Founded in New York City in 1859, the BODAI was the first central organization that sought to defend the rights of American Jews and, also, to work on behalf of Jews abroad. The chaplaincy controversy was one of the first Jewish civil rights issues in America to attract the interest of the BODAI.

The minutes of the BODAI's November 28, 1861, meeting confirm that the board's leadership had resolved to petition Congress to change the law that required Union military chaplains to be bona fide members "of some Christian denomination." Moreover, delegates instructed their president to "enter into communication with Reverend Dr. Fischell"[24] to see if he would be interested in helping them address this controversy.

At a meeting of the Executive committee of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites held at 30 West 28th St., Tuesday Evening, November 28th, 5622/1861.

Present: Henry I. Hart, Esq, President in the chair, Messers B. W. Hart, B. Russak, M. Wolfsohn, S. Wilzinski & M. S. Cohen

The minutes of the last meeting were read and approved.

The Secretary reported the receipt of $10 from each of the following Congregations, B'nai Jeshurun[25] and Beth El of New York, B'nai Jeshurun of Newark, NJ. Report accepted.

The President called the attention of the Committee to the letter published in the N.Y. Tribune from Hon. S. Cameron, Sec'y of War to Rev A. Fischell [clipping pasted into minute book]:

War Department, October 23, 1861

Rev. A. Fischel, Rabbi, Jewish Synagogue, No. 5 Carroll place, New York:

Sir,—Your communication of the 17th inst., enclosing a letter from the Honorable F[rederick] A. Conkling,[26] in reference to the Chaplaincy of the Cameron Dragoons, has been received. In reply, you are respectfully informed that by the 9th section of the Act of Congress approved July 22, 1861, it is provided that the Chaplains appointed by "the vote of the field officers and company commanders must be a regular ordained minister of some Christian denomination." A like provision, also, is made in the 7th section of the Act of Congress, approved August 3, 1861. Were it not for the impediments thus directly created by the provisions of these two acts, the Department would have taken your application into its favorable consideration.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,
Simon Cameron,
Secretary of War

Whereupon it was Moved & Seconded that this Committee shall petition Congress to alter the law limiting the appointment of Chaplains to "ordained ministers of some Christian denomination."

That the framing of the petition be confided to the President & that he is hereby authorized, with the Secretary, to sign the same, affix the seal of the Board thereto &

present it in due form to Congress.

Carried

Moved & Seconded that it is desirable that Jewish ministers should be present in the camps & hospitals to administer consolation to Jewish soldiers.

That, with a view of furthering this measure, the President be requested to enter into communication with the Rev. Dr. Fischell, & that he report the result therefore to this Committee without delay.

On motion, Adjourned
Myer S. Isaacs,
Secretary[27]

2. THE BOARD OF DELEGATES ADOPTS ITS PLAN OF ACTION

In the minutes of the BODAI's December 5, 1861, meeting, we learn that the chaplaincy controversy had become a very high priority for the young organization. The man they hoped would lead the charge, Rabbi Arnold Fischel, had been invited to this meeting. Fischel told the board that he was willing "to proceed to Washington & supervise the general welfare of Israelites in the army, if his expenses were paid." At this same meeting, the BODAI adopted five resolutions that related to the steps it would take to address this pressing communal concern. First, the BODAI planned to send Fischel to Washington as its spokesman and representative; second, the BODAI voted to adopt "a Memorial" (a petition) that would be sent to the U.S. Congress requesting the appointment of Jewish chaplains; and third, the BODAI resolved to compose an address "to the Israelites of the United States" that would alert them to this issue and engage them in an effort to identify "suitable persons as Chaplains" who would be ready to assume duty "should the object of memorializing the President be secured."

At a special meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites held on Thursday December 5th 1861–5622.

Present: Henry I. Hart, Esq., President in the Chair, Messers B. W. Hart, Ellis Joseph, M. S. Cohen, B. Russak & M. Wolfsohn.

The minutes of the last meeting were read & approved.

The President reported having communicated with Dr. Fischell in accordance with the resolution adopted at last meeting, and that he had asked the Dr. to be present this evening.

Dr. Fischell being called upon, explained the circumstances under which the letter of Genl. Cameron dated Oct. 23, reached him, and expressed his willingness to proceed to Washington & supervise the general welfare of Israelites in the army, if his expenses were paid.

Moved & Seconded that suitable persons be appointed to supervise the general spiritual welfare of our coreligionists in the Military Hospitals of the United States.

Carried

Moved & Seconded that the Rev. Dr. Fischell be invited to proceed to Washington, & take charge of the spiritual welfare of our coreligionists in the Camps & hospitals attached to the Department of the Potomac.

Carried

Moved & Seconded that a committee of Three be appointed, to draw up & issue an

address to the Israelites of the United States, on the subject contemplated in the foregoing resolutions, and that communication be had with the Committees of Israelites at the West on the subject of appointing suitable persons as Chaplains to the Departments of Kentucky & the West should the object of memorializing the President be secured.

Carried

Messers B. W. Hart, Wolfsohn, Saroni were appointed Committee on Address.

On motion, resolved that subscriptions in response to the address be received by the President, Vice President & Treasurer of the Board.

Carried.

The President called attention to paragraph 10 of General Orders No. 113 issued from the Adjutant General's office of the State of New York, reading thus: "The Regimental Chaplain, who must be a regular ordained minister of some Christian denomination, shall be appointed, &c."

On motion, the Secretary was instructed to prepare a suitable remonstrance & address the same to Gov. Morgan of N.Y.

On motion, Adjourned.
Myer S. Isaacs,
Secretary[28]

3. THE BOARD OF DELEGATES PETITIONS BOTH CHAMBERS OF CONGRESS

On December 6, 1861, the BODAI prepared a beautiful "Memorial," penned with a fair hand, addressed to the Senate and the House of Representatives. Presumably, Rabbi Fischel would carry this "Memorial" to the nation's capital. The tone of the remonstrance was firm. The document emphasized that the congressional act concerning military chaplains excluded from "the Office of Chaplain in the service of the United States 'regular ordained ministers' of the Jewish faith." The writers insisted that the current law was "prejudicial discrimination against a particular class of citizens, on account of their religious belief." Moreover, the law established a "religious test," which manifestly contravened the protections afforded the nation's citizens by the Constitution of the United States.

The "Memorial" concluded by insisting that the congressional acts relating to military chaplains be amended "so that there shall be no discrimination as against professors of the Jewish faith."

To the Honorable, the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America

The Subscribers, your memorialists respectfully show:

That they are the President and Secretary of the "*Board of Delegates of American Israelites*": and that they are duly empowered to submit to your honorable body the facts herein set forth, and to crave, at your hands, that attention to the subject which its importance to American citizens professing the Jewish religion, demands—

Your Memorialists respectfully show:

That by the 9th section of the Act of Congress, approved July 22, 1861, and the 7th section of the Act of Congress approved August 3, 1861, it is provided that "the Chaplain appointed by the vote of the field officers and company commanders, must be a regular ordained minister of some Christian denomination," and, that, as appears by

the following letter from the War Department to which your Memorialists beg leave to refer the said sections have been interpreted to exclude from the Office of Chaplain in the service of the United States "regular ordained ministers" of the Jewish faith.

War Department, October 23, 1861

Rev. A. Fischel, Rabbi, Jewish Synagogue, New York

Sir, Your communication of the 17th inst…. has been received. In reply, you are respectfully informed that by the 9th section of the Act of Congress approved July 22, 1861, it is provided that the Chaplains appointed by "the vote of the field officers and company commanders must be a regular ordained minister of some Christian denomination." A like provision, also, is made in the 7th section of the Act of Congress, approved August 3, 1861. Were it not for the impediments thus directly created by the provisions of these two acts, the Department would have taken your application into its favorable consideration.

I have the honor to be,

Very respectfully,
Simon Cameron,
Secretary of War

Your Memorialists respectfully submit that the body of citizens of the United States whom your memorialists represent, numbering not less than two hundred thousand, are unexcelled by any other class of citizens in loyalty and devotion to the Union, that thousands of them have volunteered into the Army of the United States, and are, by the provisions of the acts hereinbefore mentioned excluded from the advantages of spiritual advice and consolation provided by Congress for their fellow Citizens professing Christianity.

That the said Acts are oppressive inasmuch as they establish a prejudicial discrimination against a particular class of citizens, on account of their religious belief, and further—

That the said Acts inasmuch as they establish a religious test as a qualification for an office under the United States, are manifestly in contravention of Section 3, Article VI of the Constitution and Article I of Amendments thereto.

Your Memorialists, therefore respectfully pray that your honorable body will take this, their memorial into favorable consideration, and that you will in your wisdom, cause the Acts of Congress approved July 22nd and August 3rd 1861, respectively to be formally amended, so that there shall be no discrimination as against professors of the Jewish faith, in the several laws affecting the appointment of Chaplains in the service of the United States.

And your memorialists will ever pray.

Henry I. Hart
President
Myer S. Isaacs
Secretary[29]

In 1861 the Board of Delegates of American Israelites sent Arnold Fischel to meet with Lincoln and solicit his support for the appointment of Jewish military chaplains. Courtesy American Jewish Historical Society, New York, N.Y., and Newton Centre, Mass.

4. RABBI FISCHEL'S LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

Rabbi Arnold Fischel departed from New York for the nation's capital on Monday, December 9, 1861. Since he was determined to bring this matter to the personal attention of President Lincoln, Fischel came to Washington armed with letters of introduction and reference. One of these letters was written by E. Delafield Smith (1826–78),[30] *a man whom Lincoln had only recently appointed to serve as the U.S. district attorney for New York. Smith assured the president that the "Rev. Dr. A. Fischel" was the official representative of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites and a "gentleman of great worth and intelligence." In addition to his kind words about Fischel's character, Smith also volunteered his own sympathetic opinion on American Jewry. The Jews, he wrote, have "evinced loyalty to the Government and, I need not say, [are] entitled to at least a hearing on this subject."*

Moses Hicks Grinnell (1803–77) also composed a letter of reference for Fischel. Grinnell, a former U.S. congressman and a member of New York City's political elite, first met Lincoln personally when the president-elect stopped in New York on his way to Washington, D.C., in February 1860. A politically influential figure, Grinnell subsequently wrote a number of letters to Lincoln.

U. S. District Attorneys Office,
New York, December 9th, 1861

His Excellency,

Abraham Lincoln,

President of the United States,
Sir:

Mindful of the constant pressure upon your strength, I have refrained from obtruding letters of introduction upon you. I depart from this course now, to introduce to you the Rev. Dr. A. Fischel, who had been appointed by the Board of Delegates of The Israelites of the United States to urge the modification of the laws in relation to Chaplains, so far as they effect the practical, though I doubt not unintended, exclusion of clergymen of the Jewish faith from acting in that capacity even in regiments composed of persons of that religion.

The class of our citizens has evinced loyalty to the Government and, I need not say, is entitled to at least a hearing on this subject.

Doctor Fischel is a gentleman of great worth and intelligence, connected with the Jewish Synagogue in 19th Street, in this City. The congregation worshipping there is the oldest and wealthiest in this Country, as I am informed.

Hoping that a brief interview with Doctor Fischel may be agreeable to you and useful,

I am,

Honored Sir,
With great respect and regard,
Your faithful servant,
E. Delafield Smith
U. S. Dist. Atty.[31]

New York, Dec. 10, 1861

To Prst. Lincoln,

Sir, permit me to present to you Rev. Dr. Fischell of this city who visits Washington as a delegate from the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, having been selected as chaplain to the Jews of the army around Washington estimated at about 8000. Dr. Fischell is of high literary abilities and greatly esteemed by distinguished men of all religious denominations. Believe me, etc.

M. A. Grinnell[32]

5. LINCOLN'S MEMORANDUM TO RABBI FISCHEL

Despite reports to the contrary, President Lincoln agreed to see Rabbi Fischel on December 11, 1861. From Fischel's perspective, the meeting went quite well. Lincoln even asked him to return the next day to discuss the matter further. Much to Fischel's disappointment, Lincoln was unable to meet with him the next day, though the overall tenor of the meeting sustained Fischel's hope that Lincoln would, at the very least, agree to ask Congress to modify the law so that Jewish ministers would be able to become chaplains.

On December 15, 1861, Rabbi Fischel received a short but gratifying letter from Abraham Lincoln. He sat down on the spot and penned a buoyant letter to Henry I. Hart (1816–63),

president of the BODAI.[33] *Fischel wanted Hart and the rest of the BODAI to read Lincoln's words for themselves, so he quoted the entire text of Lincoln's letter verbatim. Had the rabbi not done so, we might never have been able to document Lincoln's personal involvement in the controversy, since the original of Lincoln's note appears to have been lost.*[34]

"I think we may congratulate ourselves," Fischel effused in his letter to Hart, "on having gained an important front in our cause." Lincoln told Fischel that he would do more than submit a recommendation to Congress supporting a modification of the current law; the president informed the rabbi that he would actually submit to Congress "a new law broad enough to cover what is desired by you in behalf of the Israelites."

Lincoln kept his word. Five months later, Congress passed new legislation that would enable ministers of the Jewish faith to serve as chaplains in the U.S. military.

332 Pennsylvania Ave.
Washington, Dec. 15, 1861

My dear Sir,

Yr letter of the 13th inst. has reached me, and its contents will be acted upon.

I think we may congratulate ourselves on having gained an important front in our cause. As you will have learned from my letter of the 13th inst. the President has resolved to lay my case before the Cabinet, and accordingly I rec'd on Friday evening the following letter, from which you will perceive that the President has decided not only to recommend to Congress the modification of the law but actually to submit to them a bill which will embrace in general terms all religious denominations:

[Copy of the president's letter]

Executive Mansion Dec. 15, 1861

Rev. Dr. A. Fischel
My dear sir

I find there are several particulars in which the present law in regard to chaplains is supposed to be deficient, all which I now design presenting to the appropriate Committee of Congress. I shall try to have a new law broad enough to cover what is desired by you in behalf of the Israelites.

Yours truly,
(signed) A. Lincoln

Having fully studied the subject, I was prepared to affirm that this is by far the most important step the Pres't could have taken. Had he appointed me under some fictitious title, to evade the act of Congress and merely to pacify the demands of the Jews, it would have been very advantageous to myself, but the Jewish community would have gained nothing by it, since they w[ould]d be actually excluded by law and only admitted by the back door. The great principle the Jews have to contend for is, that the Constitution takes no cognizance of religious sects and that consequently we do not want *special* legislation for the Jews, as is the case in England, but all legislation must be *general* for *all American citizens* without any regard to their faith. Now this is precisely what we need for in undertaking to submit to Congress a bill based on general principles, he virtually throws his entire influence in our favor and with more force than by merely sending a special message on the subject to Congress. The course I shall

have to pursue is now self evident. The Committee on Military Affairs will have charge of that bill, and I will make it my business to see its members with the object of forcing on their attention our claims, as well as examining the details in so far as they relate to the religious opinions of the chaplains. As soon as the bill is printed I will send you a copy, and if the Committee report the same favorably to the House, it is sure to pass. Some weeks may elapse before this bill will come before them, and you will, therefore, see the propriety of my abstaining from bringing the matter before Congress, as such a process is sure to injure rather than benefit the cause.

This now is in the best hands, and everything will be done on my part that is likely to promote its success. As You will probably not hear from me again till next week, unless something of importance is to be communicated. I shall pass all my time this week in the camps and hospitals…. Whenever you have any suggestions to make, please write me.

Very respectfully yrs,
A. Fischel

Henry I. Hart, Esq.[35]

6. ISAAC LEESER URGES LINCOLN TO APPOINT A JEWISH CHAPLAIN

On July 17, 1862, Congress passed a law that authorized the Jewish ministers to serve as military chaplains in the armed forces. Now the president needed to make the first chaplaincy appointment. Rabbi Isaac Leeser, one of the most distinguished rabbinic figures of the period, was serving as secretary of the Board of Ministers of the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia when he urged President Lincoln to "speedily comply" with the Board of Ministers' petition that he approve the appointment of a Jewish chaplain to serve soldiers in military hospitals in and near Philadelphia.

Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia was one of the most significant rabbinical personalities of the nineteenth century. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

In his letter to the president dated August 21, 1862, Leeser stressed his belief that there was now a moral necessity for Lincoln to take swift action on this matter. Lincoln "recognized the propriety of [Leeser's] suggestion,"[36] and on September 18, 1862, Rabbi Jacob Frankel of Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Philadelphia became the first Jewish clergyman in the history of the United States to serve as a military chaplain.

To the Hon. Abraham Lincoln

President of the United States of America
Sir

By order of the Board of Ministers of the Hebrew Congregations of Philadelphia, I take the liberty, as their secretary of addressing you briefly on a subject of great importance to us as a religious body.

Many Israelites are serving in the army of the United States, and this city and vicinity being the locality where numerous hospitals for the sick and wounded soldiers have been established, it is to be expected that not a few persons of our persuasion will be brought hither in a condition to require spiritual no less than bodily care. In fact two at least of our persuasion have already died in the hospitals, one of these had his religious affinities not made known to us till after he had been already buried without an Israelite being present. From the steps taken by us it is not probable that another Israelite will die under similar circumstances without some one of his fellow believers being made cognizant of his case.

Nevertheless it has at our last meeting been deemed highly expedient to have a Jewish chaplain appointed by the President of the United States, to be invested with the privileges pertaining to ministers of other persuasions holding the same position. The act of the last session of Congress having given you full authority to delegate to Israelites this office of mercy, we trust that you will speedily comply with our request.

The object of this being merely a preliminary step, to bring the matter under your notice, it is useless to enlarge, especially as we are well aware that your time is greatly occupied by public concerns of the gravest importance. Still our request is one which should of right receive the kind attention of the chief magistrate of the Union, mainly because the moral effect of the compliance with our request cannot fail of being manifest to yourself.

If an appointment is made, it is suggested that the district for the operation of the chaplain might conveniently include York, Harrisburg, Chester and other towns not at too great a distance, where U.S. hospitals are or may be established.

Please to command my services in whatever way I could convey such information as may be needed by you.

For our trustworthiness, as our board are strangers to you, we may refer to Messrs Biddle, Lehman & Kelly members of the House of Representatives of this city.

Respectfully your obt. sevt.
Isaac Leeser
minister Franklin St. Synagogue
and secry. Board of Heb. mins. of Phila.
Philadelphia
1229 Walnut St
August 21st 1862[37]

7. THE MAN WHO LED THE FIGHT FOR THE RIGHT TO SERVE DENIED APPOINTMENT

Although Jacob Frankel had been appointed to care for Jewish soldiers in the vicinity of Philadelphia, this did not alleviate the need for Jewish chaplains elsewhere. On October 6, 1862, the president of the BODAI, Henry I. Hart, asked Lincoln to appoint Dr. Arnold Fischel a military chaplain so he could tend to the needs of Jewish soldiers in hospitals in and around Washington.

In this case, the surgeon general's office surveyed the military hospitals in the Washington area and, allegedly finding only seven Jewish patients, rejected Hart's request. Evidently, the man who, as one historian noted, "won for American Jewry the first major victory of a specifically Jewish nature…in a matter touching the Federal government" never himself received a commission and never served as a military chaplain.[38]

New York, Tishri 12th 5623
October 6th 1862

Sir,

May we not once again call your Excellency's attention to the necessities of the Jewish volunteers? We know your time is fully occupied with the engrossing cares of state, but feel sure you will require no apology for bringing once more to your notice the case of our coreligionists who, expending their life's blood in the noble cause of country, are still, when racked by pain and suffering, debarred the privilege of the ministrations of spiritual advisers of their faith. They are sick and dying in the hospitals —hundreds of them. We beg of you to relieve them.

Congress has empowered you to designate regularly ordained ministers of various religious denominations as chaplains to the army hospitals. In the vicinity of Washington City, we are informed that the 48 hospitals contain nearly 20,000 patients; among them are a fair proportion of Jewish soldiers. May we not earnestly solicit you to confer on the Rev. Dr. Arnold Fischel, a capable & respected minister of our faith, duly ordained, whose testimonial as required by law, was duly forwarded to your Excellency in August last,—or on some other suitable person the appointment of Chaplain to the hospitals in and around Washington, so that the pain of our suffering brethren may be assuaged and their mental agony soothed?

We do not address you in the capacity of seekers after office; but, in the name of humanity and of our Country which Israelites love as dearly as their fellow citizens, ask your speedy compliance with our request.

Fervently trusting that peace and unity may soon be restored to our land, and that you may long be spared to preside over its destinies, I beg to subscribe myself, in behalf of the Executive Committee of this Board, and awaiting your Excellency's reply,

Your Obedient Servant
Henry I. Hart
President
office, 369 Broad Way,
Myer S. Isaacs.
Secretary[39]

4

Lincoln and the Revocation of General Orders No. 11

Less than three months after Reverend Jacob Frankel's appointment brought the chaplaincy controversy to a satisfactory conclusion for the American Jewish community, and just two days after President Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, Lincoln adjudicated the most notorious anti-Jewish act in American history. This extraordinary event, known as Grant's "General Orders No. 11," resulted in the first and only time in the nation's history that Jews, "as a class," were expelled from American territory.[1]

On December 17, 1862, General Ulysses S. Grant telegraphed the following order throughout the Military Department under his command:

> The Jews, as a class, violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department and also department orders, are hereby expelled from the department within twenty-four hours from the receipt of this order.
>
> Post commanders will see that all of this class of people be furnished passes and required to leave, and anyone returning after such notification will be arrested and held in confinement until an opportunity occurs of sending them out as prisoners, unless furnished with permit from headquarters. No passes will be given these people to visit headquarters for purpose of making personal application for trade permits.
>
> —By the order of Maj. Gen. U. S. Grant: Jno [John] A[aron] Rawlins, Assistant Adjunct General[2]

This order authorized regional commanders to expel all Jewish citizens—men, women, and children—living in the newly created Military Department of the Mississippi, which included the states of Kentucky and Tennessee and parts of Alabama and Mississippi. Understandably, the order has been called "the most sweeping anti-Jewish regulation in all American history."[3]

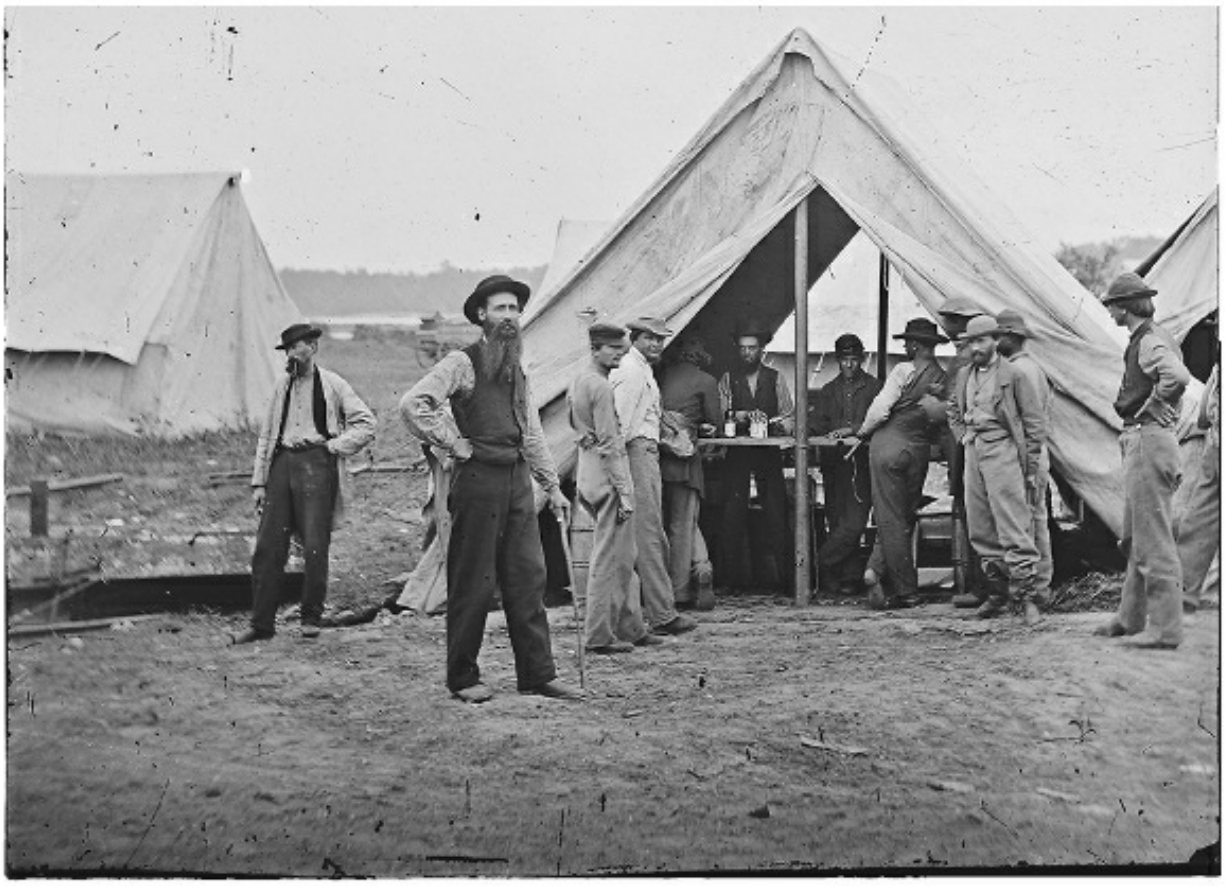
During the months leading up to the infamous edict's promulgation, Grant had been particularly vexed by the problem of "unprincipled traders" who traveled into the occupied South, both with and without authorized permits, to conduct commercial activity. Many of these profiteers tried to make some fast cash by gathering up cotton crops and other commercial goods from vanquished southerners and then transporting the goods into the Union. By the fall of 1862, illicit trading activities had become a serious problem. "Bribery and corruption" were rife, and the demoralizing profiteering was so widespread that Lincoln himself complained that "the army itself is diverted from fighting the rebels to speculating in cotton."[4]

Ulysses S. Grant, half-length portrait, standing, facing slightly right, wearing uniform, circa 1865. The implementation of Grant's General Orders No. 11 constituted the only time in history that Jews, as a class, were banished from American territory. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

It is not difficult to understand why Grant associated this activity with Jews. First, it is a fact that many, though certainly not all, of those involved in this kind of commercial trading were Jewish. Peddling and trading was a popular livelihood among the Jewish immigrants who had settled in the states of the Old Northwest Territory. The actual number of Jewish tradesmen doing this kind of work was made to appear even larger because of the popular tendency to stereotype the Jew. During this era, the term "Jew" was often unthinkingly used as an epithet to describe anyone—Jew or non-Jew—who behaved in a shrewd, ambitious, and in some instances dishonorable fashion. These factors caused many in the North to stereotype Jewish peddlers and entrepreneurs in the region as being profiteers. Yet Grant's decision to punish Jews *as a class*—men, women, and children—when he issued his infamously bigoted edict remains to this day a truly incomprehensible ruling.[5]

Historians have proffered an array of hypotheses in an attempt to explain Grant's confounding decision to expel Jews "as a class" from the military department in such an indiscriminate manner. Some have asserted that Grant's superiors in Washington directed him to issue the order and then, after the tidal wave of resentment hit, told Grant to abandon the idea and let the longsuffering general take the heat for the decision. Others have suggested that Grant was acceding to the will of his own military personnel. Many of the officers in the U.S. Army had been collaborating with profiteers in order to fatten their own wallets. If an unscrupulous trader

was unable to procure a legitimate trading permit, he would try to serve as the agent/representative for an army officer who was authorized to grant him permission to travel into southern territory for commercial purposes. Many officers were eager to collaborate with these ambitious traders and sutlers so they could earn a cut of the profits. It has been argued that a number of these officers wanted to eliminate Jewish competition in the hope of gaining more direct control over the enterprise. Therefore, they urged their general to give the Jewish competition the boot.[6]



Petersburg, Va., sutler's tent, Second Division, Ninth Corps, November 1864. Civil War sutlers traveled with the armies and sold the soldiers clothing, food, dry goods, and other necessities.
Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Another explanation ascribes Grant's decision to an act of displaced anger. Only a short time prior to the issuance of General Orders No. 11, Jesse R. Grant (1794–1873), the general's father, arrived at his son's Mississippi headquarters with three Jewish business partners in tow: Harman, Henry, and Simon Mack of Cincinnati, Ohio. Jesse and his partners approached Grant in an attempt "to procure a permit for them to purchase cotton" in the South and transport it back to the Union for a profitable sale. As one historian summarized, Grant was furious but could not bring himself to punish his own flesh and blood, so he "expelled the Jews rather than his father." A fourth consideration may have contributed, in some measure, to any of the aforementioned explanations: Grant's well-documented drinking habit may very well have left his mind cloudy on an occasion or two, making him particularly irritable and impulsive. No matter what the

actual cause may have been, it is unmistakably clear on the basis of Grant's own dispatches that Grant himself had concluded that the most efficacious way for him to address the vexing problem of illicit trading practices would be to expel all Jewish tradesmen from his department so as to keep them from traveling to the South. This ambition ultimately led him to issue his condemnable order.[7]

By November 1862, it was clear that Grant had had his fill of illegal traders and sutlers—and the Jewish ones had become a particular annoyance. In a dispatch dated November 9, Grant canceled all trading permits for the South and added an additional injunction: "The Israelites especially should be kept out." The next day Grant issued a similar order, which again singled out the Jews for special treatment: "No Jews are to be permitted to travel on the railroad southward from any point. They may go north and be encouraged in it; but they are such an intolerable nuisance that the department *must be purged of them*" (emphasis added). On the very day that Grant promulgated General Orders No. 11, he discussed his decision in a communication to Assistant Secretary of War Christopher Parsons Wolcott (1820–63):

> I have long since believed that in spite of all the vigilance that can be infused into post commanders, the spice regulations of the Treasury Department have been violated, and that mostly by Jews and other unprincipled traders. So well satisfied have I been of this that I instructed the commanding officer at Columbus to refuse all permits to Jews to come South, and I have frequently had them expelled from the department, but they come in with their carpet-sacks in spite of all that can be done to prevent it. The Jews seem to be a privileged class that can travel everywhere. They will land any woodyard on the river and make their way through the country. If not permitted to buy cotton themselves they will act as agents for some one else, who will be at military post with a Treasury permit to receive cotton and pay for it in Treasury notes which the Jew will buy up at an agreed rate, paying gold. There is but one way that I know of to reach this case; that is, for Government to buy all the cotton at a fixed rate and sent it to Cairo, Saint Louis, or some other point to be sold. Then all traders (they are a curse to the army) might be expelled.
>
> U. S. Grant, Major-General[8]

Was Grant's decision an outgrowth of a fundamentally anti-Jewish disposition? It is impossible to say with certainty. He and his supporters firmly denied the accusation. General Orders No. 11, Grant later insisted, was a misguided effort on his part to address a demoralizing problem of greedy and unpatriotic traders. Years later, during the presidential campaign in 1868, Grant—who tenaciously refused to discuss General Orders No. 11 publicly—did confess, in private correspondence, that the entire affair was due to the fact that he had acted much too carelessly and precipitously:

> The order was issued and sent without any reflection and without thinking of the Jews as a sect or race to themselves, but simply as persons who had successfully (I say successfully instead of persistently because there were plenty of others within my lines who envied their success) violated an order, which greatly inured to the help of the rebels…. I have no prejudice against sect or race, but want each individual to be judged by his own merit. Order No. 11 does not sustain this statement, I admit, but then I do not sustain that order. *It never would have been issued if it had not been telegraphed the moment it was penned, and without reflection*.[9] (emphasis added)

Fortunately for the Jews, surprise military attacks were disrupting communications between Grant's headquarters and his military commanders, which caused the order, promulgated by telegram, not to reach many of the command posts in a timely fashion. Some of the commanders who did receive the order telegrammed headquarters for additional clarifications: did the general mean for them to expel *all* Jewish merchants and sutlers who provided goods to the soldiers? The order had been revoked by the time headquarters had a chance to consider these queries. It is also interesting to note that Isaac M. Wise contended in his newspaper, the *Israelite*, that General Jeremiah Cutler Sullivan (1830–90) actually refused to carry out the order. Nevertheless, General Orders No. 11 was carried out by some and primarily took effect in two particular regions of Grant's department: northern Mississippi and Paducah, Kentucky.[10]

Northern Mississippi is where Grant was headquartered, and this fact may explain why subordinates in this particular region wasted no time in identifying Jews in the territory and deporting them. Distressing reports to this effect soon began to circulate. Rabbi Wise provided his readers with an alarming exposé on the expulsion of Jews from Holly Springs and Oxford, Mississippi, in the *Israelite*, and in New York, Reverend Samuel M. Isaacs's *Jewish Messenger* carried similar stories. Later in the month, after the order had already been rescinded, hair-raising stories about the mistreatment of Jews in these two cities continued to circulate.[11]

It was in Paducah, Kentucky, however, where the most sensational developments occurred. Captain L. J. Waddell, provost marshal in Paducah, received Grant's edict and acted on it with alacrity. He notified the entire Jewish community—store owners, businessmen, families, law-abiding citizens all—that they had twenty-four hours to leave Paducah. One historian has emphasized that Paducah had been well primed for such bigotry because the then-bustling community had been suffering from rampant political and economic strife, which heightened anti-Jewish fervor in the region. In other words, Waddell and some other local officials were inclined to act promptly because Paducah had become fertile soil for “cupidity, suspicion, and fear.”[12]

By the end of the month, the Jews of Paducah—save two ill women—had left on steamships that headed up the Ohio River toward Cincinnati. Although these hapless Jews must have been profoundly stunned by these catastrophic and fast-paced developments, there was one member of the community, Cesar J. Kaskel, who was determined to fight back against the odious order. Kaskel's indignation carried him to Washington, D.C., where he would have a remarkable personal meeting with Abraham Lincoln in the White House.[13]

Thirty-year-old Cesar J. Kaskel (1833–92) and his younger brother, Julius W. Kaskel (1837–1909), the most prominent Jewish activists involved in this upsetting incident, were immigrants from Wiesbaden, Prussia. Very little is known about their lives aside from the courageous role they played in advocating for the revocation of General Orders No. 11. They apparently immigrated to the United States in the early 1850s and settled in the Middle West. Julius lived in Burlington, Iowa, in the late 1850s, and he was listed as one of the city's “clothiers and tailors” in Des Moines's 1859 City Directory. On April 23, 1861, Julius enlisted as a volunteer in the First Iowa Infantry, though he was mustered out a few months later. By the end of 1861, he and Cesar were living in Paducah, Kentucky, where they had opened a clothing business. Some time shortly after the revocation of General Orders No. 11, the Kaskels relocated to New York City, where they opened a haberdashery and lived out the rest of their lives. Historical evidence suggests the two men were also adventurous entrepreneurs. They owned property and had business dealings in Leadville, Colorado, at the height of that city's economic boom in the early 1880s. Although they returned to Germany for a visit now and then, they remained residents of

New York City, making a respectable living and participating in communal affairs.[14]

It was their response to General Orders No. 11, however, that has earned the Kaskels a place of honor in the annals of American Jewish history. Evidently, as soon as news of Grant's order arrived in Paducah, the Kaskel brothers, together with two other Jewish merchants, the Wolff brothers, organized a meeting in Paducah to map out a response to the troubling edict. A written record of these activities, which Julius Kaskel evidently preserved, provides us with much of what we currently know about Cesar Kaskel's astounding activities.[15]

Cesar J. Kaskel traveled from Paducah, Kentucky, to Washington, D.C., in order to ask Lincoln to revoke Grant's order that Jews be expelled from the Military Department of Tennessee. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

The very first response to Grant's order came in the form of a telegram written by the Kaskel brothers and sent directly to President Lincoln. In the telegram, the Kaskels ask Lincoln for an "immediate interposition." The text of this remarkable communication, preserved in the *Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, is a testament both to the moral courage of these immigrant writers and to their fervent faith in the promise of the U.S. Constitution.

The telegram informed Lincoln that many "good and loyal citizens of the United States," who were longtime residents of Paducah and honorable merchants, had been unjustly expelled from their community. These Jewish citizens felt "greatly insulted and outraged" by Grant's "inhuman order," which constituted "the grossest violation of the Constitution and our rights as good citizens under it." Unless this edict was promptly overturned, the telegram reasoned, then innocent, law-abiding Jewish citizens would be seen as "outlaws before the whole world."[16]

Evidently, the Kaskels and their compatriots did not want to rely solely on the telegram. This was a wise decision, since it seems that Lincoln showed the telegram to his general-in-chief, Henry W. Halleck (1815–72), who told the president he had never heard of this order and could not believe that Grant would have done such a thing.[17] In order to ensure that Lincoln was fully informed of the entire story, Cesar Kaskel decided to go to the nation's capital and seek an audience with the president. He left Paducah by a steamer, which stopped in Cairo, Illinois, where he conveyed a "full account of the affair," in writing, to an Associated Press correspondent who began to disseminate news of the incident. From Cairo, Kaskel traveled to

Cincinnati, where he procured letters of introduction from Rabbi Isaac Wise, Rabbi Max Lilienthal (1815–82), and Daniel Wolf (ca. 1819–1904), a political activist and prominent Cincinnati merchant.[18]

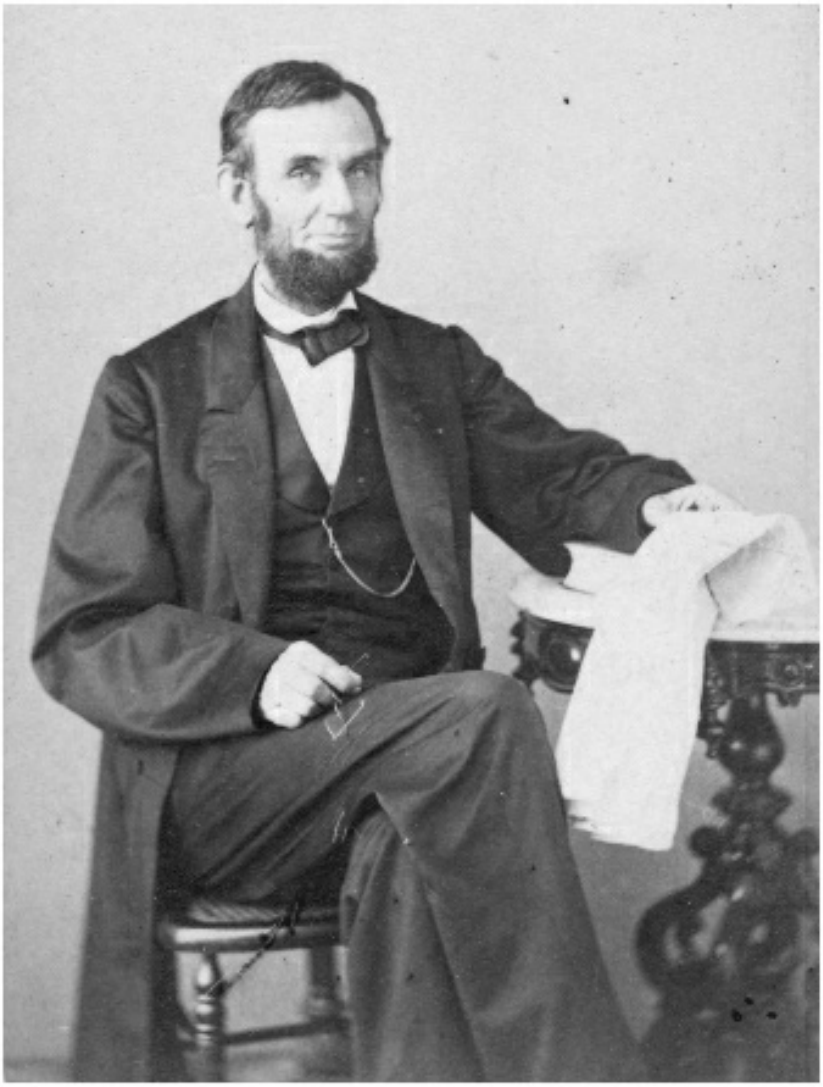
On Saturday, January 3, 1863, seventeen days after Grant issued General Orders No. 11 and two days after Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, Kaskel arrived in Washington, D.C. He immediately made contact with Ohio congressman John A. Gurley (1813–63), a former clergyman and newspaper publisher from Cincinnati, who knew both Rabbis Wise and Lilienthal. Without the help of a loyal Republican and Lincoln partisan like Gurley, it is unlikely that Kaskel, a man who heretofore had no political contacts, would have succeeded in procuring an emergency meeting with Lincoln at the White House.[19]

Gurley and Kaskel arrived at the White House as the sun was setting on the evening of January 3.[20] They apologized for appearing without an appointment but explained that they had come to discuss a matter of some urgency with the president. The two men were told to wait. Soon the president sent word that he would meet with them, noting he was "always glad to see his friends." Although no documentation of Kaskel's meeting with President Lincoln has survived, secondhand accounts have appeared in numerous sources. Kaskel showed the president a copy of his expulsion orders and described the occurrences that had brought him to Washington. The extraordinary exchange that is said to have then occurred between Lincoln and Kaskel constitutes one of the most memorable dialogues in all of American Jewish history. The president wryly observed:

> "So the children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan?"
>
> Kaskel replied: "Yes, and that is why we have come unto Father Abraham's bosom, asking protection."
>
> Lincoln responded: "And this protection they shall have at once."
>
> Then seating himself at a table the President penned an order to General [Henry] Halleck [and] request[ed] his visitors to deliver it at once.[21]

Having concluded their meeting with the president, Kaskel and Gurley went directly to see General Halleck, who once again insisted he knew nothing about Grant's order. Halleck continued to doubt the veracity of Kaskel's story until he was shown a copy of Grant's order, countersigned by Captain Waddell. Kaskel gave the general-in-chief the president's written directive to reverse the order, and Halleck promised he would do so. "You may leave for home at once if you wish," Halleck told Kaskel, "and before you reach there, Grant's order will have been revoked."[22]

In a telegram to Grant sent on January 4, 1863, Halleck wrote: "If such an order has been issued, it will be immediately revoked." Yet in spite of Halleck's directive, General Orders No. 11 was not *immediately* revoked. It was not until three days had passed—on January 7, 1863—that General John Rawlins (1831–69) circulated the official revocation from Grant's headquarters. The brief text of the revocation noted clearly that the decision to withdraw the order came directly from the "General-in-Chief of the Army, at Washington"—not from General Grant.[23]



Abraham Lincoln, August 9, 1863. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Kaskel left Washington the next morning and returned to Paducah, where, Halleck's promise aside, he was dismayed to learn that Captain Waddell still had not been told that the order had been revoked. As soon as the provost marshal saw Kaskel was back in town, he asked: "By whose orders do you return?" Kaskel rejoined, "By order of the President of the United States."[24]

It was during this interim—that is, between January 4, when Halleck instructed Grant to revoke the order, and January 7, when Grant's office issued the official revocation—that Grant's supporters tried to convince Lincoln to let the order stand. On January 6, 1863, a day before Grant himself had officially revoked the order, Congressman Elihu B. Washburne (1816–87), a fellow Republican from Illinois and an ardent supporter of General Grant, urged Lincoln *not* to rescind the order: "I see a report that you have revoked Grant's order touching the Jews,—I hope not. I consider it the wisest order yet made by a military command, and from my own personal observation, I believe it was necessary. As the friend of that distinguished soldier, General Grant, I want to be heard before the final order of revocation goes out, if it be contemplated to issue such an order. *There are two sides to this question*" (emphasis added).[25]

Washburne was not the only government official who was ambivalent about Lincoln's

decision to revoke the order. In conveying to the president a formal resolution of protest about Grant's order that was submitted by the officers of the St. Louis B'nai B'rith Lodge, Attorney General Edward Bates expressed little enthusiasm for Lincoln's decision. “In handing you the papers,” he wrote the president, “[I take] no particular interest in the subject.”[26] Evidently, even the highest legal authority in the nation was not convinced the president had made the proper decision.

Yet, even after Grant formally revoked his order on January 7, the controversy continued to simmer in Washington. Several members of Congress clashed bitterly over Lincoln's instantaneous decision to order a revocation of General Orders No. 11. Although some congressmen proposed resolutions condemning the order and congratulating Lincoln on the revocation, there were others who expressed little interest in praising the president for publicly countermanding the popular General Grant. Partisanship prevailed, and in the end, Congress refused to act. Lincoln's decision was no less controversial in the press. Some newspaper editorials vigorously condemned the order, while others vociferously defended General Grant as well as the need for the order.[27]

There is no evidence that Lincoln ever paused to reconsider his initial negative reaction to Grant's General Orders No. 11. To the contrary, he seems to have been resolute in his decision and eager to assume responsibility for countermanding Grant. According to Isaac M. Wise, who led a protest delegation to Washington on the heels of Kaskel's visit, Lincoln expressed genuine regret over the issuance of an order like General Orders No. 11. Originally, Wise's group had planned to protest the order, but upon reading in the press that the order had already been rescinded, the protesters decided to use the occasion to express their appreciation to the president for quickly responding to the crisis. Wise and his entourage met with Lincoln on Wednesday evening, January 7.[28]

According to Wise's account of the group's meeting, Lincoln welcomed his Jewish guests with “a frank cordiality, which…becomes men high in office so well.” Wise recalled that the president's demeanor was “informal and friendly.” Lincoln told his guests that he could not fathom how or why General Grant would have issued such a “ridiculous” order. “To condemn a class,” Lincoln told the delegation, “is…to wrong the good with the bad. I do not like to hear a class or nationality condemned on account of a few sinners.” In describing the meeting, Wise noted that Lincoln was “splendidly eloquent on this occasion,” and he effectively “dispelled every doubt” about his sincerity. The president, Wise subsequently testified, “entertained no prejudices of any kind against any nationality, and especially against Israelites, to whom he manifested a particular attachment.”[29]

Generally speaking, the story of Grant's General Orders No. 11 illustrates the tremendous undercurrent of “anxiety and conflict” that expressed itself during the Civil War in random acts of “animosity and bigotry.”[30] In this kind of atmosphere, American Jewry became a favored target, and this bigotry worried many in the Jewish community. Isaac M. Wise articulated his concern about this hateful spirit, and he reminded his readers that the way America treated its Jews would be a barometer of liberty for the nation's future:

> If the Jew as a nationality may be treated with impunity, where are the guarantees that other nationalities, the Germans, Irish, Dutch, French, etc., will not be treated in the same manner tomorrow?…Liberty is represented as a mighty woman, we the people, all of us, are her limbs, bones, muscles, nerves, veins, intestines, heart and soul, and allow the government to be her head and brain; if she is wounded in any one of her

members, she is wounded, and requires a careful treatment…. Therefore, it is everybody's business to look at this affair.[31]

Lincoln's prompt and resolute response to the abrogation of their rights as American citizens persuaded most American Jews that the president was determined to do something about the inclement social atmosphere that seemed to be darkening the American horizon. Wise himself testified to the fact that Lincoln had "fully illustrated to us and convinced us that he knows of no distinction between Jew and Gentile, that he feels no prejudice against any nationality." Although Lincoln's revocation brought political relief to a very small number of Jews who were affected by Grant's order, Lincoln's action loomed large in Jewish popular opinion during that era. Over the 150 years that have passed since this incident occurred, this episode has repeatedly been cited by Jews as a striking example of Lincoln's remarkable moral compass that guided him to hold fast to the Constitution's fundamental promise to ensure liberty and justice for all.[32]

DOCUMENTS

1. General Orders No. 11 Breaks into the News

2. "Good and Loyal Citizens" Felt "Greatly Insulted and Outraged"

3. Letter from the United Order of B'nai B'rith Protesting Grant's Order

4. From the *New York Times*: Lincoln Relieved Himself of a "Serious Affliction"

5. Rabbi Wise Editorializes on Grant's Order

6. The *Israelite* Reports on Grant's Order: Lincoln's Meeting with the Jewish Delegation

7. The *New York Times* Criticizes the Order's "Bad Writing and Worse Logic"

8. Wise Refuses to Vote for Ulysses S. Grant

1. GENERAL ORDERS NO. 11 BREAKS INTO THE NEWS

Soon after the provost marshal of Paducah, Kentucky, Captain L. J. Waddell, received a telegraphed copy of General Grant's General Orders No. 11, he ordered the city's Jewish citizenry to report to his office and ordered them to leave Paducah within twenty-four hours.

Shortly thereafter, the text of Waddell's orders began to appear in newspapers together with a letter to the press from one of the banished Jews, Cesar J. Kaskel. Kaskel wrote his appeal while on board the steamboat Chaley Bowe *that carried him and his fellow Jews upriver to Cincinnati. The texts of Waddell's orders and Kaskel's letter to the press appeared in the* Jewish Record *on December 30, 1862.*

Rabbi Isaac M. Wise of Cincinnati was incensed by Kaskel's report. In his editorial, which appeared in the January 2, 1863, edition of the Israelite, *Wise vented his spleen at this appalling example of "military despotism." Decrying what he called an "outrage without a precedent in American history," Wise urged "every honest friend of the republic" to take action. "It is your duty, the duty of self defence, your duty to bring this matter clearly before the president of the United States and demand redress, the satisfaction due to the citizen thus mortified and offended."*

Justice of Provost Marshal
Paducah, Ky., December 28, 1862

C. J. Kaskel—Sir: You will report to this office immediately, as I wish to see you in relation to General Order No. 11, issued from Major General Grant's headquarters.

L. J. Waddell
Captain and Provost Marshal

[Copy]

Office of Provost Marshal

Paducah, Ky., December 25, 1862

C. J. Kaskel—Sir: In pursuance of General Order No. 11, issued from General Grant's headquarters, you are hereby ordered to leave the city of Paducah, Kentucky, within twenty-four hours after receiving this order.

By order,
L. J. Waddell

On Board Steamboat "Chaley Bowe"
December 30, 1862

The accompanying copies of orders issued respectively by Major General U. S. Grant and Captain Waddell, Provost Marshal at Paducah, Kentucky, will explain easily the cause of my coming before the public.

I, a peaceable, law abiding citizen, pursuing my legitimate business at Paducah, Kentucky, where I have been a resident for nearly four years, have been driven from my home, my business, and all that is dear to me, at the short notice of twenty-four hours; not for any crime committed but simply because I was born of Jewish parents. Nearly thirty other gentlemen, mostly married, all respectable men, and old residents of Paducah, two of whom have served their country in the three months' service, and all loyal to the Government, have suffered the same fate.

On my way to Washington, in order to get this most outrageous and inhuman order of Major General Grant countermanded, I ask you, gentlemen, to lend the powerful aid of the press to the suffering cause of outraged humanity; to blot out as quick as possible this stain on our national honor, and to show the world that the American people, as a nation, brand the author of that infamous order as unworthy of their respect and confidence.

Yours, respectfully,
C. J. Kaskel[33]

The Outrages in Major-General Rosecrans' Army

The order of Colonel [John Van Deusen] Du Bois,[34] reviewed in our last, it appears, was entirely in consonance with orders from head-quarters. The colonel was removed since for other offences and we have no more to say about him.—But gentlemen just arrived from Mississippi and Tennessee communicate facts to us which leave no doubt to our mind, that gentlemen higher in rank than a colonel, are the originators of wrongs which, if reported from Turkey, Russia, Austria or from Morocco, would excite the indignation of every liberal man in this country. It appears that the sacred rights of loyal citizens and the laws of the land are as little regarded by military commanders and their

next subordinates in the above mentioned states, as the laws of the Chinese empire.

Gentlemen of undoubted integrity, connected with some of the most highly respectable firms in Cincinnati, New York, Chicago, St. Louis and elsewhere, just returning from Holly Springs, Miss., having footed their way to Memphis, communicate to us, that one evening shortly before Holly Springs was taken by the Confederates, they were apprised by a military officer of the arrival of a general order (No. 29)[35] issued by Major-General U. S. Grant, commanding All Jews (in these very terms) to leave the lines within 24 hours, not even excepting the numerous Jews in the service of the United States whom he certainly did not mean to exile. The gentlemen considered the order spurious, and desired the officer to grant them the privilege of telegraphing General Grant to ask him, whether he issued such an order, which he could not grant, but told them to write down what they wished to ask him, and he promised to telegraph. They went to their lodging and Mr. Silberman of Chicago wrote the dispatch and had it delivered to that officer. Late in the evening an orderly arrived to inquire after the author of the telegram, and being told it was Mr. Silberman, he arrested him, because he doubted the genuineness of the order and kept him imprisoned to 12 M. the next day. Jewish citizens who had resided in Holly Springs for years together with all others were obliged to leave. Our informants next morning went to the Rail Road depot, but being told there that civilians could not be accommodated that day, they footed their way to Memphis.—They could not tell how the others came off, or whether they were not taken prisoners by the Confederates.

Need we comment on this handsome piece of military despotism? We trust not. We expect, every man acquainted with the laws of the country and the principles of the people to regard to political freedom and the rights of citizens;—every man of liberal and just opinions, condemns with indignation this outrage without a precedent in American history.

In the first place we supposed these prejudices are of a religious character and pitied their purblind agents; but the gentlemen informed us different. The next order, after the Jews were banished from the lines was of the same general, that no farmer or planter, under the penalty of confiscation, dare charge or receive more than 25 cents for the pound of cotton, which a day before sold at 40 cents a pound. This let the cat out of the bag. The Jews bought cotton of planters (who before selling must take the oath of allegiance to the U.S.) at 40 cents a pound; the military authorities with their business partners, agents, clerks, portiers, &c., intend to buy that staple at twenty-five cents a pound, it appears, they could sell it in eastern cities just as high as the next man—and the Jews must leave because they interfere with a branch of the military business. So the matter appears to us.

Another fact is this. Jews leaving Nashville, Tenn., who come to Captain [William M.] Wiles[36] for a passport, after standing three or four days at his door, are sent to the chief of police who has a nomenclature of all Israelites coming and going. This dignitarian, for the time being, before granting a permit to leave, demands of every Hebrew to sign a pledge promising *never* to return to Nashville, after which the fellow this tortured receives a peculiar card of clearance. Our informants, two young men of this city, having come to Nashville with pass and permit to sell dry goods, finding, however, that they were not allowed to do their legitimate business, concluded upon returning to this city. On applying to Captain Wiles for a pass, he was sent to the chief

of police who tried to exact the same pledge from him as from all other Hebrews: but the gentleman said, he rather would rot in a military prison than do such a thing, notwithstanding his very determination, not to do business in Nashville. After the exchange of hard words, the chief of police had found out that he caught a tartar, he insisted no longer on his terms, sent him back to Captain Wiles who signed his pass. This is the routine of business in Nashville under the very eyes of General Rosecrans.[37] We do not mention names, because we expect these gentlemen and others treated in the same manner will publish lawful affidavits. We request every person who was thus illegally treated, without delay to send us affidavits to this effect made before a justice of the peace or a notary public, or publish them in other papers, and send us the publications.

The Nashville chief of police said to our informant, “the Jews smuggle, therefore they are treated in this manner.” Granted they do, why are they not punished? Are the Jews the only smugglers in existence? Are all Jews smugglers? Granted even all the Jews are smugglers and the only persons who carry on this prohibited trade; what right has any military or civil officer to maltreat a whole race or religious denomination, because the few known to him are smugglers? Where is the letter of the law in any code of a civilized nation conferring the authority on a military officer to deprive loyal and peaceable citizens of their well defined rights, because he suspects some of them to be guilty of illegal acts? The evidence, sir, bring us the evidence that the Jews are the only smugglers, punish the guilty ones according to the terms of the law, or expel them from the lines. I, sir, am a Jew who did not smuggle, if I come to Nashville, I, nevertheless, must go to the office of the inquisition and sign a pledge *never* to return. Who is the author of the holy office of the inquisition in the heart of God's only spot of freedom and in the second half of the nineteenth century? Who is responsible for these high-handed outrages, this lawless despotism, spit into the face of a free people and an enlightened age?—General Rosecrans must be able to tell us, for he is responsible for the actions of his subordinate officers. Let him speak, if he thinks it worth while to render account to the offended majesty of freedom and law.

Reviewing closely the orders of General Grant in regard to Jews and cotton, it would strike us by a little reasoning from analogy that there are also in Nashville certain nephews, uncles, cousins, old acquaintances, generous gentlemen and such other non-Jewish merchants who found out that the Jews spoiled the marked by selling too cheap and bringing too large stocks into market. They, it appears, found out they could not get rich fast enough on account of that competition, and the Jews must go to make room to patriotic speculators and valorous companions. We are told, and if true it is, we are bound to have it under oath—yes, we are told that money well applied changes entirely the aspect of things. Permits, they say, are in the market like other commodities. So the thing appears after a cursory inspection.—We can not see how any complaints could justly be raised about demoralization, if superior officers set such examples of lawlessness.

But we do not care for causes. The orders mentioned above do exist, and this suffices to alarm every honest friend of the republic. Are we to be the slaves of military chieftains? Are we playthings in the hands of presumptuous men, to abuse and maltreat us at pleasure? Are we frogs and mice to be trampled under anybody's feet, or are we men who stand by their rights? Is no law in the land, no authority higher than bayonets?

If we can stand this, we are unworthy of being citizens of a free country. If we do stand all this, we just not wonder, if one day anybody will treat us like paria[h]s and outcasts of society. Israelites, citizens of the United States, you have been outraged, your rights as men and citizens trampled into dust, your honor disgraced, as a class you have officially been degraded! It is your duty, the duty of self defence, your duty first to bring this matter clearly before the president of the United States and demand redress, the satisfaction due to the citizen this mortified and offended.

It is not only the business of the Jew to look to these matters, it is everybody's affair. If the Jew as a nationality may be treated with impunity, where are the guarantees that other nationalities, the Germans, Irish, Dutch, French, &c., will not be treated in the same manner to-morrow? If the Jews as a religious community are handled thus, how will the Catholics, Unitarians, Universalists or any other religious denomination be treated, if a general or provost officer sees fit to come down on one or the other. Liberty is represented as a mighty woman, we the people, all of us, are her limbs, bones, muscles, nerves, veins, intestines, heart and soul, and allow the government to be her head and brain; if she is wounded in any one of her members, she is wounded, and requires a careful treatment. Wounded in her right arm or her little toe, wounded she is, and the whole body must feel it, and be protected against more serious injuries. Therefore it is everybody's business to look to this affair.[38]

2. "GOOD AND LOYAL CITIZENS" FELT "GREATLY INSULTED AND OUTRAGED"

Before departing from Paducah, Cesar and Julius Kaskel and David Wolff described their circumstances in a telegram they sent to Abraham Lincoln on December 29, 1862. The Jewish businessmen told the president that the "inhuman" order made them and their fellow Jews into "outlaws before the whole world." General Orders No. 11 was, they insisted, "the grossest violation of the Constitution and our rights as good citizens under it."

Kaskel traveled directly to Washington, D.C., and, with the help of Ohio congressman John A. Gurley, he secured a personal meeting with Lincoln that took place on January 3, 1863. After convincing the president that such an order had actually been issued, Kaskel is said to have told Lincoln that he and his fellow Jews had come to Father Abraham's bosom for protection.

Paducah, Ky., December 29, 1862

Honorable Abraham Lincoln,
President of the United States:

General Orders, Numbers 11, issued by General Grant at Oxford, Miss., December the 17th, commands all post commanders to expel all Jews, without distinction, within twenty-four hours, from his entire department. The undersigned, good and loyal citizens of the United States and residents of this town for many years, engaged in legitimate business as merchants, feel greatly insulted and outraged by this inhuman order, the carrying out of which would be the grossest violation of the Constitution and our rights as good citizens under it, and would place us, besides a large number of other Jewish families of this town, as outlaws before the whole world. We respectfully ask your immediate attention to this enormous outrage on all and humanity and pray for your effectual and immediate interposition. We would respectfully refer you to the post commander and post adjutant as to our loyalty, and all to respectable citizens of this

community as to our standing as citizens and merchants. We respectfully ask for immediate instructions to be sent to the commander of this post.

D. Wolff & Bros.
C. F. Kaskell
J. W. Kaskell[39]

3. LETTER FROM THE UNITED ORDER OF B'NAI B'RITH PROTESTING GRANT'S ORDER

Although President Lincoln ordered General Halleck to revoke General Orders No. 11 on January 3, 1863, during his meeting with Cesar Kaskel, it took a few weeks for the revocation to work its way through the military bureaucracy. In the meantime, American Jews remained outraged. Complaints about the odious action appeared in the Jewish press during the first week of January 1863.

On January 5, the United Order B'nai B'rith of Missouri sent the president a remonstrance. Signed by the lodge's president, Rabbi Henry Kuttner (1820–1902), and secretary, Morris Hoffman (1828?–94), the protest decried the immorality and unconstitutionality of Grant's order.[40]

It is interesting to note that the remonstrance was originally received by Attorney General Edward Bates. It was Bates's duty to forward the document to the president, and in doing so, the attorney general affixed a note, saying, "I do not comply with [their] expressed wish, in handing you the papers, myself feeling no particular interest in the subject."[41]

United Order "Bne B'rith" Missouri Loge [*sic*]
St Louis. Jan 5, 1863

Sir

An Order, Expelling and ostracizing all Jews, as a class has been issued by Maj. Genl U. S. Grant and has been enforced at Holly Springs, Trenton, Corinth, Paducah, Jackson and other places.

In the name of that Class of *loyal* citizens of these U.S. which we in part represent. In the name of hundreds, who have been driven from their homes, deprived of their liberty and injured in their property *without* having violated any law or regulation.

In the name of the thousands of our Brethren and our children who have died and are now willingly sacrificing their lives and fortunes for the Union and the Suppression of this rebellion.

In the name of religious liberty, of justice and humanity—we enter our solemn Protest against this Order, and ask of you—the Defendor & Protector of the Constitution—to annull that Order and to protect the liberties even of your humblest Constituents[.]

Henry Kuttner
President
Morris Hoffman
Secy[42]

4. FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES: LINCOLN RELIEVED HIMSELF OF A "SERIOUS AFFLICTION"

This terse news item from the New York Times, *dated January 5, 1863, reported, in a somewhat peculiar tone, that the Jews of the West had threatened to send "large delegations" to Washington to protest Grant's orders. With tongue in cheek, the writer implies that it was the thought of facing a delegation of "exasperated" Jews, and not the injustice of the orders, that prompted Lincoln to revoke the odious orders with such alacrity.*

Gen. Grant and the Jews

The action of General Grant, in ordering all Israelites out of his Department, was today reversed by Gen. Halleck, at the instance of the President. The "Jewish persuasion" throughout the West, according to telegrams received, were greatly excited and exasperated at the order, and were organizing large delegations to visit Washington, for the purpose of having it rescinded. In view of this threatened visitation, the president's action had undoubtedly relieved him from a serious affliction.[43]

5. RABBI WISE EDITORIALIZES ON GRANT'S ORDER

On January 9, 1863, Rabbi Isaac M. Wise published another column on Grant's General Orders No. 11 in the Israelite. *Clearly unaware of the fact that the orders had already been officially revoked, Wise notified his readers that a delegation of citizens from Cincinnati, Louisville, and Paducah planned to "proceed to Washington, to bring this matter to the notice of the administration." The editorial goes on to heap scorn on the many Cincinnati newspapers that failed to publish a condemnation of Grant's order, and in his criticisms, Wise expressed some of his own perhaps illiberal views.*

Steps have been taken to bring this matter in proper shape before the President of the U.S., to see whether a general may with impunity deprive people of their rights which to protect he is sworn and paid for. In Cincinnati the Rev. Doctors Lilienthal and Wise were appointed; in Louisville, Martin Bijur, Esq., and in Paducah, Ky., Mr. Goldsmith[44] were also sent on the same mission, who as one delegation proceed to Washington, to bring this matter to the notice of the administration. Therefore we abstain from any further publication or comment on this subject.

We have only to say one thing more. The Cincinnati newspapers were timely informed of the outrage committed on citizens because they are Jews. In Cincinnati thousands of Israelites live and contribute largely to the wealth of the city, to every benevolent or charitable institution, contributed largely to the military funds of various descriptions, and read the said newspapers, for which they pay, advertise therein and support them otherwise. What do you think these selfsame papers did learning of the outrageous order of General Grant?—Nothing, nothing in the world. Shame on such press!

The *Enquirer* and the *Volksfreund* are the only Cincinnati papers which condemned the order of Grant and had the manliness to speak earnest words against a wrong without precedent in American history.

So we know what we have to expect of the Cincinnati press in case of emergency. So we know with what zeal those gentlemen watch over the rights of white people. So we learned what their pretensions at liberality and their declamations on freedom are actually worth. So we are aware now (and facts speak) of what metal they are made.[45]

6. THE ISRAELITE REPORTS ON GRANT'S ORDER: LINCOLN'S MEETING WITH THE JEWISH DELEGATION

Once he arrived in Washington, D.C., Rabbi Wise learned that General Grant's orders had been revoked. Wise and the other members of the delegation decided to meet with Abraham Lincoln and express their collective appreciation for his decisive action. Wise reported on his visit with Lincoln in the Israelite *of January 16, 1863. He praised Lincoln, who received the contingent cordially and "convinced" them "that he knows of no distinction between Jew and Gentile." This report contains many intriguing details about the controversy, including Wise's bitter condemnation of certain congressmen who defended General Grant's actions and criticized President Lincoln's decision to revoke them.*

The Israelite*'s last editorial concerned with Grant's Orders No. 11 appeared on January 23, 1863. The introductory section of the editorial, which follows, reiterates the details of the order and the Jewish community's reaction against it and concludes with another description of Lincoln's conversation with the Jewish delegation from Cincinnati and Louisville.*

Letter from the Editor

The history of General Grant's order and its revocation forms quite an interesting chapter in the annals of the day. Gentlemen from Paducah, Ky., telegraphed to the President, who informed General Halleck instantly; we wrote immediately to Secretary Stanton; but neither the former nor the latter believed that Gen. Grant could have issued an order so absurd and ridiculous, and, therefore, did not do anything in the matter. When Mr. Kaskel came to Washington, January 3, and was introduced to the President, by Mr. Gurley of Cincinnati, the President at once gave order to Gen. Halleck to revoke said order. General Halleck would not believe in the existence of such order, till Mr. Kaskel showed him the official copy. General Halleck instantly and peremptorily revoked the order and telegraphed to Gen. Grant to inform all post commanders instantly, of the will of the government in this matter. The Cincinnati and Louisville delegation came too late.—The order was rescinded. Still we thought proper to see the President to express our thanks for his promptness in this matter.—Mark, however, how democratic things look in Washington. We arrived from Baltimore around 5 P.M. on Wednesday, arrived in the hotel without changing clothes. Rev. Dr. Lilienthal inquired and was informed that Mr. Gurley was in the same house, but was not in at present. Meanwhile Mr. Bijur and myself went to Mr. [George H.] Pendleton of Cincinnati [member of the U.S. House of Representatives] and talked half an hour to him.

On returning to our hotel we met Mr. Gurley, who without bestowing any consideration on our traveling garbs, went with us to the White House and before 8 P.M. we were introduced to the President, who being all alone, received us with that frank cordiality, which, though usually neglected, becomes men high in office so well. Having expressed our thanks for the promptness and dispatch in revoking Gen. Grant's order, the president gave utterance to his surprise that Gen. Grant should have issued so ridiculous an order, and added—"to condemn a class is, to say the least, to wrong the good with the bad. I do not like to hear a class or nationality condemned on account of a few sinners." The President, we must confess, fully illustrated to us and convinced us that he knows of no distinction between Jew and Gentile, that he feels no prejudice against any nationality, and that he by no means will allow that a citizen in any wise be

wronged on account of his place of birth or religious confession. He illustrated this point to us in a very happy manner, of which we can only give the substance at present, and promise to give particulars on another occasion. Now then, in our traveling habiliments, we spoke about half an hour to the President of the U.S. in an open and frank manner, and were dismissed in the same simple style.

Sorry we are to say that Congress did not think proper to be as just as the President is. Congress is not now the people's legislative body, it belongs to a party. Senator [Lazarus] Powell of Kentucky, as noted elsewhere, introduced a resolution condemning the unjust order of Gen. Grant, to inform others that orders of this kind must not be issued; but the resolution was tabled to be killed, when called up again. Mr. Pendleton of Cincinnati, attempted in vain on Monday and Tuesday to bring the following resolution before the house. He finally succeeded on Wednesday (yesterday) to propose the following:

Mr. Pendleton offered a preamble setting forth that Major General Grant, on the 17th of December, as the commander of the Department of the Tennessee, did issue an order stating that the Jews, as a class, had violated every regulation of trade established in that department, and for this were to be expelled from the department within twenty-four hours &c., and as in the pursuance of the order General Grant caused many peaceful citizens to be expelled within twenty-four hours without allegation of misconduct, and with no other proof than that they were members of a certain religious denomination; and whereas said sweeping order makes no discrimination between the innocent and the guilty, and is illegal, unjust, tyrannical and cruel, therefore

Resolved, That the said order deserves the sternest condemnation of the House and of the President of the United States as Commander-in-Chief of Army and Navy.

Mr. PENDLETON moved the previous question of the passage of the proposition.

Mr. WASHBURNE (R) moved that it be laid upon the table; and this was agreed to—yeas 56, nays 53.

On motion of Mr. Washburne, the everlasting Mr. Washburne, the resolution was tabled by a vote of 56 yeas to 53 nays. If the Hebrew citizens of the United States were "gentlemen of color," Mr. Washburne would certainly have made a brilliant effort to vindicate their rights and expose a general who committed a gross outrage on them. But being only white men, it would not pay Partisan legislation, that is all we have to expect of this congress. Mr. Pendleton said Washburne's motive was that of friendship for Grant, whom to defend in congress he had several times taken upon himself; but Republican members openly say, it is a rule of the House to vote down every thing coming from the other side, viz: the democratic. How do you like this remarkable impartiality?

Having to see a good many things to-day, we must conclude this, to say more to-morrow.[46]

The Last of General Grant's Order

We do not mean to say that General Grant issued his last order, he may yet issue his farewell order to the army. We simply wish to say that this is the last we write and publish on the notorious persecution order of General Grant. Whether those materially injured by that queer document will bring civil suits for damages against General Grant, wherever and whenever he shall be accessible to the arms of justice and law, as they

ought to do—we can not tell, nor is it our business to meddle in that part of the proceedings, this being the lawyer's business. As far as the honor of our co-religionists was involved, we tried to get satisfaction, and we only review the matter for future reference and the benefit of the historian. This is to conclude this affair.

Long before Grant's order was issued, the *Israelite* called attention to the existence of a spirit of dark prejudice in the army against our people. The order of Col. [John Van Deusen] Du Bois, however, was the first official document we obtained, published and censured. Still nobody appeared to care particularly for the matter. Saturday, December 27, two gentlemen coming directly from Holly Springs, Miss., informed us of the publication and enforcement of Grant's order. Monday next we took their affidavits, as well as affidavits of gentlemen who had been offended in Louisville by General [Jeremiah] Boyle, in Bowling Green, Ky., and especially in Nashville by provost-marshals, merely and exclusively on account of their being Jews. We exhibited these papers to several influential gentlemen who, we know not why, did not feel disposed to take the matter in hand. We wrote a letter to Secretary Stanton, and resolved to wait for an answer, before taking any further steps in the matter.

Meanwhile this famous order was put in force in Paducah, Ky., where several Jewish citizens resided for years past. This caused a considerable alarm. One of the Jewish residents of Paducah repaired at once to Washington, published the affair in a Cincinnati paper, and took letters of recommendation by Rev. Dr. Lilienthal to Mr. Gurley, M[ember of] C[ongress], of this city, and by Mr. Daniel Wolf to Mr. Pendleton, M.C., also of this city. Another resident of Paducah, Mr. Wolf, also repaired to Washington in company of an influential citizen. Again another resident of Paducah, Mr. Goldschmit went to Louisville, presented the case to some gentlemen of our persuasion, whereupon a meeting was called, resolutions as the case deserves were adopted, and Martin Bijur, Esq., a popular lawyer of our persuasion, residing in Louisville, was appointed a delegate to act in conjunction with others appointed to the same purpose, to bring the matter before the President of the U.S.

Thursday, January 1, 1863, some influential merchants of Cincinnati held a meeting, appointed a committee to call a general meeting and prepare the business for it. The committee was to meet again on Saturday evening. Meanwhile Messers. Bijur and Goldschmit came to Cincinnati and gave a new impulse to the matter. Sunday evening, January 4, a large and enthusiastic meeting convened in the hall of the Phoenix; resolutions befitting the occasion were unanimously adopted, and three delegates chosen to act forthwith in conjunction with other delegates. The Cincinnati delegates were Rev. Dr. Lilienthal, Edgar M. Johnson, a popular lawyer of our persuasion, and our humble self. Monday morning the delegation of Louisville and Cincinnati, in company of Mr. Goldschmit started for Washington, provided with sufficient affidavits to substantiate our case.

We intended to go to Philadelphia and Baltimore, meet there delegates from these cities and New York, and act in conjunction with them; but it appears no steps had been taken yet in the eastern cities. In the Philadelphia papers, however, obtained in the cars near that city, we learned that the order of Grant had been revoked on Sunday, on presenting the matter to the president by Mr. Kaskel. Still we thought it proper to go to Washington and convince ourselves. We arrived in Washington on Wednesday evening and were introduced to the president the same evening by Mr. Gurley. The interview

was of an informal and friendly nature. We had but little chance to say anything, the president having been so splendidly eloquent on this occasion. He assured us in every possible form that neither he nor General Halleck believed that Grant issued so absurd an order, until the official document dispelled every doubt. Furthermore that he entertained no prejudices of any kind against any nationality, and especially against Israelites, to whom he manifested a particular attachment. He spoke like a simple, plain spoken citizen, and tried in various forms to convince us of the sincerity of his words in this matter.[47]

7. THE NEW YORK TIMES CRITICIZES THE ORDER'S "BAD WRITING AND WORSE LOGIC"

An editorial from the January 18, 1863, edition of the New York Times *began by reporting on the controversy within the Jewish population over whether "the authorities at Washington" should be thanked for the annulment of Grant's General Orders No. 11.*

The editorial continues with a jocular criticism of the order's grammar and composition but then proceeds, with great conviction, to condemn the order and to marvel over the "humiliating reflection" that "the freest Government on earth" had temporarily revived "the spirit of the medieval ages."

Gen. Grant and the Jews

One of the deepest sensations of the war is that produced among the Israelites of this country by the recent order of Gen. Grant, excluding them, as a class, from his Military Department. The order, to be sure, was promptly set aside by the President, but the affront to the Israelites, conveyed by its issue, was not so easily effaced. It continues to rankle, and is leading to sharp controversies and bitter feuds in the ranks of the Faithful. It seems that a committee of Jews, in this city, took it upon themselves to *thank* the authorities at Washington for so promptly annulling the odious order of Grant. Against the conduct of this committee the bulk of the Jews vehemently protest. They say they have no thanks for an act of simple and imperative justice—but grounds for deep and just complaint against the Government, that Gen. Grant has not been dismissed from the service on account of his unrighteous act. The matter has been made to assume an importance that requires a mention of it in our columns, as constituting an exciting chapter in our current history. We therefore present the order of Gen. Grant, that the public judgment in the premises may rest on a clear perception of the facts;

Headquarters Thirteenth Army Corps

Department of the Tennessee,
Oxford, Miss., Dec. 17, 1862

> General Order No. 11.—The Jews, *as a class*, violating every regulation of trade established by the Treasury Department, also Department orders, are hereby expelled from the Department within twenty-four (24) hours from the receipt of this order by Post Commander.
>
> *They* will see that all this class of people are furnished with passes and required to leave, and *any one* returning after such notification will be arrested and held in confinement until an opportunity occurs of sending *them* out as

prisoners, unless furnished with permits from these headquarters.

No pass will be given these people to visit headquarters for the purpose of making personal application for trade permits. By the order of

Maj.-Gen. Grant
John B. Rawlins. A[ssistant] A[djunct] G[eneral]
Official—J. Lovell. Capt. and A[ssistant] A[djunct] G[eneral]

It must be admitted that this order is open to severe criticism in more respects than one. The first and mildest objection we see, is its atrocious disregard of the simplest rules of English composition. To be dealt harshly with is bad enough, but to be vilified in execrable English is cruel, if not unusual, punishment. But if the execrable English of the general excommunication from Grant's attractive Department is very objectionable, the mocker of the allusion to special exemptions is utterly unworthy. "*Any one*" (any Jew) "returning" after a notification to leave, *they* will be sent away as prisoners, "unless furnished with permits from these headquarters." But "no pass will be given these people to visit headquarters for the purpose of getting permits." Such is the substantial and almost literal conclusion of Grant's order. It is mortifying to know that such a jumble of bad writing and worse logic should emanate from the headquarters of a Major-General commanding a Military Department of the United States.

As to the odious principle of Gen. Grant's order, there can be no doubt whatever. To condemn any religious body, as a class, and by wholesale, is contrary to common sense and common justice—contrary to Republicanism and Chris[tianity]. Gen. Grant may have been harassed by hangers-on of his army who were swindlers and extortionists. It was desirable that he should be rid of such. But will he say that all the swindlers that beset him are Jews? We are of opinion that there are degrees of rascality developed by the war that might put the most accomplished Shylocks to the blush. We have native talent that can literally "beat the Jews." Gen. Grant's order has the demerit of stigmatizing a class, without signalizing the criminals. All swindlers are not Jews. All Jews are not swindlers. Gen. Grant assumes that the reverse of this latter proposition is true, and he expels the Jews, "as a class," from the Department. That carries women and children—women at home and children at the breast. A number of Jewish families that had been quiet, orderly and loyal citizens of the town of Paducah for years, hurriedly packed up their goods, and left their home, under this cruel order. They had had nothing whatever to do with Grant or his army, but they belonged to the Jews, "as a class," and were denounced and expelled. Their situation must have revived the history of their unfortunate people during the twelfth, thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, when England, France and Austria successively followed each other in decrees against them of banishment and persecution. And it is a humiliating reflection that after the progress of liberal ideas even the most despotic countries has restored the Jews to civil and social rights, as members of a common humanity, it remained for the freest Government on earth to witness a momentary revival of the spirit of the medieval ages.

If we take a merely selfish view of Grant's treatment of the Jews, it will appear in the highest degree impolitic. Persons "of this class" have come to hold high positions in the leading Governments of Europe, whose good opinions we cannot afford to despise. M. [Achille] Fould, of Louis Napoleon's Cabinet, is a Jew, and his voice might, in the

possibilities of things, go far to decide the fate of the American Union. The Rothschilds wield a power in the financial world that is well nigh omnipotent to raise or destroy the credit of any nation. We may find it better to have their friendship than enmity.

But rejecting all such considerations, we rely on the general principles of republican right and justice for the utter reprobation of Grant's order. Men cannot be condemned and punished as a class, without gross violence to our free institutions. The immediate and peremptory abrogation of Grant's order by the President saved the Government from a blot, and redeemed us from the disgrace of a military assault upon a people whose equal rights and immunities are as sacred under the Constitution as those of any other sect, class or race.[48]

8. WISE REFUSES TO VOTE FOR ULYSSES S. GRANT

This excerpt from an article in the "Theological Department" of the February 28, 1868, edition of the Israelite *expresses, with great vehemence, the newspaper's firm opposition to Grant's nomination as a candidate for the presidency. Here, Grant is described as the man who has done the Jews more "injustice than any man in power, in this century…in any civilized country."*

This barbarian order caused a general outcry of horror all over this country, in the public press, public meetings and resolutions, in any and every form. In Congress, Mr. Pendelton [*sic*], of Ohio, moved the following resolution:

"Whereas, On the 17th day of December, 1862, Major General Grant, commanding the department of the Tennessee, did publish the following order, to-wit: (here followed the above order *verbatim*). And in pursuance thereof did cause many peaceable citizens of the United States, residents in the said department, to be expelled therefrom within twenty-four hours without allegation of special misconduct on their part, and on no other proof than that they were members of a certain religious denomination; and

"Whereas, The said order in its sweeping condemnation of a whole class of citizens, without discriminating between the guilty and the innocent, is illegal and unjust, and in its executions tyrannical and cruel; therefore

"*Resolved*, That the said order deserves the earnest condemnation of this house, and of the President as Commander-in-Chief."

This was lost in the House, but only because nobody paid any attention to it, and the order had been revoked previously. The vote, after all, was a very close one—56 voted to table and 53 to pass it; two more votes would have done it. Among those voting for the resolution were, besides other republicans, also Mr. [Schuyler] Colfax, the present speaker of the House, Mr. [Frederick] Low, of St. Louis,[49] and other prominent members of that party.

The order No. 11 fell most savagely upon the old Jewish residents in that department; but there was no Senator from those States in Washington, except from Kentucky. Therefore Senator Powell from Kentucky, in behalf of his outraged constituents, introduced in substance the same preamble and resolution in the Senate, where it was defeated in a most shameful manner, where but 7, viz: Messrs. [Garrett] Davis, [Aaron] Harding, [Milton S.] Latham, [James W.] Nesmith, [Lazarus] Powell, [Eli] Saulsbury and [Robert] Wilson of Missouri, had the moral courage and moral rectitude to stand by an outraged class of their fellow-citizens.

President Lincoln could not persuade himself for a long time that General Grant

issued that order; but when Mr. Kaskel, of Paducah Ky., succeeded in convincing him of the fact, he immediately revoked it, and expressed his indignation at the outrage in the strongest terms in presence of Messrs. Gurley, Lilienthal and Wise from Cincinnati, and Bijur from Louisville.

There was nobody, at the time, to defend the despotic and barbarous order of General Grant, not a voice was heard in its favor or defence; but plenty, besides President Lincoln, seven Senators and fifty-three members of Congress, in its condemnation. Every free man felt outraged by the lawless ukase of a military chieftain, whom they now want to force upon us as chief magistrate of the country.

We have to say this: As a Jew, we can not and will not vote for a man who has done us a more shameless injustice than any man in power, in this century, has done us in any civilized country. Therefore we hope and expect that the entire Jewish press will come out boldly and justly against the movement to nominate General Grant as President of the United States. Again, as a citizen who loves his country and her free institutions, who considers it his solemn duty to protect justice and freedom as much as it may be in his power, we can not and must not entrust the banner of justice and freedom to the hands of a man who, when possessing the brief power of a commander of a volunteer army (and among them thousands of Jews) abused it so outrageously, and trampled upon his fellow-citizens because they were too weak to resist. That man, in our estimation, is unfit to be the chief of a republic whose citizens claim equal justice and equal freedom. Therefore we hope and expect from all political leaders to drop the scheme of nominating General Grant. As a man, we feel an aversion to every person who disrespects the just claims of humanity and justice, and General Grant by his order No. 11, 1862, is guilty of that disrespect.

That is part of what we have to say on this point, and we will say it over and over again, until the masses shall know and appreciate it; till the feeling of honor shall awake also with those who cry with the millions, laugh or weep by order of their newspaper, cheer or scorn *ad libitum*. When a few scanty and poverty-stricken insurance companies in New York offended the Jews by an order not to insure their property, there was noise, meetings, resolutions, &c.; now when one who outraged the Jew beyond measure or comparison, one who outraged the Jew, the man and the citizen, the laws of the United States and the sacred cause of justice and humanity, is proposed as President of the United States, nobody has the courage or rectitude to talk. Is this principle? Is it manful? Is it honorable? Let cowards be silent for utility's sake; but let men speak out honorably.[50]

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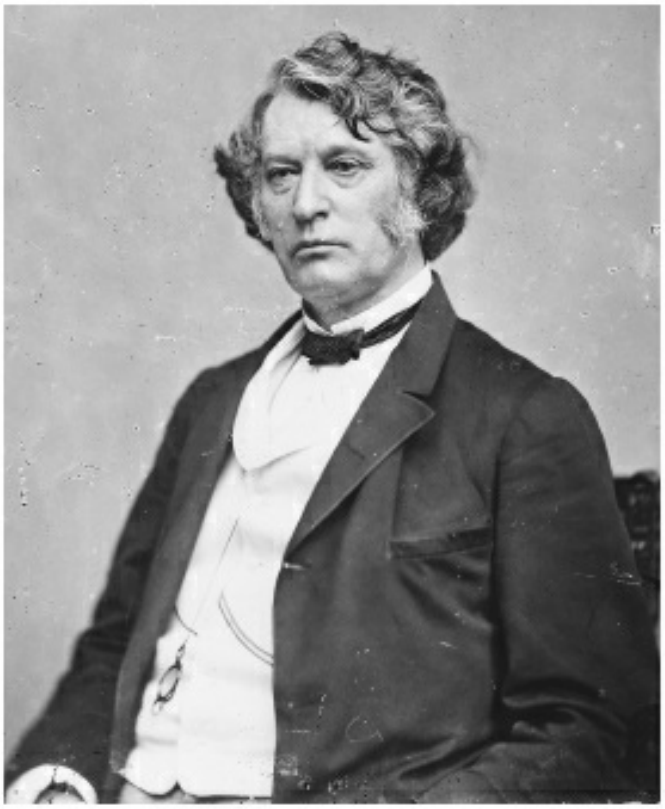
Lincoln and the Movement to Christianize the U.S. Constitution

During the years that Lincoln was in the White House, a third controversy arose that deeply concerned many leaders in the American Jewish community. This issue began to emerge in the early months of 1861, even before President-elect Lincoln formally took office, when a small religious synod called the "Covenanters"—a Christian denomination that split off from the Presbyterian church in 1809—met in Allegheny County, just outside of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The members of this denomination deplored the fact that the U.S. Constitution did not forbid human slavery. They also decried the absence of any mention of God and Jesus Christ in the foundational law of the United States. The Constitution was a flawed document, they concluded, and "Covenanters" decided to do their best to rectify these errors. Their convictions led them to organize a vigorous religious and political movement that sought to formally amend the Constitution so that the Christian essence of the Republic was made explicit.[1]

The Covenanters' first major success came within days of their meeting, when they persuaded Massachusetts senator Charles Sumner (1811–74), a passionate abolitionist, to submit a "memorial" they had written to the U.S. Congress. The Covenanters called on Congress to see "that provisions be made in the Constitution expressing [firstly] an acknowledgment of the authority of God; secondly, an acknowledgment of the authority of God and Christ; thirdly, a recognition of firm obligations to God's law; fourthly, that the principles be clearly adverse to slavery."[2]

As news of Sumner's action spread, some American Jews took note of this development. Was it possible that the future of the U.S. Constitution, like the Union itself, was in question? If the "American Union [was indeed] tottering to its basis," some American Jewish leaders fretted, the ensuing disorder could indeed result in the dismantling of the Constitution and the rights it guaranteed to all citizens. Isaac Leeser, the prominent Philadelphia rabbi and publisher of the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, ominously warned his readers that if a "downfall of the American Republic" occurred, then the chaos that followed might very well become an "excuse for tyranny." Yet, for those who sympathized with the Covenanters and Senator Sumner, the impending collapse of the federal Union and the wicked slave system that triumphed in the American South was the inevitable result of a Republic that exiled God from the nation's founding documents.[3]



U.S. senator Charles Sumner of Massachusetts was a fiery opponent of slavery. Half-length portrait, between 1861 and 1874. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Fanatical abolitionists worried Leeser not because they hoped to abolish slavery by amending the Constitution but because they wanted to demolish Thomas Jefferson's famous “wall of separation between Church & State.”[4] In the pages of the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, Leeser informed his readers that “should the opportunity be offered again to make a new fundamental law for the whole or part of the confederation, the absolute guarantee of religious liberty would be struck down by the hands of fanatics, even of those who have provoked the bitter hostility which the extreme sections of the country now profess for each other.”[5]

The Christian amendment movement continued to build steam during the course of the Civil War. In February 1863, another band of “Christian amendment” advocates, independent of the “Covenanters,” came together in Xenia, Ohio. One of the most passionate participants was a young Presbyterian lay leader named John Alexander (1805–94), who delivered a paper asserting that the Civil War and all the accompanying bloodshed was in fact a national punishment. According to Alexander, “by setting up our national government in the name of a new deity, ‘we the people,’” the American republic had deeply “dishonored” God. By omitting mention of God and Jesus Christ in the Constitution, the Founders committed “the original sin of the nation.” Alexander urged his compatriots to rectify this most serious of flaws by resolving “to amend the Constitution so as to acknowledge God and His authority.”[6]

According to Alexander's own memoirs, his appeal did not immediately win the day among those who had convened with him in Xenia. However, he, and others who agreed with him, soon learned about the Presbyterians and Covenanters in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, and they traveled there in order to collaborate with them. On January 27–28, 1864, this newly formed coalition of advocates held a watershed conference at the First Associate Reformed Presbyterian

Church of Allegheny City.[7] The attendees, most of whom represented local Presbyterian churches and seminaries, concluded that America needed to adopt a Christian amendment to the U.S. Constitution as quickly as possible, and they agreed to join forces under a new unified banner. Thus, the National Reform Association (NRA) was born.

The NRA quickly adopted its own mission statement wherein it set forth the essence of its political agenda:

> To maintain existing Christian features in the American Government touching the Sabbath, the Institution of the Family, the Religious Element in Education, the Oath and Public Morality as affected by the liquor traffic and other kindred evils; and to secure such an amendment of the Constitution of the United States as will declare the nation's allegiance to Jesus Christ and its acceptance of the moral laws of the Christian religion, and to indicate that this is a Christian nation, and place all the Christian laws, institutions and usages of our government on an undeniable legal basis in the fundamental law of the land.[8]

A short time later, the NRA moved its headquarters to Philadelphia and began publishing a monthly organ, the *Christian Statesman*.[9]

News of the NRA's establishment worried many American Jews, who feared that the changes this group was proposing posed a severe threat to religious freedom and minority rights in America. Although he admitted that the NRA had not yet become a mass movement, Isaac Leeser warned his readers that if this group ultimately succeeded "in rendering the *faith* of Christians a part of the supreme law of the country, [then] every one who dissents from it might then by a parity of reasoning be justly deprived of having his portion in the benefits conferred by the Constitution."[10]

Only days after the group's organizational meeting was held, on February 11, 1864, a delegation from the NRA traveled to Washington, D.C., to meet with Abraham Lincoln. They read aloud the text of a new preamble to the Constitution that John Alexander had drafted, and they urged Lincoln to support them in their effort to persuade Congress to Christianize the Constitution and permanently abolish slavery.

According to the minutes of this meeting, which were published in 1873, Lincoln asked the NRA delegation to give him ample time to reflect on their proposal. "The work of amending the Constitution," he told them, "should not be done hastily." Lincoln concluded by assuring them that he would act "upon it as my responsibility to our Maker and our country demands."[11]

Before long, news began to spread that a delegation from the NRA had traveled to Washington in order to "win the President of the United States in favor of the [Christian amendment] measure." In a long and passionate essay, Rabbi Isaac M. Wise of Cincinnati disparaged the group's aspirations and activities:

> We do not know how many members of Congress laugh over this joke; but so much we do know, many laughed about it and considered it not worthwhile to lose a word on it. Its fate is decided, its doom is certain. We, the people of the United States who are no Presbyterians, are not such fools as to place the chains on our own limbs—We, the people of the United States who do acknowledge God as the source of all power, would not allow any body to impose religious dogmas on us contrary or agreeable to our conviction. We claim religious liberty to its full extent and please God we shall maintain it intact and unimpaired as it exists now.[12]

Although the NRA continued to pursue its objectives throughout the remainder of the Lincoln administration, President Lincoln avoided taking any kind of public stance on the matter. Many years later, John Alexander recollected that a few months after the NRA delegation met with Lincoln, the president told an unnamed NRA member, in confidence, that he hoped a Christian amendment would pass during his second administration. “Therefore we believe,” Alexander insisted in 1894, “that if Lincoln had lived, he would have recommended the amendment of the Constitution making it Christian.”[13]

Abraham Lincoln, 1864. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

It is not known whether or not Lincoln actually made such an “off the record” comment, but there can be no doubt that many leading American Jewish personalities disagreed strongly with Alexander's assertion that Lincoln actually supported their cause and wanted to help them pass a Christian amendment during his second term. In the weeks following Lincoln's assassination, many Jewish leaders pointedly described Abraham Lincoln as a man who was always ready to recognize—“in full”—American Jewry's “claims to an equality before the law.” Isaac Leeser reminded the members of his congregation that Lincoln “was not guided by sectarian prejudices.” Prominent lawyer and Jewish leader Philip J. Joachimsen (1817–90) insisted that Lincoln was the “banner-bearer of the Constitution and of the laws…[and he] refused to listen to intimidation.” In eulogizing Lincoln, Philadelphia newspaper editor and Jewish communal leader Alfred T. Jones (1822–88) maintained that whenever the minority rights of American Jewry had been impugned, Lincoln “promptly recognized our claims as a religious body to national protection, and acceded unhesitatingly to all our just demands.”[14]

As time went on, Jews never tired of reminding the American nation that “there was no room for sectarian narrowness in [Lincoln, who] sought to unite the people at whose head he stood.”[15]

In 1911, Rabbi Nathan Krass (1880–1949) wrote an essay wherein he insisted that Lincoln was not a partisan of religious denominations but rather "a strong believer in the God of nations and the Providence of the human family."[16] Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Jewish speakers like Krass repeatedly emphasized Lincoln's universalism. They insisted that as far as Lincoln was concerned, "this is not a government of Christians nor a government of Jews, but a government of the people, for the people, and by the people."[17] For American Jewry, Lincoln was venerated as "the very incarnation of all that was just, true and manly, not only for the Christian, but for the Jew; not only for the white man, but for the negro; not only for the American, but for all men, no matter from what part of the world they came."[18]

For all these reasons, American Jews persistently reassured themselves that the man who asserted that "a government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free" would similarly maintain that "liberty and sectarianism [constituted] 'a house divided against itself'—a contradiction in terms."[19]

DOCUMENTS

1. The National Reform Association Appeals to President Lincoln

2. Rabbi Wise Comments on the Religious Amendment

3. Isaac Leeser Condemns the Effort to "Engraft Christianity on the Constitution"

4. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites Opposes a Religious Amendment

5. A "Destructive Amendment": Leeser's Concern Intensifies

6. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites Defends the Framers of the Constitution

1. THE NATIONAL REFORM ASSOCIATION APPEALS TO PRESIDENT LINCOLN

A delegation of prominent Christian clergymen and leaders from the NRA convention met with President Lincoln in Washington on February 11, 1864. The minutes of that meeting were preserved and later published.

What is interesting in the following documents is the language they used in their proposal to Christianize the Constitution as well as the record of Lincoln's response to their appeal. The NRA leaders hoped the president would embrace their cause, and they credited him for having "awakened a hope in the Christian people of this land." Amazingly, they declared themselves opposed to the idea of uniting church and state and clearly believed that a Christian amendment would not lead to this result. As long as the nation did not favor one Christian *denomination over any other, they argued, the "wall of separation" endured. A Christian America might very well be tolerant of non-Christians, but if the NRA amendment passed, the Christian character of America would become an unassailable fact.*[20]

The Religious Amendment of the Constitution Memorial to Congress

To the Honorable, the Senate and House of Representatives, in Congress assembled:

We, citizens of the United States, respectfully ask your Honorable bodies to adopt measures for amending the Constitution of the United States, so as to read, in substance, as follows:

> We, the people of the United States, [humbly acknowledging Almighty God as the source of all authority and power in civil government, the Lord Jesus Christ as the Ruler among the nations, and His revealed will as the supreme law of the land, in order to constitute a Christian government] and, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare, [and secure the inalienable rights and the blessings of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness to ourselves, our posterity, and all the people,*] do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.
>
> *And further: that such changes with respect to the oath of office, slavery, and all other matters, should be introduced into the body of the Constitution, as may be necessary to give effect to these amendments in the preamble. And we, your humble petitioners, will ever pray, etc.

Resolved, That a special Committee be appointed to carry the Memorial to Washington, lay it before the President, and endeavor to get a special message to Congress on the subject and to lay said Memorial before Congress.[21]

Address to the President

Mr. President:—The object for which we have taken the liberty of trespassing a moment on your precious time, can be explained in very few words. We are the representatives of a mass Convention of Christian people, without distinction of sect or denomination, which was held in Allegheny City, on the 27th and 28th of January last; and we are instructed to lay before your Excellency the action of that Convention.

We are encouraged, Mr. President, to hope that you will give the great object for which we pray, your cordial and powerful support, because you have already shown, by many significant acts of your administration, that the principle on which it rests is dear to your heart. This principle is our national responsibility to God, which you have expressly and repeatedly recognized. We remember that when, under one of your predecessors, an anti-Christian power had refused to treat with the United States, on the ground that we were a Christian nation, the objection was removed by the authoritative statement that we, as a nation, had no religion; also, that several of your predecessors refused, when earnestly importuned, to appoint days of national fasting and thanksgiving, for the same reason, whilst you, sir, within the space of a single year, have thrice, by solemn proclamation, called us to either national fasting, humiliation and prayer, for our many and grievous sins, especially our sin of forgetting God, or to national thanksgiving for His unspeakable mercies.

You, moreover, as no other of our Chief Magistrates ever did, have solemnly reminded us of the redeeming grace of our blessed Saviour, and of the authority of the Holy Scriptures over us as a people. By such acts as these, you have awakened a hope in the Christian people of this land, that you represent them in feeling and want of a distinct and plain recognition of the Divine authority in the Constitution of the United States. For we hold it most certain truth, that nations, as such, and not individuals alone, are the subjects of God's moral government, are responsible to Him, and by Him are graciously rewarded for their obedience, or justly punished for their disobedience of His divine laws….

We ask for no union of Church and State—that is a thing which we utterly repudiate; we ask for nothing inconsistent with the largest religious liberty, or the rights of conscience in any man. We represent no sectarian or denominational object, but one in which all who bear the Christian name, and all who have any regard for the Christian religion, can cordially agree; and one to secure which we are persuaded that any lawful and wise movement would call forth an overwhelming public sentiment in its support.

We, therefore, do earnestly hope that you, our beloved Chief Magistrate, will not be indifferent in our prayer…

The President replied as follows:

Gentlemen:—The general aspect of your movement, I cordially approve. In regard to particulars, I must ask time to deliberate, as the work of amending the Constitution should not be done hastily. I will carefully examine your paper, in order more fully to comprehend its contents than is possible from merely hearing it read, and will take such action upon it as my responsibility to our Maker and our country demands.[22]

2. RABBI WISE COMMENTS ON THE RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT

In his editorial in the Israelite *of June 5, 1863, Isaac M. Wise commented on the movement to amend the Constitution so as to explicitly recognize Christianity as the foundational religion of the United States. Wise points out the contradiction inherent in this proposal, which sought to append an unconstitutional "establishment of religion" on a document that itself prohibits any union of church and state. He also observes that the movement likely had sprung up at this time because "the nation is battling for its life," and "the public mind," being "unsettled and inflamed," is susceptible to "agitation." Wise appeals to his readers to be vigilant: "Who knows but that amid the distractions of the hour the hobby of changing the Constitution might be made a success?"*

The Constitution and Religious Belief

The subject of our caption, so often discussed in our columns, was handled so ably and impartially in the Methodist organ of Pittsburg, Pa., that we must lay it entirely before our readers. The leading points, it will be observed, are precisely like our own, and we republish them in proof of our assertion that the better class of Christian journals are reasonable on this point and contemplate no attack on civil and religious liberty, on the contrary they oppose every violation of rights granted by the constitution. Fanatics and fools think and act otherwise, but their influence reaches not very far.

Our contemporary says: The Convention that framed our National Constitution was composed of different religionists. The Catholic from Maryland, the Puritan from New England, the Episcopalian from Virginia, the Dutch Presbyterian from New York, and Lutheran from Pennsylvania, all assisted in laying this cornerstone of our national edifice. This explains why the great charter of our liberties is wholly unsectarian, since no single class of religionists in the Convention could command a majority of all its votes. To an attentive observer of human events it looks like a providence, which brought about this state of affairs, and launched the nation upon its separate and independent history without sectarian bias and partialism. But from the foundations of the Republic the Constitution has been regarded by some as a godless and infidel

document. It has not escaped their anathemas; but they have been so inconsiderable in numbers as to be insufficient for any serious work of agitation in times of peace. The conviction of this has kept them comparatively quiet in former times. But affairs are now changed. The nation is battling for its life. The public mind is unsettled and inflamed. And who knows but that amid the distractions of the hour the hobby of changing the Constitution might be made a success? What if it does increase the public agitation; fomenting dissensions instead of harmony; and by its controversies adding to the perils of the Government. Who would dare to put the national life in a balance against an abstract, sectarian theory. And so it was proposed to take advantage of our national sorrows in order to foist upon the people the scheme of modifying this Constitution. There it is in a nutshell. The time was opportune for agitators.

The Constitution opposes a union of Church and State. It explicitly enjoins that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibit a free exercise thereof." While this language remains unchanged, the Church and State in America must remain separate. And, who can wish their union. Who would be willing to celebrate their nuptials, or stand sponsor for their good behavior if the bonds of matrimony were cemented? Does not the history of European nations sufficiently demonstrate the sad and desolating effects of such a union? Where has the Church been married to the State and prospered, standing as a light of the nations, moving heaven and earth in regeneration of society? But the idea of uniting Church and State is usually disclaimed by public agitators, who are proposing to amend the Constitution. They know well the repugnance of the mind to such a measure, and avoid providing its heavy opposition.—But the Constitution not only opposes a union of Church and State, it as much establishes the most perfect freedom in religious worship. Now if any religionists are oppressed by the Constitution; or if their religious liberties and immunities are in any just sense curtailed; then indeed should that great national document be amended. But who are so oppressed? In a national history of eighty-five years whose just religious privileges have been restricted or denied? Can the Constitution here be changed for the better? Shall the American people begin to impose restrictions upon the freedom of religious worship? Let him vote aye who will; the sense of the masses will array them, we trust, forever on the negative of the question, and in favor of the largest religious liberty compatible with the public safety.

The Constitution, however, does not once employ the name of God. This, it is thought by some, makes it an infidel document.—They want it to make "a recognition of God," or "a recognition of Christianity." Both these demands appear in the United Presbyterian of this week and since the editor of that paper admits that the Pittsburg agitators have erred in "attempting too much," it is to be presumed that his propositions embrace the most moderate views. Does the simple omission of God's name make an instrument of writing an anti-Christian or infidel document? The Book of Esther does not, we believe, mention the name of God. Is it an infidel document[?] Neither does the Song of Solomon. Is it too an infidel document? Would this justify a revision and amendment of the canon of Scripture? Yet if the reason is valid in one case, it is not less so in the other. But is this advocated amendment of the Constitution possible without restricting the religious freedom of some classes—without imposing restraints upon Jews and Deists? We believe these classes of men in error.—For long years we have taught this publicly and from place to place. But is that any reason why we should

restrain their religious freedom and persecute them? Did Christ and the apostles so teach? And would persecution rectify their error and correct their faith? The answer of all history is in the negative. Error persecuted finds sympathy and spreads. It is idle to say that the advocated amendments of the Constitution can be ingrafted upon that instrument without restraining the liberties of any. And the American nation may well pause before it consents to abandon its present liberal policy for a history of persecution and bigotry.

But what do agitators want? Must God and Christianity be explicitly named in order to their substantial recognition? Can they not be recognized by advocating the principles they embody, and represent and teach? And does not the Constitution make this recognition of them? We do not grant what agitators fondly assume, that the Constitution makes no recognition of God and Christianity. It does recognize them. It teaches, as but few human documents ever taught, the principles that God and Christianity embody and underlie. An inspection of the Constitution will show this. And the history of the nation shows it as well. In 1776 the Continental Congress proclaimed a fast—the second ordered by the same authority. Congress then "Resolved, That it becomes the duty of these hitherto free and happy colonies, with true penitence of heart and most reverend devotion, *publicly to acknowledge the overruling providence of God.* Congress therefore earnestly recommends…a day of fasting, humiliation and prayer that we may, *by a sincere repentance and amendment of life, through the merit and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain his pardon; and…that he would graciously bless our people, and grant that a spirit of incorruptible patriotism and pure and undefiled religion may universally prevail*." We but recently observed a national fast appointed by very similar language. It was requested by Congress and President Lincoln, in its appointment says: *"That it is the duty of nations, as well as men, to own their dependence on the overruling providence of God…and to recognize the sublime truth announced in the Sacred Scriptures, and proven by all history, that those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."* And the President also expresses his sorrow that "we have become too self-sufficient to feel *the necessity of redeeming and preserving grace,"* thus recognizing the atonement in all its untold influences upon man. Has not the nation, without violating the Constitution, thus made public recognition of God, and Christ, and Christianity? What more can agitators want? Would they cast away the substance by grasping a mere shadow? But public agitators are perhaps a necessary evil. If the amendments proposed were granted, others still would be demanded. Restless spirits will always abound. Changes will never cease to be agitated. It will be safe, and pious, and godlike for the American people to conclude that our National Constitution shall never be changed till it is proven an oppressive and illiberal document. This no man can show.[23]

3. ISAAC LEESER CONDEMNS THE EFFORT TO "ENGRAFT CHRISTIANITY ON THE CONSTITUTION"

The Occident and American Jewish Advocate, *a monthly periodical edited by Isaac Leeser, published from 1843 through 1869, was dedicated to informing the Jewish public about issues that pertained to Jewish literature, religion, politics, and culture. In the following selection from the August 1863 issue, Leeser—like his counterpart, Isaac M. Wise—warned his readers about the movement to "Christianize" the Constitution. If the Constitution were to be thus amended, he*

wrote, all non-Protestant individuals (Catholics, Deists, Unitarians, and Quakers, as well as Jews) could be "crushed under the wheels of the new Juggernaut" and deprived of their civil rights on account of their religious opinions.

A Ministerial Amendment to the Constitution

We would therefore now draw attention to the present effort to engraft Christianity on the Constitution, by which all who do not admit it as true, may ultimately be excluded from every participation in the government of the country. We trust indeed that the attempt, renewed ever so often, may prove futile, and as nugatory and insignificant as the two meetings in Allegheny and its twin city, Pittsburgh, have as yet proved. But we would warn all who are interested in the maintenance of the Constitution as it was made by the sages of the revolution, who stood a head and shoulder higher than the men of the present age, not to allow such views as now propounded to go abroad without watching closely the progress of things. As in other agitations, the party now small may become gradually the vast majority, and it requires no great stretch of the imagination to conceive the possibility of so powerful a combination of all the protestant sects, that Catholics, Jews, Unitarians, Deists, Quakers, and other dissenters may be crushed under the wheels of the new Juggernaut which is now in the process of erection. It is true that the interests of the various sectarians are apparently not easily reconciled; and that whenever power should be obtained, they may quarrel among themselves over the distribution of the spoils of victory. But this would be no satisfaction at all to those who would have suffered the loss of their political and religious equality; besides which, the re-obtaining of the precious treasure of equal rights would be opposed unanimously by the spoilers, notwithstanding the diversity of sentiment among themselves. Do we not see now the exemplication [*sic*] in Prussia, where the constitution declares that no citizen shall be deprived of any rights on account of religion, and still the claim of Israelites is constantly evaded by the arbitrary interpretation which ministers of all the various parties, as they obtain office, have contrived to put on the laws of the land? The people are with the Israelites by vast majorities; but the Christian State party understand after all how to avoid doing justice to a large, most intelligent, honorable, influential, and patriotic portion of the community. We do not say that it is *probable* that a similar result may be witnessed in the United States; we rather think, it will take a long while before it can occur, if ever; but we speak of a possibility of the evil developing itself with irresistible force at some day; and we therefore enter our protest now against it in its inception, that should it become a reality at the distant day, it may be known, that honest Israelites were very early cognizant of the conspiracy against human liberty, in the fullest sense of the word.

Now there is no question to our mind, that there are many zealous men, we might call them without offence fanatics in the maintenance of their opinions, who deem Christianity the only safe rule of governing in the State, and who will leave no effort untried to engraft it on the Constitution, from the conviction of the justice of its being done. But we think that the claim to a power of this kind must prove injurious; and hence we trust that all who feel that they may be injured thereby will carefully watch the coming events, and throw their influence in the scale of the opponents of the measure, even if no success should follow, to check the power of the assailants. In this country it is not likely that the Romish faction will obtain an overpowering influence

for years to come. We have indeed nothing to expect from them, should they get the superiority; and we would warn Israelites not to be misled by the blandishments which they know so well how to offer, to *entrust their priests and nuns with the education of our children.* But at present they would be as much injured as we, should the religious element be engrafted on the constitution; for they would find it difficult to contend against a united protestant body. We may therefore expect that should the question grow into larger dimensions, we should not be left alone to contend for human rights, but find support no less from our ancient oppressors than from persons indifferent to all religion, not from love for Israelites and those who would be excluded under the new state of things, but from a sense of common danger.

Some readers may deem that we are alarmed without cause. Perhaps it is so. But there is no certainty, we repeat, that the danger is imaginary. It will not hurt us, at least, to be on our guard against surprise; and we have discharged a duty in simply recording, in order to warn the unwary, the second attempt to transfer the idea of the Christian state to American soil, the boast of which has hitherto been that here all men might worship God according to the dictates of their conscience, which right would surely be greatly circumscribed were the messiahship of the man of Nazareth engrafted on the fundamental law of the country. We could easily extend this article to much larger dimensions; we however forbear, content to let our readers form their own conclusions from premises as clear to them as they are to us, especially as their interest in the result cannot be inferior to ours. For it requires no long argument to demonstrate, that, if the agitators should succeed in rendering the *faith* of Christians a part of the supreme law of the country, every one who dissents from it might then by a parity of reasoning be justly deprived of having his portion in the benefits conferred by the Constitution; and thus persecution for opinions' sake would be the next legitimate and inevitable step.[24]

4. THE BOARD OF DELEGATES OF AMERICAN ISRAELITES OPPOSES A RELIGIOUS AMENDMENT

At its December 11, 1864, meeting, the leaders of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites resolved that action must be taken to oppose the movement that sought to Christianize the U.S. Constitution. The BODAI decided that if the National Convention to Secure the Religious Amendment of the Constitution presented a "Memorial" urging the U.S. Congress to adopt such an amendment, then it would prepare and submit a counter-memorial to Congress.

At a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Delegates held on Wednesday, December 11th, 1864.

Present: Rev. I[saac] Leeser, VP in the Chair, Messrs. [Henry] Josephi, [Lawrence] Myers, [Abraham] Hart & [Ellis] Joseph.

The reading of minutes of last meeting was on motion dispensed with.

The Committee on Conference with the Presidents of City Congregations reported progress.

Accepted.

The Chairman stated the object of the meeting to be the taking of proper action with reference to the projected Constitutional amendment recognizing Christianity.

Moved Seconded That the Executive Committee will watch with care and

solicitude the proceeding inaugurated at the recent Convention at Philadelphia, looking to an amendment of the U.S. Constitution recognizing Christianity that in the event of a memorial being presented to Congress praying for such Amendment, this Committee will cause a counter-memorial to be prepared & submitted to Congress, with the endorsement of friends of civil religious liberty of whatever denomination.

Carried

Moved & Seconded that Mr. Myers be added to the Committee on Conference with the Presidents of un-represented congregations.

Carried

Moved & Seconded that Mr. Hezekiah Kohn be chosen a member of the Executive Committee in place of Mr. Berlin.

Carried

Letter of Sir Moses Montefiore was received and ordered on file.

The Chairman brought to the attention of the Committee the project for a Jewish College which had been initiated at Philadelphia & also the projects Free Schools at New York.

On motion, adjourned
M[yer] S. Isaacs,
Sec'y[25]

5. A "DESTRUCTIVE AMENDMENT": LEESER'S CONCERN INTENSIFIES

A year after the initial meeting of the National Convention to Secure the Religious Amendment of the Constitution, the movement appeared to be gaining momentum. The proponents met twice more in 1864, and news of their intentions continued to appear in the press.

In January 1865, Isaac Leeser wrote a blistering article in his journal, the Occident and American Jewish Advocate. *Leeser titled this essay "Rishuth,"*[26] *which he defined as "religious intolerance." He asserted that the movement in favor of changing the Constitution had been gaining momentum in large part due to widespread belief that God was so displeased by his having been excluded from the nation's founding documents that he was punishing the nation by prolonging the Civil War and its wanton bloodshed.*

Leeser "grieved" over the emotional enthusiasm of this movement. He insisted that those who advocated this plan—some of whom were his personal acquaintances—were likely "to destroy the liberty of conscience, and to burden the limbs of free *America with the shackles which…* enslaved *Europe."*

The following excerpt taken from the article's first section concludes with an exhortation to Jews to "defend the cause…of Israel" and refrain from thinking that "days of evil can not come in this land of freedom and in this enlightened century."

Rishuth

The day we are commencing this article happens to be the first day of Kislev, coinciding with the 30th of November, and we find in the papers of this morning (we wish to be particular regarding dates and places in quality of a chronicler for future reference,) that a convention of friends for certain proposed amendments to the Constitution of the United States assembled yesterday, November 29, at the West Arch street Presbyterian church. We introduce the subject under a name which is no doubt new to many American Israelites, although sufficiently well known, and alas! too

bitterly experienced and remembered by natives of Europe, Asia and Africa, and means, in its general acceptation, the bigoted spirit of intolerance on account of religion displayed by those having different faiths towards the descendants of Abraham. The liberalists of Europe have been in the habit of looking towards America, and with full justice, as the land of free development of the human mind, where the question of belief placed no bar of enmity or exclusion between the various inhabitants, upon all of whom the same sun of equality was shedding his beneficent rays. The Constitution which guarantied this equality still exists on paper; but we grieve to record that there are men, even among our own personal Christian acquaintances, now at work to destroy the liberty of conscience, and to burden the limbs of *free* America with the shackles which the once *enslaved* Europe is fast casting away, guided by the higher development of the human intellect, which acknowledges no arbiter of faith except the Creator, who is great enough and wise enough to punish all offences against his majesty, without invoking the puny aid of fallible mortals. It is humiliating to behold men of influence, and of more than average mortal powers, acting as pioneers in the work of digging the grave of religious liberty and social equality; but it is after all a return to the first principles of the dominant religion on this continent, "that who is not for us is against us," and we are neither surprised nor terrified at this daring attempt to make Protestantism do in America what Romanism has failed to accomplish in the Old World, to wit:—introduce a uniformity of belief, and afterwards of practice, in accordance with what may be deemed by the *conquering* party of the doctrines of Christianity. We use the italicised word with due deliberation; for until one sect, or at least a combination of sects, has made its exposition of Christianity the accepted views by the vast majority of the inhabitants of the country, no serious thought of any amendment to the Constitution can be thought of, and many years must elapse before this contingency will occur; since so many individuals and sects are interested in preserving their right to *free* thought, that the march of the exclusive policy must be more or less slow. At the same time we are free to confess that the success of the new movement is not impossible, nor even improbable. Four years ago it was merely a speck in the political horizon, when one of the numerous branches of the Presbyterian church, sitting at Allegheny city, Pennsylvania, first publicly broached the subject, and sent a memorial to Congress by the hands of Senator Sumner of Massachusetts, of which transaction we took notice in No. 43 of our eighteenth volume, which was issued weekly. But at this day those who sit in the council of the *exclusionists* are members of various evangelical sects, and a former governor of Pennsylvania, and at present director of the U.S. Mint, does not disdain the post of honor to preside over their deliberations. Four years were in olden days but a small portion of time. But at the present period events jostle each other so rapidly, that months suffice to do the work which formerly required years to mature, and it is therefore possible that the movement to Christianizing the Constitution may be speedily brought into Congress, say within a space of fourteen months, with some chance of being favorably received, if the ruling party should choose to consider it compatible with its interests to have the matter there agitated. We will honestly state our impression that the executive himself entertains no opinions in common with the present convention; on the contrary we think ourself justified in supposing that he is liberal in religious matters; but it is still possible on the other hand, that his supporters may not wait for his consent, or rather bring the subject

up in Congress for debate against his wishes. We would not hazard a long peep into the arcana of the future as to the result,—we might perchance be deceived; but we do not venture on debatable ground in asserting that religious intolerance, *Rishuth* proper, is increasing in this country on the one hand, while rank infidelity, including the spiritual manifestation madness, is extending with equal rapidity on the other. The present civil war, which has developed the capacity for hateful passions in the people in both sections to an alarming extent, has cast a veil over the beneficent light of sober reason, and the effect on the moral future of the country does not promise to be what a philanthropist might desire, though here too, the calculations of the timid may fail and disappoint him agreeably by an emerging of the republic unscathed from the fiery trial. But there can be no question that the war has a powerful tendency to harmonize the gloomy spirits who regard themselves in every age as the chosen instruments of Providence, and called upon to purge the earth from those evils which they esteem as the cause of the pouring forth of the divine wrath which afflicts the land. It is possible also that the influence of such men over the masses may increase with the augmentation of the sorrows and poverty incident to such a contest, as is now waged in America, which is gradually extending its blighting hand into the family circle of every cottage and palace, so that but few houses will be discoverable, in which some member has not been stricken down, or which has not to mourn the absence of some beloved relative who languishes in prison or hospital; since it is easily conceivable that the gloom felt by the leaders of the people will be transmitted to others not before impressible by serious reflection. Let it be also considered that the Christian sects count their followers by the millions and their churches by the thousands; and that almost daily the ministers have thus the opportunity to come before large audiences in town and country, and expatiate on the sinfulness of the land, which they may aver, as has no doubt been done in the convention in this city, is the absence of the Christian element in the Constitution. Is it not then likely that the people at large, under the state of mental depression which must extend itself gradually, notwithstanding that so many butterflies of fashion whirl along in the mazes of extravagance while hovering on the brink of a volcano, may gradually yield to the united onslaught which will unquestionably be made under the impulse now given by the ministerial phalanx, and demand the amendment to the Constitution, which is all that is needed (so will the agitators say) to reconcile God to the land, and grant it peace, as some may sincerely wish, or the extermination of, or at least a crushing victory over their enemies, as the vast many other desire? The leaders will say, that the Lord is not with the armies of the republic, because the Constitution does not recognise His existence in so many words; that the *mediator*, whom they believe in, has not thought proper to intercede for them, because his name does not head the civil compact under which the people united to form a government, and that no prosperity can be hoped for by armies and fleets, until the sacred Scriptures are made the nominal basis of legislation,—we say nominal, for we have no idea that the agitators honestly mean to be governed by the Ten Commandments even, not to mention the whole “Book of the Law of the Lord,” which they declare in their presumption as abrogated and worn out. The people who have no other ideas propounded, who will see nothing in print to counteract them, who are blindly attached to the lead of their teachers, will naturally give their assent to propositions so plausibly laid before them, and to which they are naturally inclined by

their early training and all their surroundings. Let it be farther recollected that the representatives in the state and Union legislatures are elected by the kind of constituencies just referred to, that is those under the leadership of the agitating clergy who are perhaps hypocritically, yet actively, engaged in urging the destruction of one of the vital principles of the federal compact, and that such delegates are very apt to share the prejudices of their electors, or at least profess to do so, in order to gain the proper influence, offices and emoluments incident to power: and you have a well-grounded probability that an attempt will be made in Congress, with or without the assent of the chief executive, to engraft Trinitarian Christianity on the Constitution, as an atonement to God for past neglect of the supposed duty.

We have said, that we do not apprehend that the attempted treason will soon succeed; still there is no question but that the number of conspirators will increase every year, as long as the causes which have fostered the rise of the agitation will be operative; and no man is wise enough to fix a period when they will cease. For even if the war should suddenly terminate now, the elements are too much excited to be speedily calmed down, and the stimulus, which has set the springs in motion, will continue to act, though the apparent motive should exist no longer. If we edited a political magazine, we might branch off into details; but religion and its interests are all that we have a legitimate right to handle: we must discuss the subject, and confine ourself to the religious development before us.—In this respect we would call the attention of our readers to a duty which rests upon them, to watch the course of events carefully and cautiously, not to rush into violent excitements on account of the conspiracy which is slowly unrolled before them; but to contribute by their silent, yet energetic action through the ballot, and by pen and speech, to rebuke the sacrilegious attack which ambitious sectarians even now aim at the Constitution, which has protected for nearly eighty years, with a common aegis, the religious liberty of all the inhabitants of the land, so that even the bondmen in the South had freedom of worship, although their bodies were subjected to masters, and their labor exerted for those who claimed them as their own. It is however useless for them to argue with the agitators; they are perfectly aware of their own iniquity; many, we are sure, do not believe in the efficacy of their acts to propitiate the favor of God, as they only labor for an end exceedingly worldly, and this is power. But the whole community is not yet mad; and it is wise therefore to unite with the calm and considerate of all persuasions and modes of thinking, to avert the evil threatening all who differ from the agitators. All however, who love liberty for its own sake, should exert themselves without delay; for possibly the time of trial will come, unless some new direction should be given speedily to public opinion, and divert it from the contemplated movement. We must also be prepared, notwithstanding all honest opposition to the iniquity, to see the *destructive amendment* incorporated into the Constitution, and to find ourselves thus aliens in a land where we had hoped for permanent freedom and equality. But should this be the result of our deceived hopes, we trust that the ancient energy of Israel will show itself again as capable as of old to rise above the trials of the hour, and to glorify the name of the Lord amidst the seclusion of our own firesides, though our lot be again that of humbleness and oppression. In the meantime, while waiting for the full development of the painful drama which it is possible we may have to witness, let all Israelites endeavor to demean themselves so as to give their opponents no cause to charge them

with any acts unbecoming their holy ancestry, and to call into being institutions which will dignify their name, and be an honor to their religion, and see to it that they train representative men who will be able to seize the pen in the hour of need and to utter the living word, when occasion calls on us to defend the cause and fair fame of Israel. Much can be done by us if we only will employ earnestly and properly, as well as promptly, the means at our command, and let no one think that it is time enough hereafter to work. Now is the acceptable time, even while our opponents attempt to forge new chains wherewith to bind our conscience,—now let us work, while as yet no restrictions have been contrived to lame our efforts, and let no one in his fancied security think that the days of evil can not come in this land of freedom and in this enlightened century. What has been can be again, and crimes formerly committed are possible again even now. Perhaps there is a providence in all this to wake us out of our lethargy that we may cling closer to God than to worldly things; if so, let us bless the tempest that will purify the atmosphere of our supineness, and kiss reverently the rod that is lifted up to chastise us for our salvation.

6. THE BOARD OF DELEGATES OF AMERICAN ISRAELITES DEFENDS THE FRAMERS OF THE CONSTITUTION

As promised, the BODAI quickly submitted a "counter-memorial" in response to the one Congress received from the proponents of the Christian amendment. The BODAI's "Memorial," dated January 30, 1865, challenged the wisdom of the amendment desired by a "conference of ministers and laymen of various denominations." The memorial points out that the Christian faith is in need of no such bolstering from the Constitution, and it insists that the revolutionary patriots who framed the Constitution deliberately intended to "establish a perfect equality for all modes of belief."

To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled:

The Executive Committee of the Board of Delegates of the American Israelites respectfully show, that your memorialists are a permanent executive committee from a conference representing about forty congregations of Israelites in various parts of the United States, and have been appointed to watch over all occurrences which may interest the Israelites in their social, religious and political concerns. As such your memorialists approach your honorable bodies at this juncture, to protest energetically against the amendments to the preamble of the Constitution of the United States as prayed for in the memorial of the Presbytery of Cincinnati, dated September 20th, 1864, and signed by A. J. Reynolds and twenty-one others, and against any changes in the various articles of the Constitution, to make them agree with the amendments as suggested by a conference of ministers and laymen of various denominations held at Philadelphia, on the 29th and 30th of November, 1864, and which, no doubt, have been or will be presented to Congress at this or the next session.

Your memorialists take this early opportunity to offer their protest, fearing that an entire silence on their part might embolden the persons who seek to deprive them of their *inalienable* rights which they have hitherto enjoyed under the Constitution, as it was made by the fathers of the Republic, to say, that the universal voice of the country demands the amendment to the Constitution, so as to introduce Christianity as the

recognized religion of the land, and thus to prejudice the minds of your honorable bodies in favor to the changes, under the impression that no one would be injured by their adoption.

Your memorialists, too, represent many whose fathers and predecessors came to America to enjoy civil and religious liberty. Many of their fathers and friends fought in the war of the revolution, and aided to achieve the independence of the country in the contest the colonies waged against Great Britain. Others of those who profess our religion came to this land, called hither to participate in the religious freedom which they were told in their native countries was the common inheritance of all inhabitants of the Union, let their birthplace be what it may. Many had suffered exclusion from certain rights of man because of their religion, which they cherish as their dearest birthright; as it has been the harbinger of civilization, and has conferred the greatest blessings on the world in sacred books which compose the Bible, and which they have preserved amidst all the trials and banishments which have afflicted them. Your memorialists appeal to their history in this country and challenge comparison with the best of other persuasions as to their morality, frugality, honesty and industry. They contend that, notwithstanding many discouraging circumstances, many a bitter prejudice to which their name and descent have subjected them, they have contributed their full share, according to their numbers, to the prosperity and development of the country. They had trusted that here, where liberty was guaranteed to all by the charter which the people through their highly endowed delegates devised in 1787, they would be left in peace to pursue the course which Providence in His wisdom has marked out for them in history and revelation. But they observe with the deepest regret that they are threatened with a total withdrawal of their precious rights as citizens equal with any others, by introducing a Christian element in the Constitution. They recognize the full right of every man to worship God as his conscience impels him; they claim no right to denounce the Christian, Mahomedan or heathen, for not worshipping the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, or not obeying the laws of Moses as they do. They protest, therefore, against any acts of their fellow citizens calculated to deprive them of their fullest right to pursue their own conscientious convictions.

The Convention which framed the Constitution was composed of men who surely had full faith in the Creator. Their history proves them not to have been without trust in God. Their not reciting their own creed or any creed in the preamble to the Constitution was owing solely, as your memorialists conceive, to their desire to establish a perfect equality for all modes of belief, leaving it to every one to choose for himself what persuasion he might desire to follow. Your memorialists honestly believe, that this omission of a creed has not been hurtful to Christianity, any more than Judaism. For while the people represented by your petitioners are still a very small minority, the Christian sects number hundreds of thousands, and the spire of a village church is seen near the public school in every vale, and near almost every mountain-top. Schools and colleges are everywhere erected, and the press urged by the energetic power of steam distributes Bibles, books, tracts and cards of Christian teaching, not alone over the entire country, but even in savage lands where the enthusiastic missionary endeavors to diffuse the religion which he professes. Your memorialists cannot believe that the land is cursed by God, because He has not been recognized in the Constitution, or else they would respectfully ask why have eighty years of prosperity blessed it on land and sea,

in its basket and kneading trough, in the field and city, on going out and coming in? It is in vain to say, that the absence of a *national* creed renders this an atheistical nation; for the deeds of our people prove the contrary; but were it even otherwise, it would be akin to blasphemy to assert that the offended Deity should be appeased by mere words, which a dialectitian can twist to suit his own purposes, and not accept of works which are the true evidences of conviction.

If your memorialists could have the opportunity to appear in person before the proper committees of your honorable bodies, they have no doubt, but that they could offer you many reasons for withholding your assent to the petition from the Cincinnati Presbytery and other similar religious bodies; but they forbear at present, for fear of wearying you, from doing more than presenting their brief protest with a few reasons for it, in the firm hope that you may leave the work of the revolutionary heroes of America unchanged as regards the equality of all citizens of the land under the organic law, no matter what their religious persuasion may be, by not introducing any clause or clauses which could give to any one more prerogatives than others possess, or only permit some to reside here by the sufferance or toleration of others.

And your Memorialists will ever pray.[27]

6

“A Great Man in Israel Has Fallen”: American Jewry Mourns Lincoln

On Saturday morning, April 15, 1865, as the American people awoke and began their day, the shocking news of the president's assassination began to spread. Throughout the nation, many Jews were making their way to their synagogues; the day was not only the Jewish Sabbath but also the fifth day of the joyous Passover festival. American Jews had conducted their Passover seders in their homes on the evenings of April 10 and 11, the preceding Monday and Tuesday. More Jews than usual would have planned to attend prayer services on this special Sabbath, which occurred during the eight-day long Passover holiday.[1] Indeed, many American Jews first learned their president had been murdered while they were walking to synagogue or shortly after they had arrived. Like their fellow citizens, they were overcome with grief and sorrow.

Writing only days after the assassination, Rabbi Isaac M. Wise tried to convey a sense of the all-encompassing sorrow that enveloped the streets of Cincinnati: “The old man wept—the old woman wept—the soldier, the statesman, the native and the foreigner—all, all wept. Friends, when grief is universal—when enemies join in the general lamentations—*a great man must have fallen*! And Lincoln was a great man.”[2]

In an effort to console their forlorn congregants, American rabbis spontaneously addressed themselves to the shocking event. Some of these unrehearsed comments were captured by newspaper correspondents who published a summary of the extemporaneous remarks the following day. At San Francisco's Congregation Emanu-El, for example, the distressing news stunned Rabbi Elkan Cohn (1820–89) so profoundly that he literally burst into tears and became momentarily “senseless.” Once he had pulled himself together, Cohn did his best to break the news to his congregation: “Beloved Brethren!…I am scarcely able to command my feelings, and to express before you the sad calamity that has befallen our beloved country. Who might believe it! Our revered President Abraham Lincoln, the twice anointed high priest in the sanctuary of our Republic, has fallen a bloody victim to treason and assassination, and is no more…. Oh, the beloved of our heart is fallen…”[3]

In New York, Rabbi Samuel Adler (1809–91) of Congregation Emanu-El “attempted to say a few words of consolation to his congregation, but was himself so much overcome with grief that, after an earnest, impressive prayer for the government and the nation, he was compelled to desist.”[4]

Temple Emanu-El on Twelfth Street in New York City, 1854–66. *Centenary Celebration of Congregation Emanu-El, 1845–1866* (New York: Comet Press, 1945). Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Rabbi Max Lilienthal left a similarly vivid description of the effect the sad news had on the Jewish community of Cincinnati:

> Oh, on the fatal Saturday morning that brought us such gloomy tidings, when receiving our morning papers, we were only prepared to read the festivities of the nation, and to enjoy once more the jubilee of the past day. We hurried to the telegraphic dispatches—what letters are these? What do they mean? We were unwilling to trust our senses; we thought in the dizziness of yesterday's feast we had forgotten our letters, had unlearned our spelling; we could at first not realize the stern truth. But when we recovered from our first shock—when we became convinced of the terrible reality—then the heart of the nation stood still, breathless, lifeless, paralyzed! And when tears began to relieve our stupefaction, the lips were quivering and shivering with the heart-rending exclamation: O God, our good President has been assassinated![5]

In houses of worship throughout the nation, religious leaders eulogized Abraham Lincoln. An analysis of more than 300 sermons delivered by northern Protestant ministers sheds much light on the sentiments of sorrow and loss that shrouded Christian Americans across the Union in the wake of the assassination. In consoling their parishioners, Protestant ministers expressed a

number of common themes. Almost all these church sermons addressed themselves to Lincoln's extraordinary character. Without exception, the ministers praised Lincoln as a heroic leader and an unusually fine human being. They reminded their people that, as the nation's chief magistrate during a grave period of crisis, Lincoln never lost sight of the country's most important values: an insoluble union, a government by the people, a commitment to the inalienable right of freedom for all human beings, and a faithful belief in God Almighty. He was, they preached, a truly honest, forthright, humble, intelligent, and moral human being.[6]

The fact that Lincoln was shot on Good Friday prompted many to compare the martyred president to Jesus Christ. Both pastors and politicians pondered whether Lincoln's death was the final expiation for the nation's sins. The Reverend Cephas Bennett Crane (1833–1917) of South Baptist Church of Hartford, Connecticut, told his people that "Jesus Christ died for the world [and] Abraham Lincoln died for his country." Ohio congressman James A. Garfield, a man who sixteen years later would become the second American president to be assassinated, famously remarked: "It may be almost impious to say it, but it does seem that Lincoln's death parallels that of the son of God."[7]

Like Christian clerics, American rabbis took to their pulpits to eulogize the slain leader. Some of these rabbinic eulogies appeared in local newspapers, and many others were subsequently published separately as monographs. Not surprisingly, Jewish preachers made no mention of Lincoln having died for the nation's sins. Yet many classified his death as a form of martyrdom, and a few rabbis actually referred to Lincoln as the nation's "messiah." The themes these Jewish preachers employed in eulogizing the fallen president had much in common with those used by non-Jewish religious leaders. Above all, they lauded Lincoln's accomplishments as a leader and heaped praise on him as a truly fine human being: "Who was Abraham Lincoln? The first labourer-President! Of his antecedents nothing could be said, but that he had risen by his own energies from the lowest sphere of life. He had battled with all kinds of personal difficulties, and had overcome them; he had struggled against all obstacles, and had conquered them; and by his sagacity, energy and unsophisticated honesty, had succeeded to be elected to fill the greatest office in the hands of the people."[8]

Lincoln, the rabbis resolutely eulogized, was more than a national "hero and patriot." They insisted that Lincoln belonged to the entire nation and was a "friend of the people, the poor and the slave." The fallen president had "a smile for everyone and everything, with the welcoming grasp and winning word." He was "stern to himself [but] lenient towards others." As if with one voice, the rabbis prophesied that Lincoln's name would be as "immortal as the truth of [his] teaching."[9]

In spite of the fact that one can find many commonplaces in the Lincoln eulogies preached by both Jewish and Christian clergy, one cannot help but notice that many of the Jewish obsequies gave voice to a new and significant idea that appeared nowhere in the Protestant funeral sermons. Inside the synagogues of America, the martyred president was also being lauded as a *Jewish* hero. In some instances, this notion was conveyed through the power of suggestion and literary metaphor. Yet some of these Jewish preachers unhesitatingly insisted that Abraham Lincoln was their spiritual kinsman. Rabbi Max Lilienthal expressed the sentiments of many Jews when, quoting directly from the book of Samuel, he stoutly proclaimed: "Indeed, a great man has fallen in Israel!…We revered him, we loved him, we regarded him as a man of superior destiny."[10]

Lincoln's responsiveness to the needs of American Jewry during the course of his presidency constituted the basis for the special esteem and affection he merited among Jewish mourners. The rabbis insisted that Lincoln's unswerving commitment to the American ideals of freedom

and justice drove him to preserve and enhance the rights of Jews as American citizens. Rabbi Isaac Leeser of Philadelphia, who played an active role in many of the Jewish controversies that came to Lincoln's attention, was so shaken by the assassination that he found it difficult to preach. During the Passover seder that had occurred only a few days earlier, on April 9, 1865, Leeser became so emotionally overwrought when he heard that General Robert E. Lee had surrendered at Appomattox "that he had to stop the Service." Less than a week later, news of Lincoln's assassination upset him so profoundly he found it difficult to organize his thoughts, and he implored his congregation to forgive him for speaking in such a "disconnected manner." Overcome by grief and emotion, Leeser managed to point out that American Jews were particularly indebted to Lincoln because of his efforts to address the injustices of the chaplaincy controversy and General Orders No. 11. "These instances," Leeser declared, "speak loudly for the natural kindness of the late President, which all can cheerfully acknowledge, whatever their political opinions may be."[11]

Like Leeser, Rabbi Henry (Hayyim) Hochheimer (1818–1912) of the Oheb Israel Congregation in Baltimore also noted Lincoln's commitment to protecting and enlarging the rights of Jewish citizens. "More than all others, the 'house of Israel' has cause to mourn this great loss…. Need I cite individual cases?" Hochheimer asked rhetorically. Lincoln's unswerving determination to ensure that American Jews received just treatment under the Constitution testified to the fact that Lincoln was a man with no religious prejudice. For this reason, Hochheimer told them, Abraham Lincoln had served as American Jewry's "shield and protection" (*Schutz und Schirm*).[12]

Hochheimer was one of many rabbis who claimed that Lincoln's essential honesty and fair-minded spirit made it possible for him to relate to Jews without bias or ill will. Yet there were some Jewish preachers who insisted that Lincoln's interest in American Jewry was due to something more than his lack of religious prejudice, asserting that Lincoln was a kindred Jewish spirit. They maintained the fallen president had long evidenced a special affinity and respect for the Jewish people and went as far as to suggest that Lincoln was a friend to the Jews because, in many respects, he possessed a Jewish soul!

New York's Rabbi Morris J. Raphall (1798–1868), for example, told his congregation that when he and Lincoln first met, the fallen president treated him as a friend "because he knew [I] was a Jew…[and] a true servant of the Lord." Rabbi Benjamin Szold (1829–1902) of Baltimore had once visited Lincoln in the White House, and he spoke of this encounter frequently. The rabbi had accompanied an immigrant Jewish woman to the White House so she could beseech the President to pardon her son, who had been sentenced to death for desertion. The woman, overwrought by the thought of losing her son, became emotional and began pleading with the president in Yiddish. Obviously, Lincoln had no idea what she was saying, but, according to Szold, as he listened to the woman's unintelligible yet piteous appeal, tears began trickling down Lincoln's cheeks. Szold ended the story here, lauding Lincoln's compassion but failing to mention that the young soldier's life was not spared.[13] In his eulogy, Szold told his congregants that spiritually, philosophically, and ethically, Lincoln was a Jew:

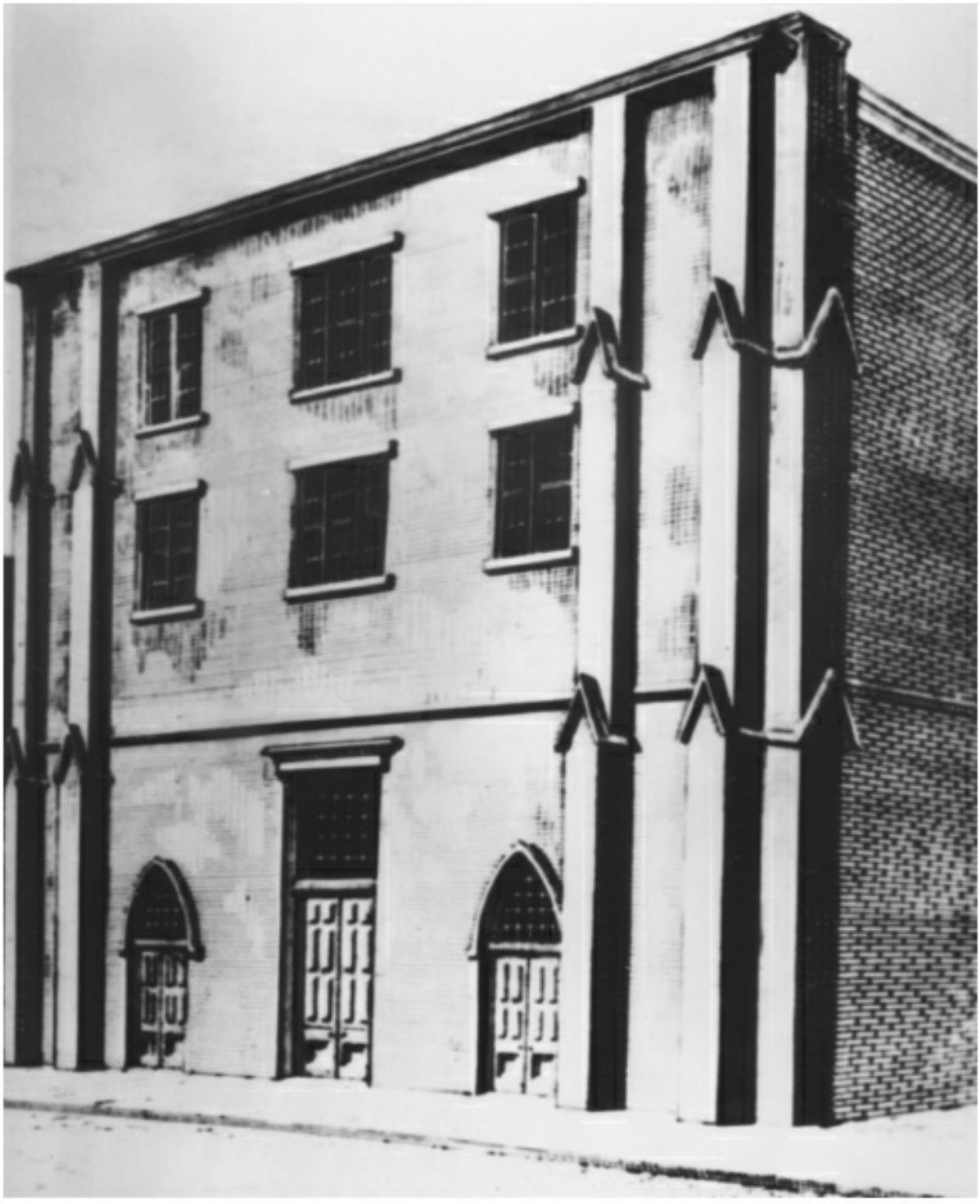
> My friends, we should regard Abraham Lincoln, so loyally devoted to [freedom], as a son of Israel. And if many, from a political standpoint, assign him a place in history next to Washington, we, on the other hand, from a higher, from a humanistic standpoint, should place him next to our heroes of virtue and of truth, next to eminent figures of Israelite antiquity. And if, as some will have it, he was not flesh of our flesh

> or bone of our bone, he was indeed spirit of our spirit and soul of our soul. His spirit and his soul, his heart and mind, his innermost nature and disposition, his fervent enthusiasm for everything noble and lofty, his love for the Fatherland, for Freedom and humanity, everything about him and in him that manifested his nature, his thought and his feeling, down to his way of speaking and the method, all his own, of clarifying lofty ideas by means of analogies in order to make them understood—these were truly Israelitish, in the spirit of ancient Israel. Therefore, just as the old Israelite faith heroes are our eternal exemplars, let us also see in him a lofty and shining exemplar.[14]

Just before noon on Wednesday, April 19, 1865, the long obsequies for President Lincoln began at the White House. Around the country, people flocked to their own houses of worship to mark the occasion locally. At Chicago's Kehilath Anshe Ma'ariv, Rabbi Liebman Adler (1812–92) described Lincoln as a paragon of virtue that Jews should emulate "even though he was a non-Jew." Adler noted that "Lincoln remains for us a glowing example because of his strict honesty, his pure morals and unfeigned faith, his modesty and kindness of heart, and a patriotism aglow with the purest flame. Let us achieve in our modest lives and in a small way what he, in his high position, accomplished on the broadest scale."[15]

In Philadelphia, Rabbi Sabato Morais (1823–97) stood before the historic Mickve Israel Congregation and confessed a profound personal love for Lincoln: "I loved every action, every word of that godly man. I loved him for his patriarchal simplicity; I loved him for his incorruptible character; I loved him for his all-comprehensive ideas, for his generous impulses, his forbearing disposition, his tender compassion for all the oppressed." Then, in offering up a prayer for the president's departed soul, he asked God to "open the portals of eternal bliss" so that Lincoln, "the righteous Abraham of the Western World," could enter into paradise.[16]

David Einhorn (1809–79), a distinguished reformer and probably the nation's most outspoken rabbinic opponent to slavery, elevated Lincoln to an almost saintly status. The "High Priest of Freedom" (*des Hohenpriesters der Freiheit*) had been murdered, Einhorn lamented. Lincoln, he euphuistically proclaimed, was "his people's messiah" (*Er war der Messias seines Volkes*). Einhorn literally described Lincoln's death as a form of "*Kiddush Ha-Shem*"—a technical expression in Judaism that refers specifically to the act of forfeiting one's life for a sacred cause. Just like the holy Jewish martyrs of old, Einhorn told his listeners, Lincoln gave his life willingly for a sacred cause, and therefore American Jewry should pay special homage to Lincoln, "who shielded also us as Israelites and embraced us with a loving heart" (*der uns auch als Israeliten geschützt und mit liebendem Herzen umschlossen*).[17]



Congregation Bene Yeshurun of Cincinnati worshiped in this building on Lodge Street from 1848 to 1866. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

In Cincinnati, Rabbi Isaac M. Wise delivered one of the most remarkable and often quoted of

the eulogies. Like Einhorn, Wise—despite his earlier mixed feelings about the president—memorialized Lincoln as an American messiah. “Our very President,” he declared, was “the chosen banner-bearer of our people, the Messiah of this country.” Embedded in his eulogy, Wise offered up one of the most extraordinary assertions ever made about Lincoln by a Jewish preacher. Not only was Lincoln spiritually aligned with the Jewish people, Wise told his congregation, but the fallen leader had actually told the rabbi he believed he was a descendant of the Jewish people.[18]

Many of the Jewish preachers compared Lincoln to one or another biblical hero. Einhorn observed that Lincoln was like Moses, who was not permitted to set foot in the Promised Land, though he had led the Israelites through a dangerous wilderness. Hochheimer compared Lincoln to his biblical namesake, Abraham, who pleaded with his nephew Lot for familial unity: “Let there be no strife between you and me, we are kinsmen, children of but one land, descendents of one tribe.” David was Lincoln, Liebman Adler declared. He was a common shepherd, a man of the people, and a hero who toppled “the Goliath of the Revolution” (namely, the secessionists and rebels) with the smooth stones of “his plain folk morality” (*seine einfache Volks-Moral*).[19]

It is interesting to note that Jewish preachers eulogized Lincoln in cities like Baltimore and Louisville, where some citizens sympathized with the Confederates in spite of the fact that Maryland and Kentucky never seceded from the Union. Even though there may have been Confederate sympathizers in the congregation, Jewish preachers in these regions memorialized Lincoln lovingly. In Louisville, Lincoln was eulogized by Rabbi Bernhard H. Gotthelf (1819–78) of Adas Israel Congregation, who, in 1863, received a commission to serve as a military chaplain. Gotthelf's commission was Lincoln's second such Jewish appointment after Jacob Frankel.[20]

The eulogy that Lewis Naphtali Dembitz delivered to Louisville's Jewish congregation appeared the following day in the *Louisville Daily Journal.* Dembitz's extraordinary oration testified to the fact that Louisville's Jewish citizens not only supported Lincoln during his lifetime but actually referred to him as “Rabbi Abraham,” even prior to his death.[21]

In contrast to cities like Baltimore and Louisville, where there may have been southern sympathizers, New Orleans actually belonged to the Confederacy until the Union army occupied that city in April 1862. The Union's first commanding officer, General Benjamin Butler, was thought by some to have cruelly subjugated the city, and consequently many local citizens harbored deep-seated animosity toward the North. Although relations between the occupying forces and the local citizens improved significantly once General Nathaniel P. Banks succeeded Butler, many New Orleanians remained loyal to the South until after the war ended. Interestingly, at least two Jewish orators eulogized Lincoln in New Orleans.

At the Temimi Derech synagogue, Lieutenant Colonel Philip J. Joachimsen, a Union military officer from New York who had been assigned to duty in New Orleans under General Butler, delivered an impassioned sermon that was subsequently published “on request of the congregation.” In addition to eulogizing Lincoln, Joachimsen delivered a highly partisan address brimming with disdain for Confederates and the Confederacy. American Jews, he said, “had a distinct ground to love, respect, and esteem” Lincoln because he valiantly protected their civil liberties. According to Joachimsen, the fallen president harbored no bigotry toward Jewish people. Lincoln “appreciated those of our creed who had come forward to sustain him [for] his mind was not subject to the vulgar clamor against Jews.”[22]

Another noteworthy Lincoln memorial was delivered by Rabbi Bernard Illowy (1814–71) of Congregation Shangarai Chasset (Shaarei Chesed), also in New Orleans. Although Illowy lived

in New Orleans during the Civil War, he was never ideologically aligned with the southerners he served. To begin with, Illowy had been culturally oriented to the North; prior to his move to New Orleans, he held pulpits in New York, Philadelphia, Syracuse, and Baltimore, where he was serving when the Civil War began. Once in New Orleans, Illowy "demonstrated an unwillingness to veer too far from tradition" and found himself at loggerheads with the vociferous liberalizing faction of his congregation. He never adjusted to a city "where rabbis dared to declare oysters kosher for Jews." In fact, by the time of Lincoln's assassination, the congregation was aware of the fact that Illowy's contract had not been renewed.[23]

Since he was about to leave New Orleans anyway, Illowy was able to speak his mind without fear of reprisal by his southern congregants. He eulogized Lincoln as "the dearly beloved father of our country" and emphasized the spiritual connection between Lincoln and the Jews by addressing his listeners with the double entendre "sons of Abraham." The Jews, Illowy preached, were sons of the biblical Abraham as well as of the American Abraham, who "with paternal love and a brave and courageous heart…walk[ed] before [the] people, to save their honor, to guard their rights and to restore peace and harmony to their gates." Illowy also reminded his congregation that even though Lincoln conquered New Orleans, he had not subjugated his enemies or "trodden [them] down with rigor." It was Lincoln's desire to transform his enemies into friends, and he largely achieved this goal because so many of his former enemies "now bow down with deference and sincere repentance before our glorious banner of liberty and equality." In an attempt to convey the depth of feeling that Lincoln's memory evoked among so many people, Illowy predicted—only days after the assassination—that Lincoln would occupy a unique place of honor in the pantheon of American heroes.[24]

Finally, it is hard to overlook the prominent role that American Jews played in Lincoln's unprecedented funeral pageant. The *New York Times* described Lincoln's funeral as one of "the most impressive [spectacles] ever witnessed," and the paper took careful note of how actively the Jews mourned Lincoln. As Lincoln's elaborate funeral train slowly made its way from Washington to Springfield for the president's final burial, Jews all along the way gave vent to "the grief that sorrowed the hearts of the people." A young man named Abraham Abraham (1843–1911), who would later become the founder of the department chain Abraham & Straus, was so distraught by Lincoln's death that he purchased a bust of Lincoln, draped it in black, and displayed it in the window of his store. The editor of the *Jewish Messenger* took pains to underscore the sincerity with which the Jews in New York and in other cities mourned the president: "It is a singular fact that it was the Israelites' privilege here, as well as elsewhere, to be the first to offer in their places of worship, prayers for the repose of the soul of Mr. Lincoln."[25]

On Tuesday, May 2, 1865, Chicagoans assembled themselves in long lines and waited throughout the day to offer a final farewell to the fallen president. As they entered the chamber of the courthouse where the casket had been placed, they passed under a banner that read: "Illinois clasps to her bosom its slain but glorified son." Upon departing, they passed under another banner emblazoned with a quotation from the Hebrew Bible: "The beauty of Israel is slain upon the high places."[26]

In San Francisco, nearly 700 Jewish citizens participated in the communal funeral assembly that gathered to hear funeral orations and recite prayers on April 20, 1865. Similar displays of sorrow were documented in every Jewish community throughout California. In San Jose, members of the Hebrew Bikur Cholim Society (a group dedicated to visiting the sick) participated in the city's "Grand Funeral Pageant" after adopting a formal resolution wherein they resolved to mourn "the untimely death of our beloved president, as well in his official

capacity as in the relation of friend and brother."[27]

In Boston, the Board of Temple Israel voted to decorate the sanctuary with "signs of mourning" and open the synagogue "for mourning services" on Wednesday, April 23. Significantly, the temple's board also decided that for the first month, "a prayer for the soul of the deceased president"—the Kaddish—would be recited on every Sabbath. Temple Israel was not unique in making this religious gesture; Jewish congregations all across the nation followed suit. Traditionally, Jewish mourners recite the Kaddish over their closest relatives—parents, children, siblings, and spouse. The fact that Jews across the land recited this prayer over a non-Jewish president lends powerful testimony to the depth of their affection for Abraham Lincoln.[28]

Two months after Lincoln's death, Rabbi Max Lilienthal of Cincinnati offered his own explanation as to why American Jewry mourned Lincoln so affectionately and piously: "Lincoln's name has become…a domestic altar, around which the nation meets with filial affection. No President, not even the father of our country, our immortal Washington, has taken so deep-rooted hold of the nation's sympathy, as plain and unassuming Lincoln did."[29]

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EULOGIES

1. "TWICE ANOINTED HIGH PRIEST IN THE SANCTUARY OF OUR REPUBLIC"

Rabbi Elkan Cohn's stirring and grief-ridden announcement to his congregation was made extemporaneously after he was informed of the assassination just prior to Shabbat morning services on April 15, 1865. A record of the rabbi's remarks appeared the following day in the pages of San Francisco's paper the Daily Alta California.

Abraham Lincoln

Just as the Rev. Elkan Cohn, of the Congregation Emmanuel [*sic*], on Broadway, was ascending his pulpit, on Saturday, to deliver the usual sermon, a copy of the dispatch announcing the assassination of President Lincoln was handed to him, and on reading the same, he was so overcome that, bursting into tears, he sank almost senseless. Recovering, in broken accents he announced the same to the congregation, and it fell upon their ears like a thunderbolt—the whole being moved to tears. The impression created was beyond description. Dr. Cohn made this very impressive and eloquent address on the character of the national calamity, of which the following is the substance, although it does not do justice to the learned Divine:

Beloved Brethren! Overpowered with grief and sorrow at the terrible news which just at this moment was communicated to me, I am scarcely able to command my feelings, and to express before you the sad calamity that has befallen our beloved country. Who might believe it! Our revered President Abraham Lincoln, the twice anointed high priest in the sanctuary of our Republic, has fallen a bloody victim to treason and assassination, and is no more. He, who by the indomitable power of his energy, stood amidst us like a mighty giant, holding with his hands the tottering columns of our great commonwealth, and planting them secure upon the solid basis of general freedom and humanity; his great mind full of wisdom, his great heart full of love, his whole being, a true type of the American liberal character. Oh, the beloved of our heart is fallen, and is no more amongst the living. And with his soul departed also the soul and spirit of his council, the great statesman who inspired him with wisdom, and stood on his side with the giant intellect of his mind, William H. Seward. Under the burden of this terrible affliction, we can scarcely realize the truth of our bereavement; our feelings quail under the weight of a most intense grief, and we are more inclined to cry than to speak them out. Two great men have fallen. Arise, my brethren, and bow in humble devotion before God! Arise, and honor the memory of the blessed, whose life was a blessing to us, to our country, to the oppressed and afflicted, and to the human race at large. But though they are dead, their noble persons hushed in ethereal silence, their spirits live—live in thousands and millions of American hearts and souls, a sacred inheritance to them of their great dead—never to die out—never, never! The great principles they so nobly and fully represented are the very nerve and essence of our people, and as long as there is upon our soil a mind to think and a heart to feel, these principles will be defended and upheld with the last drop of blood. Glory in heaven will be the celestial reward of our beloved, whom we mourn as children mourn the loss of a father, and we pray to God to receive their souls in love and mercy, and be gracious to these His most faithful servants. Oh, they served God, in their love to man, the most glorious worship upon earth! And we pray that He, in His infinite love, may graciously avert the dreadful consequences of this calamity, calm the passions of the people, so justly aroused at this atrocious crime, soothe the grief and sorrow so deeply cutting in the very heart of our nation, and speak to the Angel of Destruction: “Enough! The noblest victims may be the last. Henceforth, the great work for which they bled stands under my divine protection. They have fulfilled their mission, they have restored the Union, they have rebuilt the great stronghold of humanity and freedom; I will now seal their work with the great blessing of peace!” O God! Thou who hast given victory to Thy people, may it please Thee to bless thy people with peace.[30]

2. “THE GOODNESS OF HEART HE DISPLAYED”

Isaac Leeser's eulogy, delivered to Congregation Beth-El Emeth in Philadelphia on April 5, 1865, powerfully conveys the shock and distress felt by so many upon hearing the report of Lincoln's death. The beginning and the conclusion of Leeser's sermon are included here.

Lincoln's Death

Since we assembled last, yesterday afternoon, in this house for worship of the Almighty God, a frightful and unlooked-for crime has startled the whole land. This morning, when I left my residence, the papers announced that a murderous assault had been made, late in the evening, on the President of the United States, but that at last accounts he was still living, though without hope of recovery; but since the commencement of the morning-service, the president of this congregation has communicated to me that death has closed the scene, and that Mr. Lincoln has been numbered with the dead. The man who was only yesterday, perhaps, the most powerful on earth, who had nearly closed with marked success a war of vast dimensions, which had raged full four years, has been suddenly struck, in the moment of his triumph, by the fatal bullet of the murderer, in the midst of a crowded assembly, by the side of his wife, and has been thus unconsciously hurried into eternity. A week had scarcely elapsed since he entered, as conquerer, the capital of his enemy, where he sat in the chair erst occupied by the chief of the opponents of the government of the Union, and he had returned in safety to the chief city of the country, and the seat of its central power; when the mighty ruler of the republic, to whom the people had confided the government for another term, who had anticipated so much that he had not yet accomplished, was stricken down unawares, unprepared, and now lies low, with none to fear him, with none to do him reverence. For all that will be done hereafter will not affect him; he rests from his toils in the arms of cold death….

Respecting Mr. Lincoln's political career and character it does not become me to speak; politics is not the province into which a minister of religion should enter. You are all familiar with the history of the conflict in which the deceased was engaged as the President of the United States, and it would be useless to enlarge on it at the present moment. But I may fittingly speak of the traits of the goodness of heart he displayed and his sense of justice, of which I have become personally cognizant. I refer to the appointment of a chaplain to the hospitals in this city, about which I wrote to him more than two years ago, as it was deemed a hardship that Jewish soldiers, when sick and wounded, should not have the care and supervision of a minister of their own persuasion, as those of other creeds have. Mr. Lincoln promptly acknowledged the justice of the application, and soon thereafter appointed the Reverend Mr. Frankel to the office of hospital chaplain. And when the Senate of the United States had neglected to act on the nomination, by which means Mr. Frankel's office terminated with the adjournment of the Senate, Mr. Lincoln at once reappointed our worthy colleague as soon as his attention had been called to the case. He thus proved that he recognized in full our claims to an equality before the law, and that he was not guided by sectarian prejudices. So, also, when General Grant banished the Israelites from the military district over which he commanded, it was Mr. Lincoln who at once ordered him to revoke the unjust order, and restored our brothers to their homes and pursuits. These instances have severally come under my own observation, and they speak loudly for the

natural kindness of the late President, which all can cheerfully acknowledge, whatever their political opinions may be; and let us hope that all in authority in America may be animated by the same spirit of justice and liberality.

But if we cast a scrutinizing view on the deplorable act of murder which has been committed on the chief magistrate of the republic, we shall discover in it an evidence of the fearful moral deterioration which the desolating civil war has produced. It appears as though the recklessness of strife had loosened the bonds of society, and that men have lost the appreciation of right and wrong. The rights of property have been in many cases not recognized with the nice distinction customary in the times of peace, and also personal security seems to have declined with the habitual scenes of violence which have devastated the land. Formerly the President of the republic needed no armed men to guard him from personal harm, the humblest could freely enter and speak with the head of the executive department, who dreaded no danger from any one. But now, notwithstanding the precaution taken to guard his life, Mr. Lincoln has fallen a victim to the pistol fired by the concealed murderer. O, it is terrible to contrast the two conditions of the republic, the one of safety to all, with the present, when secret danger threatens even those high in authority! It behooves us all to contribute our share to alter this state of things. Every man for himself should endeavour to review his moral character, and apply the corrective of the divine law to cleanse himself from evil, and to counteract the tendency to wrong-doing which is now so universally prevalent. We Israelites, too, have much to answer for; I acknowledge that we are not addicted to slaying a fellow-being, nor to the commission of deeds of violence against the property of others; but for all that, we have awfully transgressed, and swerved in many respects from the path of ancient conformity. We have, in many instances, set the laws of God at defiance, and done deeds which ought to call the mantle of shame over our countenance. Such things ought not to happen among faithful Israelites, who should be distinguished not more for their philanthropic action towards all men, than by a strict conformity to the divine precepts which they have received as the rule for shaping their life.

We can at the same time best promote the welfare of the republic by a close observance of all the moral restrictions which religion imposes on us, and by endeavouring, singly, to stem the torrent of moral delinquency which now is so generally prevalent. We have no separate interest from our fellow-citizens; their weal and their woe are ours likewise. Israelites should therefore labour to identify themselves with all the other inhabitants of the country, and prove the justice of their claims to an equality of rights, by cheerfully sharing all the burdens, and conforming faithfully to the laws enacted for the government of all. When evil befalls the land, let us also share in the grief which afflicts all others; but above all let us cultivate good-will and peace towards our fellow-men of all creeds.

You must excuse me for speaking somewhat in a disconnected manner, more so than is customary with me. The dreadful news and its suddenness have in a great measure overcome my usual composure, and my thoughts refuse to arrange themselves in their wonted order. The crime which has just been consummated is well calculated to appal[l] even the stoutest of hearts. In the midst of a great military success, the director of the national affairs is struck down in a moment; and with the removal of the controlling mind, dark clouds seem to lower over the future of the land. Who will guide

safely the ship of state? Who will handle the government with a firm yet merciful hand? Will those who will be intrusted with the settlement of the difficulties, which meet our view everywhere, have the capacity to comprehend the duties which devolve on them, and to fulfill them for the benefit of all? Only by a firm reliance on Providence can they succeed, and not by trusting to their own strength and wisdom. Let us hope that they will choose the right path, and be the means of restoring peace and prosperity to the land so lately heaving under the tumult of civil strife.—As to ourselves, let me exhort you to reflect on the uncertainty of your life. You in general are not exposed to individual acts of violence, for the exalted are more threatened with danger than the humble; the storm will uproot the lofty and branching oak, and leave the lowly herb undisturbed, though torrents of rain have flooded the place where it grows. Still all have to meet their end, and they should be ever ready to obey the dread summons when it is issued by the Lord of our life. Prepare yourselves by obedience to the divine will, that you may be received in favour. And for him who has so untimely fallen, let us ask the divine mercy which we all need to purify us from iniquity: may his spirit be received amidst the blest, and repose in peace after its earthly toils. And as regards the people of the land, let them bow with submission to the evil that has befallen them, and let us all say in the sincerity of devotion: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken; blessed be the name of the Lord!"[31]

3. THE WHOLE HOUSE OF ISRAEL HAS SPECIAL CAUSE TO MOURN

These three paragraphs are taken from the eulogy originally delivered in German by Rabbi Henry Hochheimer before his congregation, Oheb Israel, in Baltimore on April 19, 1865, the day that Lincoln's funeral ceremonies were held at the White House. Hochheimer's remarks emphasize the depth of Lincoln's commitment to freedom and justice and his special kinship to the Jewish people.

Predigt [Sermon]

Frohlockte er über den Fall seiner Gegner? Nein, meine Freunde…. Dem gefallenen Feinde reichte er die Hand, er sparte ihm jede Demütigung…und, *ein anderer Abraham*, rief er ihm zu: אחים אנחנו אל נא תהי מריבה ביני וביניך כי אנשים "Lass doch keinen Streit mehr sein zwischen mir und dir, wir sind ja Brüder, Kinder eines Landes, Sprossen eines Stammes."[32]…Und diesen Mann haben wir verloren…als er nach vierjährigen Mühen und Kämpfen seinen Lande einen ehrenvollen Frieden sichern wollte. Ach, nur aus der Ferne war es ihm gegönnt, das Land der Verheißung zu erblicken, betreten sollte er es nicht.

[Did he gloat over the fall of his enemies? No, my friends. He stretched out his hand to his vanquished foe, sparing him humiliation…and, like another Abraham, he called out to him: "Let there be no strife between you and me, we are kinsmen, children of but one land, descendants of one tribe."[33]…And this man we have lost…at a time when, after four years of battles and travail, he wanted to secure for his country an honorable peace. Alas, he was granted to see the Promised Land from afar, he was not to enter it.][34]

Wie jene beiden Priester, Nadab und Abihu, unmittelbar nach ihrer Priesterweihe dahingerafft wurden, so wurde auch er, der als Hohepriester dieses Landes die Urim

und Tumim, den Schild des Lichtes und der Gerechtigkeit auf seinem Herzen trug, kurz nach seinem Weihetag dahingerafft. Und es war kein אש זרה kein "fremdes, unheiliges Feuer," das er in das Heiligtum, welches die Nation ihm zum zweitenmale anvertraut, gebracht, nein, es war echtes, heiliges Feuer, das auf dem Altar seines Herzens loderte, das Feuer der Begeisterung für die Freiheit seines Landes, seines Volkes….

Darum "sollen eure Brüder, das ganze Haus Israel, beweinen den Brand, den der Ewige angezündet." Ja, כל בית ישראל "*das ganze Haus Israel*," mehr als alle anderen hat das "Haus Israel" Ursache, diesen großen Verlust zu beklagen; denn in dem Kranz der Tugenden, die Abraham Lincolns Haupt schmückten, war seine Vorurteilslosigkeit in religiösen Angelegenheiten keine der geringsten; sie war so manchem der Unseren—brauch' ich euch erst die einzelnen Fälle aufzuzählen?—Schutz und Schirm.

[As those two priests, Nadab und Abihu, were taken immediately after they were ordained as priests, so was he, who as high priest of this land bore the Urim and Thummim, the shield of light and of justice on his heart, taken from us shortly after his inauguration. And it was not a "strange, unholy fire"[35] that he brought into the sanctum he was entrusted with by the nation for the second time; no, it was an authentic, holy fire ablaze on the altar of his heart, the fire of enthusiasm for the freedom of his country, of his people….

Therefore, "your kinsmen, the whole house of Israel, shall bewail the burning that the Lord has wrought."[36] Yes, *the whole house of Israel.* More than all others, the "house of Israel" has cause to mourn this great loss, because in the wreath of virtues that adorns Lincoln's head, his lack of prejudice in religious matters was not one of the least. For some of us—need I cite individual cases?—it was shield and protection.][37]

4. "I LOVED EVERY ACTION, EVERY WORD OF THAT GODLY MAN"

Profound grief pervades the entirety of this moving sermon by Rabbi Sabato Morais, which he delivered before Congregation Mickve Israel in Philadelphia on April 19, 1865. It is particularly interesting to note that in eulogizing Lincoln, Morais asserted that "many knew not his worth." With rare candor, the rabbi reminds us that prior to Lincoln's death and subsequent apotheosis, Lincoln was bitterly criticized as an "ambitious" politician with a "despotic sway." According to Morais, Lincoln's abilities were underappreciated while Lincoln lived—many "could not see that beneath the crust of apparent dross lay whatsoever is inestimable and precious." The rabbi urged his people to be forgiving and to reunite the nation, thereby paying homage to Lincoln's character as well as to the cause that consumed his life.

The Death of Abraham Lincoln

> Let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep
> between the porch and the altar, and let them say,
> "O Eternal God! have mercy upon thy people."
>
> Joel 2:17

The stillness of the grave reigns abroad. Where is the joyous throng that enlivened this city of loyalty? Seek it now, my friends, in the shrines of holiness. There, it lies prostrate; there, it tearfully bemoans an irretrievable loss, Oh! tell it not in the country of the Gauls; publish it not in the streets of Albion, lest the children of iniquity rejoice,

lest the sons of Belial triumph. For the heart which abhorred wickedness has ceased to throb; the hand which had stemmed a flood of unrighteousness, is withered in death. How appalling is the change which one week has wrought! The anniversary of the redemption from Egyptian bondage had opened most auspiciously to Israel of America. When your voice, O fellow believers, was attuned to my psalmodical invocation, every fibre in my being thrilled with delightful emotions. For on the eve of the memorable fifteenth of Nissan the arm of the Lord had also been revealed to this people of his love. By its might was the surging tide of adversity driven back. Its Divine strength upraised the standard of universal freedom here unfolded by the purest hands. Grateful to our ears sounded then the roar of cannons which announced the winning of a bloodless victory. We shared not the intemperate zeal of such who laid against our General-in-Chief the charge of excessive leniency. We, with the nation at large, admired the magnanimous hero, and weaved garlands for his noble brow. Praying and longing for the reign of peace, we hailed the messenger of happy tidings advancing towards us with rapid strides. Thus did our attachment to the ancestral faith and to this dear country of our adoption, obtain for us festive enjoyment during four days of our Passover. The fifth day arrived, and with it the Sabbath sanctified to the Creator of the world.

Brethren! If the pulsations of my heart could assume human speech, they would best picture my mental agony upon that never-to-be-forgotten Sabbath. I had never concealed before my love for him who was chosen from among the lowly as a ruler over a great people. Yes, I loved every action, every word of that godly man. I loved him for his patriarchal simplicity; I loved him for his incorruptible character; I loved him for his all-comprehensive ideas, for his generous impulses, his forbearing disposition, his tender compassion for all the oppressed. The ideal of Truth imprinted by nature upon my soul, seemed at length realized in that man of homely mien, but of lofty mind. Alas! that many knew not his worth, and misapprehended his deeds! They called him ambitious; but his ambition was to redeem a pledge he had solemnly taken. They imputed to him a despotic sway; but he exercised power to vindicate the law of the living God. They could not see that beneath the crust of apparent dross lay whatsoever is inestimable and precious. But he who grappled with falsehood, and saved America from ignominious death, needs not my defense. He who removed the burden from every shoulder, and wiped off the mark of degradation from human visage, is far above the encomium offered by one so humble as he who speaks on this melancholy occasion. Verily, my friends, did I possess the eloquence of our lamented Everett,[38] I could not extol in adequate terms a man who knew so admirably to temper justice with mercy, and who, while practicing humility in the highest degree, was so scrupulously chary of the national honor.

But wherefore shall I portray the feelings which pervade my breast, when they are reflected on almost every countenance? The intense grief which I experience is now, alas! our common participation. From each dwelling, from each hovel, throughout the length and breadth of our Union, is a silent tribute of reverence offered to the righteous memory of our martyred President. As my vision rests upon these sable draperies of woe, unbidden tears streak down my cheeks, and with the priests, the ministers of the Lord, I weep between the porch and the altar, and say: “O eternal God! have mercy upon thy people.” We all weep for the great and good man that has ruthlessly been torn away from us. The vile agent of a relentless foe, he does not weep. The execrable

wretch who has robbed liberty of its staunchest defender, and nature of its noblest creation, he triumphs over his flagitious crime. But the avenging sword is at his heels. It shall never return to its scabbard until it has consumed, with the assassin, his accessories and abettors. “There is no darkness, no shadow of death where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves.”[39] The mournful nation shall be avenged; they shall behold the dastardly hand which spilled innocent blood, severed from its venomous body.

But whence shall they derive consolation in their sad bereavement? So long accustomed to identify the lamented President of the United States with the principles he represented; to look for the restoration of peace to his conciliatory and merciful measures, where shall they hopefully turn for the realization of his ardent desires; for the consummation of our happiness?

My friends! It has pleased the Lord sorely to afflict us. But His benign countenance shines yet refulgently upon our holy cause. With almost every vibration of the telegraph wires, He seeks to gladden us with the tidings of fresh victories. Our distress for the irreparable loss sustained, shuts out from our bosom all joyful emotions. Yet, let us be mindful of God's mercies; let us improve them by a grateful demeanor. Confidently relying upon the Director of human events, let us strengthen the hands of the man, who, through a sorrowful incident, has been raised to the highest office in the republic. It is just that our minds cling fast to his immortal predecessor; him we had learned to trust, and upon him we gazed with filial affection. But “the Rock whose all works are perfect,”[40] demands that we submit to His unsearchable will. Let, then, the memory of the upright statesman and ruler be enshrined in the innermost recesses of our soul. But let not the structure which he has founded, remain incomplete for the lack of support. If his paternal voice could reach us from the seat of beatitude, it would exhort us to suffer further privations, to endure hardships, to bear even a temporary defeat, but never to pause until the flag of one reunited people shall wave from Maine to California, from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico; for in that event not only our happiness and that of our children is involved, but the cause of human liberty is deeply concerned. If our great Abraham could address us now, he would also beseech us to curb the noble wrath which his murder has aroused within us, lest it may be visited upon the guiltless and the penitent. He would, in his merciful nature, entreat that we prefer magnanimity to severity, forgiveness to vengeance. He would likewise heal our lacerated hearts by the assurance that his mission upon earth was fulfilled, on the day that the supremacy of the Constitution was reasserted, and unspotted hands planted again over the ruins of Fort Sumter the banner which is the symbol of independence and freedom, of justice and humanity. Oh, may his kindly words ever re-echo in our hearts, and incite us to godliness and truth.[41]

5. HE WAS HIS PEOPLE'S MESSIAH

These selections from Rabbi David Einhorn's “Trauer-Rede” (Mourning Sermon), originally delivered in German at Congregation Keneseth Israel in Philadelphia on April 19, 1865, communicate the depth of the loss the Jewish community felt it had suffered and compare Lincoln to an array of biblical figures such as Joseph, Moses, and Elisha. It was Einhorn, one of the nation's most prominent liberal rabbis and a fierce opponent of American slavery, who praised Lincoln as “his people's messiah” (Er war der Messias seines Volkes) *whose death, he*

declared, was comparable to the Jewish concept of holy martyrdom: Kiddush Ha-Shem.

Trauer-Rede [Mourning Sermon]

Nein! Noch ist die Zeit des Trostes nicht gekommen; noch ist die Wunde zu frisch, um vernarben zu können. Haltet Euren Schmerz nicht zurück und lasset Euren Tränen vollen Lauf über den ungeheuren Verlust, den wir erlitten! Lehren ja schon unsere Alten: Man möge niemanden zu trösten versuchen, so lange noch die Leiche des Geliebten vor seinen Augen sich befindet![42]

[No, the time for consolation has not yet arrived; the wound is still too fresh to heal! Do not hold back your grief and let your tears run freely over the tremendous loss which we suffered! Our sages already taught: Do not comfort the bereaved as long as the corpse of his loved one lies before him.][43]

…hier ruht Amerikas Stolz und Zierde, er, der—wie Moses—sein Volk durch eine lange öde Wüste bis an die Schwelle Kanaans führte, ohne dieses betreten zu dürfen!

[…here rests America's pride and ornament, one who—like Moses—led his people through a long, bleak desert to the border of Canaan, and was not allowed to enter it.]

[Lincoln's death seen as a death of the righteous, according to rabbinic thinking]

Es liegt tiefer Sinn in dem rabbinischen Spruch: der Tod der Gerechten sühne die Sünden ihres Zeitalters.

[There is a profound meaning in the rabbinic saying: The death of the righteous procures atonement for the sins of the age.][44]

Laß, o Gott, seinen Geist auf seinen Nachfolger übergehen, wie einst den Geist des im Sturm entrückten Elias auf Elischah, dass er sein großes Werk glücklich vollende…

[O Lord, may his spirit pass on to his successor so that his great work may be happily completed, as was the spirit of Elijah who was gathered into a whirlwind, and whose spirit passed on to Elisha…]

Wenn Abraham Lincoln einen Fehler hatte, so war's seine übermäßige Milde gegen die Rebellen, er, den die Demagogen und der Mörder einen Tyrannen schalten! Moses Sünde bestand darin, dass er den Felsen schlug, um Wasser zu geben dem lechzenden Volke, während Gott ihm befohlen, zum Felsen zu reden. Bei Abraham Lincoln verhält sich's umgekehrt. Er glaubte den felsenharten Nacken der Aufrührer durch freundliches Zureden und sanftmütiges Behandeln zu beugen, uns das Labsal des Friedens zu spenden, während dieser Nacken nur durch Schläge…gebeugt werden kann.

[If Abraham Lincoln had one flaw, it was his excessive leniency towards the rebels: he whom the demagogues and the murderer decried as a tyrant! The sin of Moses was to have struck the rock to give water to the thirsting people, whereas God had told him to speak to the rock. The reverse holds true for Abraham Lincoln who believed that, by speaking to the rebels kindly and by treating them gently, he could bend their rock-hard neck in order to bring us the blessing of peace, whereas this neck can be made to yield only with use of force.]

Als Israel aus Ägypten zog, da trug es als entflammendes Siegespanier vor sich her die Bahre mit den Gebeinen Josefs, jenes Gerechten, der unter allen Stürmen nimmer abwich von dem Pfade Gottes…und noch in der Todesstunde mit unerschütterlicher Zuversicht die einstige Erlösung seines Stammes verkündete, und sinnig heißt es im Midrasch: “Das Meer, welches Israel trockenen Fußes durchschritt, es wich zurück vor

dieser Bahre, vor dieser heiligen Asche, dem Nationalkleinode." Und so wird auch das Meer der Vergänglichkeit nimmer verschlingen können das Andenken an Abraham Lincoln!

[When Israel left Egypt, it was preceded, as by a fiery victory banner, by the coffin containing the remains of Joseph, that righteous man, who, throughout all storms, never veered from God's path…and who, even at the hour of his death, proclaimed with unshakable confidence the ultimate redemption of his tribe. The Midrash comments meaningfully: "The sea, which Israel crossed on dry land, parted before this coffin, before the sacred ashes, the national treasure."[45] Similarly, the sea of transitoriness will never succeed in washing away the memory of Abraham Lincoln!]

[Lincoln likened to a Jewish martyr]

Das mosaische Gesetz gebietet: Es solle, wenn die Leiche eines Erschlagenen gefunden wird, ohne dass man des Mörders habhaft werden kann, ein Opfer dargebracht werden, weil die staatliche Gemeinschaft vor der Entdeckung des Mörders sich befleckt fühlt und der Sühne bedarf. Wir befinden uns in demselben Falle, und die Tränen derer zu trocknen, die ihr Blut für uns vergossen—das seien unsere Opfer! So wird denn jeder gern das Seine beitragen; denn es gilt קדוש השם [*Kiddush Ha-Shem*],[46] es gilt *ihn* zu ehren, der uns auch als Israeliten geschützt und mit liebendem Herzen umschlossen.

[Mosaic law requires that when the corpse of a murdered person is found, and the murderer could not be apprehended, a sacrifice be brought because the people feel impure and in need of atonement before the murderer is discovered. We find ourselves in the same situation, in that we need to dry the tears of those who shed their blood for us—let these be our sacrifices! Thus, everyone will gladly contribute his part, because it is a question of *Kiddush Ha-Shem* honoring martyrdom and honoring him who shielded also us as Israelites and embraced us with a loving heart.][47]

6. THE "DEARLY BELOVED FATHER OF OUR COUNTRY" IS NO MORE

Speaking from the pulpit of Shangarai Chasset in New Orleans, Rabbi Bernard Illowy's eulogy, given on April 23, 1865, is particularly remarkable because it was delivered to a congregation of southerners. Illowy was leaving New Orleans, so he spoke from his heart, expressing the enormous admiration he had for the late president. Lincoln was a father figure, the rabbi lamented, and he reminded his listeners that in this way they were all "sons of Abraham."

Abraham Lincoln

Text—II Sam. 3:32–38

> And when King David heard that his friend Abner had been assassinated by the murderous hand of Joab, he wept at his grave and thus lamented: Must Abner die the death of the wicked?
>
> Thy hands were not bound, nor thy feet put into fetters; as a man falleth before wicked men, so didst thou fall. And all the people wept again over him.
>
> And when all the people came to cause David to eat meat while it was yet day, David sware, saying: So do God unto me, and more, also, if I taste bread or aught else till the sun be down.
>
> And the King said unto his servant: Know ye not that there is a prince and

a great man fallen this day in Israel.

My text which I just now read before you, will probably tell you that it must be a melancholy and sad occasion that impels me today to address you with a broken heart, a depressed mind, and an afflicted soul, which on any other occasion, however melancholy it might be, would be regarded as a violation of the sacred hilarity of the Lord's day. But I cannot restrain myself from uttering my feelings of a woe which will tear the hearts of millions at home and abroad, when hearing of the great calamity which befell our country. Sons of Abraham, you have all read the heartrending news which has thrown the whole nation into the deepest depth of sorrow and affliction. Sons of Abraham, you have heard of the most terrible event—that Abraham, the dearly beloved father of our country, is no more. The Great Ruler of the Universe pleased to call him home to the Father's house, and as once, to our patriarch, He said unto him Abram, get thee out of thy country, from thy kindred, from thy people, and go into a land which I will show thee[48]; Abram is gone as the Lord has commanded him to ascend the glorious throne which his hand has erected for his beloved ones, in a land of eternal bliss and perpetual happiness, where the righteous earns the fruits of his righteousness, where the sun never sets, where there is always day and never night. Oh, my friends, how gladly did we listen last Sabbath to the glorious news, to the happy and cheerful tidings which filled our hearts with joy, with overflowing pleasure, and with feelings of gratitude to our Heavenly Father for the gracious favors which He has bestowed upon us, through his faithful servant Abraham, whilst millions who were nearer to the place of calamity were weeping over the great loss of the best of men who ever lived on the American soil. Oh, how short are all earthly pleasures, shorter than a night's dream; they vanish away like a morning cloud; soon and sudden did the Lord convert our joy into sorrow, our tears of pleasure into the tears of deep affliction. Last Sabbath we all cheerfully exclaimed with the pious David, Thank ye the Lord, for He is good, His mercy endureth for ever, and today already we must lament with him, weep with him, and, like him when he mourned for his friend Abner, we must call, Mourn House of Israel; lift up thy clamorous voice House of Judah, for a prince, a great man has fallen today. Like David, when standing at the grave of his assassinated friend, we call after the departed father of our bereaved country, Abraham thy hands were never bound and thy feet were never put in chains. No, thy hands were never bound by the wiles of others, by the ties of flattery or by the galling manacles of fear; thou didst hear nothing but the wishes of thy people, thou didst fear none but God who alone was thy guide and trust, and who was with thee as He had promised on the night of terror, “Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield.”[49] Thy hands were always active, always stretched forth to help, when and where thy help was needed. Thy feet were not put in chains, never restrained by selfishness, never checked by ambition, but with self-denial, with noble ardor, with paternal love and a brave and courageous heart didst thou walk before thy people, to save their honor, to guard their rights and to restore peace and harmony to their gates; and thou hast succeeded. Thou hast succeeded and hast achieved glorious victories over enemies whom thou hast not trodden down with rigor, but turned into friends, who now bow down with deference and sincere repentance before our glorious banner of liberty and equality.

Thou hast wound thyself lovingly around the hearts of millions with gentle ties, which even the destructive tooth of time can never loosen. Ages will roll upon ages, but

thy memory will still live in the hearts of thy countrymen until the latest generations. Thou hast succeeded to see the full accomplishment of the last work of thy life and the total disappearance of the storm pregnant clouds which were thickly brooding over our country threatening it with ruin. Thou hast succeeded and hast seen before the sunset of thy life, the blissful fruits of the tree which thou hast planted and moistened with the precious blood of thy noble heart—thou wast permitted to see but not to enjoy them, and like unto the great Teacher of mankind, the Redeemer of Israel, did the Lord say unto thee, "Get thee up on this mountain; from there shalt thou see the land which I have given unto thy people, and when thou hast seen it, then shalt thou be gathered unto thy fathers who are gone before thee."[50]

Without any disloyalty to the worthy successor of Abraham Lincoln we may openly avow how deeply and bitterly we deplore his loss, how deeply it has affected us; and the intelligence so sudden and so unexpected, of his having been cut down like a stalk of corn, and fallen under the murderous hand of an infernal fiend, so staggered our belief that we could hardly realize the awful fact, had not the general lamentation confirmed the sad report, that the good and noble-minded father has been called hence by the King of Kings.

He is gone; he is no more; but his spirit will continue to live in the heart of his worthy successor, and his memory will for ever be a blessed one in the hearts of his countrymen, as in the pages of history, for with his name commences a new era in the history of the greatest and most powerful republic that ever existed on earth.

He is gone and is no more. Duly and well prepared he gave up his body to corruption, and his soul he rendered into the hand of the Father of all souls who had given it. His body lies now like once our father Jacob on a cold piece of ground, with a stone pillow under his head, sleeping the sweet sleep of the righteous, but the spirit has ascended the ladder of life on which God's ministering angels are ascending and descending.

And may the stone under his head make his grave, the sacred place where his weary bones rest, a holy temple, in which his latest successors may yet hear with awe and deference the voice of truth and justice, which arises from the grave of Abraham Lincoln, whose memory will forever be, amongst all of us a blessed one. Amen.[51]

7. "BONE FROM OUR BONE AND FLESH FROM OUR FLESH"

Rabbi Isaac M. Wise's "Funeral Address," delivered at the Lodge Street Temple in Cincinnati on April 19, 1865, is well known for its anecdotal assertion that Lincoln had actually admitted to Wise that he was of Jewish descent. But, beyond this piece of sensational information, it is interesting to read the words of a rabbi who had often criticized Lincoln. The erstwhile skeptical Wise praised the fallen president with love and affection. Like Rabbi David Einhorn, Wise also referred to Lincoln as "the Messiah of this country." The rabbi told his congregation that the fallen president had now become a member of the "'covenant of an everlasting priesthood'… immortal in his people."

Funeral Address

"And the Lord said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country; and out of thy birth-place, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a

blessing. And I will bless those that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse; and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken to him."[52]

Abraham Lincoln departed, as the Lord had spoken to him. Abraham Lincoln, whose biography is too well known to be repeated here, the President of the United States, from March 4, 1861, to the day of his assassination, April 14, 1865; the generous, genial and honest man, who stood at the head of our people in this unprecedented struggle for national existence and popular liberty; whose words and deeds speak alike and aloud of his unsophisticated mind, purity of heart, honesty of purpose, confidence in the great cause, and implicit faith in the justice of Providence, which inspired him to consistency, courage and self-denial; this Abraham Lincoln, who endeared himself to so many millions of hearts, and gained the admiration of other millions of people, both at home and abroad; whom the myriads of freedmen consider their savior, and tens of thousands esteem as high as George Washington, and feel as sincerely and affectionately attached to as Israel to her David, Rome to her Augustus, and France to her Napoleon I; this Abraham Lincoln, whose greatness was in his goodness, and whose might was in his unshaken faith, was assassinated. Blush, humanity!—he was assassinated. This is the lamentable fact which today bends so many stout hearts with sorrow and grief—speaks by the tears of countless myriads, and the dark clouds of mourning which envelop the great Republic. Hark! listen to the voice of grievous lamentation, of woeful complaint, filling the very air of this vast country. "The elders of the daughter of Zion sit upon the ground; they are silent; they have thrown dust upon their heads; they have girt themselves with sackcloth, the virgins of Jerusalem have brought down low their head to the ground. My eyes do fail with tears, my bowels are heated, my liver is poured upon the earth, because of the breach of the daughter of my people. How shall I cheer thee, to whom compare thee, O daughter of Jerusalem?—to what shall I liken thee, to console thee, O virgin daughter of Zion?—for great like the sea is thy breach, who can heal thee?"[53] Hark, listen to the doleful voice of woe, echoing from thousands of hearts: "Fallen is the crown of our head; woe to us, for we have sinned; therefore our heart is woe-stricken; therefore are our eyes dimmed."[54] This is the lamentable cause of our meeting today before God, to weep with the nation, to mourn with our country, to show the last honors to Abraham Lincoln.

Why? Wherefore must it be so? you ask. Silence, mortals! Upon your knees, sons of the dust! "And the Lord said unto Abram, get thee out of thy country, out of thy birthplace, and from thy father's house, unto the land that I will show thee. So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him." Who of the finite and perishable creatures will unravel the mysterious ways of infinite and everlasting Providence? The drop comprehends not the seas, the mote understands not the sun; man, whose life is like a passing shadow, can not penetrate the counsels of the eternal and allwise God. Worship with humiliation, look down with awe at the throne of glory, and proclaim anew the sacred words: "The Lord hath given, the Lord hath taken away, the name of the Lord be blessed."[55] We can only look in and about ourselves to find the proper answer to the question: How can we honor best the memory of Abraham Lincoln?

Repent your sins. "Return, Israel, to the Lord thy God, for thou hast stumbled in thine iniquity,"[56] this deplorable event cries, with a loud voice. God has punished us

grievously. His mighty hand inflicted a deep and burning wound upon the heart of the nation, and He is just. “The Rock, his work is perfect, for all His ways are just. The God of truth and without iniquity, just and upright is He.”[57] The Lord has revealed His powerful arm to remind us of our iniquity, and move us to repentance. Behold the man at whose command the mightiest armies of this world moved, and whose name is associated with the dearest affections of so many millions of men; the man upon whom the whole civilized world looked, and whom, to protect and shield, a great nation was ready, was destroyed by one mad villain. Must not this rouse us from our sinful lethargy to a consciousness of our weakness? All the power, wisdom, goodness and affection of man can not protect us when the Lord decrees to call us hence. Must not this rouse us from our sinful lethargy to a consciousness of our guilt? Abraham Lincoln was a good man; the millions testify, and history, with her impartial pencil will record it. Not in his sins, in ours, he died; “for before wickedness, the righteous is taken away.” He is the sin-offering for our iniquities. His death cries aloud, “Repent, repent your sins.”

Verily, we need not inquire deeply to find our sins, when we know that an assassin was born and raised in our midst; the assassin of Abraham Lincoln brooded over his diabolic schemes in the very capital of our country. Where shall we begin to speak of the enormity of our sins? Must we speak first of the precepts of revenge which poison so many hearts and pervert so many minds to consider murder and assassination a matter of honor—assassination for offensive words—murder in duels? Or must we mention first the barbarous habit of bearing concealed arms to hide cowardice under the garb of crime? Or must we speak of the mercenary passions, which know of no intrinsic value of either persons or duties, honor or pride, art or science; which weigh or measure all persons and things alike by the standard of the market? Or must we mention the frigid hypocrisy which seeks refuge on the cushioned pews of fashionable churches; the haughtiness of little creatures embellished in costly garments and beglittered with gems, or such other dust; the scorn to which religion is subjected, the smile of pity cast on old-fashioned virtue, or the numerous and costly means to silence the crying conscience? There is no necessity for mentioning either of them, which are the mere fountains of our national sins, when we may look at once upon the broad and mad streams, with their impetuous billows and thousand whirlpools. Remember the frauds which were committed on the nation when hundred thousands of her noblest sons rushed to arms and offered their lives in vindication of her holy cause. Remember the legion of traitors and spies who surrounded our armies and penetrated into the most secret recesses of our Government. Or if that is too vast, too much to be remembered at once, then remember, simply, that our very President, the chosen banner-bearer of our people, the Messiah of this country, was slain by the assassin's hand in the midst of his people; and we must cry with Cain, “Mine iniquity is greater than I can bear.”[58]

Repentance is the great lesson which this deplorable event should teach us. Away with your idols of silver and your idols of gold; away with haughtiness, selfishness, delusion, deception and barbarism; prostrate yourselves with humble spirits and contrite hearts before God; confess and repent your sins; be healed of your diseases, distill the Balm of Gilead in the wounds of your conscience; cry for mercy and forgiveness to your God, then rise better men, better citizens, true children of the living God—and you have honored the memory of him who died in our national sins; you

have erected a durable and grand monument to that martyr of liberty whose untimely departure we lament. Let him live in your virtues, resurrect in your patriotism; let him glow and shine in your aspirations, for the benefit of humanity, and the triumph of justice and liberty, of light over night, and right over might; and Abraham Lincoln lives as he wished to live—the benefactor of his people; and Abraham Lincoln departed as the Lord had spoken unto him that God might fulfill his divine promise: "And I will make of thee a great nation."[59] So let us do honor to the memory of the departed martyr of liberty.

Honor brethren, honor the deceased President of the United States, by securing to him a perpetual reign, and a dominion everlasting. How? The dead should reign, the deceased one have dominion everlasting? Yes, even so shall you do.

The photographer or lithographer, the painter or sculptor, can not eternize a man; he can not give you more of him than a faint delineation of the outside, shape and features, the most unimportant portion, the mere case of a person. Monuments, however lofty and extensive, crowded with inscriptions and symbols, tell very little, after all, of the man himself, to whose honor they may be erected. The passions, feelings, struggles, victories, motives and thoughts of a great mind, and each of them is a real fraction of his existence, are so innumerably manifold and change so often, that no artist can represent a considerable portion of them. This is the case especially with the deceased, Abraham Lincoln. The best representation of his figure will not tell posterity who he was. His outside appearance bore no resemblance even to his real nature. The most skillful philosopher will fail in describing the man who stood at the head of affairs during this gigantic struggle, his cares and troubles, his sleepless nights and days of anxiety, his thoughts and his schemes, his triumphs and mortifications, his hopes and fears, and ten thousand more sentiments, feelings and thoughts, which moved his mind in the stormy period of his Presidential term. He will be obliged to satisfy himself with the focus in which all these rays of the mind centers, with the actions of the deceased. Let these actions be our political creed, and Lincoln reigns perpetually; his is the "covenant of an everlasting priesthood,"[60] he is immortal in his people.

"I will restore the Union," he promised us, and twice he took the solemn oath to protect and enforce the Constitution of the United States. Let these two points be forever the beginning and end of our political creed. He gave liberty to an oppressed race, "And ye shall proclaim freedom to all the inhabitants of the land." Let us adhere to this great principle. All shall be free, all equal before the law. He was kind, charitable, and lenient towards the enemies of his country, longed and hoped for peace. —Let also these be cardinal points of our creed. Let us not be led astray by blind passions, hatred, a spirit of revenge; let us act entirely and conscientiously in the very spirit of the departed man, and we honor him. He reigns in death, and holds his dominion as though he were living still.

Let us carry into effect and perpetuate the great desires which heaved the breast of Abraham Lincoln; let us be one people, one, free, just and enlightened; let us be the chosen people to perpetuate and promulgate liberty and righteousness, the union and freedom of the human family; let us break asunder, wherever we can, the chains of the bondsman, the fetters of the slave, the iron rod of despotism, the oppressive yoke of tyranny; let us banish strife, discord, hatred, injustice, oppression from the domain of man, as far as our hands do reach, and we secure to Abraham Lincoln a perpetual reign

and dominion everlasting; we set him the most durable monument in the hearts of the human family; then he is not dead, not removed even, from our midst, and will live forever. If his person was called from our midst, that we be guarded against the follies of apotheosis, which numerous admirers already approximated, to teach us again the great lesson, “Trust not in the noblest ones, in the son of man with whom there is no salvation,”[61] or as the prophet Isaiah expressed it, “Withdraw yourself from man, whose breath is in his nostrils; because, for what is he to be esteemed?”[62] If God permitted it that we learn the great lesson of the firmness and fitness of our Government, which is the people's Government, depending on no man or party; or to wake us to a sense of duty to our Government, to unite and fraternize us more in mourning and the common sympathy with the deceased President and his mourning family, the abused and ill-treated Secretary of State and his sons; if God has permitted the sudden removal of the person of Abraham Lincoln from our midst, for any or all of these reasons, or for reasons unknown to us, (but just and wise they certainly must be); his personality, his essence and substance, his mind, his soul, his principles, may forever remain with us and be our guiding stars. So we may secure to him a perpetual reign, and a dominion everlasting; for the ideas of union, justice, liberty, peace, kindness, charity, forbearance and goodness are everlasting, like God himself.

Murmur not against the justice and wisdom of Providence. God is just. Abraham Lincoln fought the battles for great ideas, and his enemies, of necessity, must be numerous and violent. He was a man, and where is the mortal one without his measure of faults and infirmities; with a great man, in a great period of time, they only become, with his virtues, more conspicuous. Every man has his mission, his destiny on earth; with men of eminent positions it only becomes more conspicuous. Whenever our mission is fulfilled God calls us hence. Abraham Lincoln fulfilled a great mission; he led the country through this glorious struggle to glorious victory, and bequeathed to us the ideas which, when fully developed and realized, not only will bring upon us the great blessing, “And I will make of thee a great nation,” but will also fulfill that sacred and most glorious promise, “And in thee all families of the earth shall be blessed.”[63] All families of the earth shall be blessed by freedom, as the chain of the negro was broken; by union, peace, justice, equality, charity and kindness. So Abraham Lincoln shall reign perpetually and have an everlasting dominion. Therefore, “Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken to him.”[64]

Brethren, the lamented Abraham Lincoln believed himself to be bone from our bone and flesh from our flesh. He supposed himself to be a descendant of Hebrew parentage. He said so in my presence. And, indeed, he preserved numerous features of the Hebrew race, both in countenance and character.

He was a man of many noble virtues, which may be our heritage; and God may forgive him his sins, and accept his soul in grace among the righteous men of all nations, and the martyrs of every sacred cause. May the Lord send consolation to his bereft widow and children, and heal the burning wound of this country which his departure afflicted on her. Brethren, let us read the funeral service for the soul of departed Abraham Lincoln.[65]

8. YOU CALLED HIM RABBI ABRAHAM

Lewis Naphtali Dembitz, attorney and scholar, had been a Kentucky delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1860, where he had cast his support behind Abraham Lincoln. His strong loyalty for Lincoln made him a natural choice to deliver a eulogy for the president to the members of Adath Jeshurun Congregation on April 23, 1865. Dembitz—the uncle of the first Jew to serve as a justice on the U.S. Supreme Court, Louis Dembitz Brandeis—delivered one of the most eloquent of all the Jewish memorial addresses. From Dembitz, we learn that even while Lincoln was in the Executive Mansion, the Jews of Louisville referred to him as "Rabbi Abraham." Dembitz's moving eulogy, which appeared in the pages of the Louisville Daily Journal, *is reproduced in its entirety below.*

EULOGY ON PRESIDENT LINCOLN—On Wednesday, the 19th Instant, Mr. L. N. Dembitz, being called upon, addressed the congregation of the Green street Synagogue in this city, as follows:

MY FRIENDS: I speak to you on this occasion, not as a preacher—I am not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet—but I stand before you as the chief mourner, thinking, as I do, that, among this congregation, none thought oftener or more than I did of the great dead, whose fate we to-day lament. You often called him, jocosely, Rabbi Abraham, as if he was one of our nation—of the seed of Israel; but, in truth, you might have called him "Abraham, the child of our father Abraham." For, indeed, of all the Israelites throughout the United States, there was none who more thoroughly filled the ideal of what a true descendent of Abraham ought to be than Abraham Lincoln. And, if he was uncircumcised, we are told, "All the nations are uncircumcised in flesh, but all they of Israel are uncircumcised in heart."[66]

The whole duty of Israel was thus comprised in a short compass by the Psalmist King: "Who may go up on the mount of the Lord? Who can stand up in his holy place? He whose hands are clean, whose heart is pure, who did not call up my spirit for falsehood, and did not swear deceitfully."[67] Whose hands, whose heart was purer than his? Who among all our public men was more reverent and more truthful?

The prophet Micah thus comprises man's duty: "What does the Lord ask of thee but the doing of justice and loving kindness, and to walk humbly before thy God?"

Indeed, if the good and great Abraham Lincoln did not always do justice fully, it was only because he loved kindness too much. But who more than he walked humbly before his God? Did he not ascribe all his actions to that overruling Providence which pointed out to him the way he should go?

The prophet Habakuk, however, comprises what is needed for man's salvation in one requisition: "The just shall live in his faith."[68] It was Abraham Lincoln whose faith in the Almighty never wavered, who believed himself but an instrument in His hand, and who was ever ready to give Him honor.

But as mortal man sins, so he, too, did sin. Just as Saul, the first king of Israel, was imperfect in *not sufficiently hating* the Lord's enemies, as he could not say in David's words, *thy enemies I have hated*, and for this the kingdom was taken from him; so it may here have been in the providence of God that an instrument was needed to carry out the stern demands of heavenly justice, while Abraham Lincoln's great duty had been fulfilled.

And as I have compared him with Saul, let me remind you that the most beautiful lamentation over the dead preserved to us is that of David over Saul, and his son

Jonathan, who fell together, battling against the Philistines, just as Abraham Lincoln and his sons, not, indeed, in the flesh, but his sons in the good cause, hundreds of thousands of them, and among them many a good Israelite, fell battling together but lately for truth and justice.

"The pleasant and beloved in their lives, even in their deaths, they were not parted; they were fleeter than eagles, stronger than lions."[69] And to this I might add what indeed is not found in the Scriptural lamentation, but in our weekly Sabbath prayer for the souls of the martyrs: "Fleeter than eagles and stronger than lions to do the will of their master, the purpose of their creator;" for we must indeed be no better than unbelievers, than the grossest atheists, not to see in this war the finger, the purpose of God, in obedience to which Abraham Lincoln, and the men who fought under him, laid down their lives.

Let me add from the same prayer: "May God remember them in kindness, with other just men of all ages, and may He avenge before our eyes the blood of his servants that has been spilt."[70]

And I pray myself:

"May my soul die the death of the righteous and may my hereafter be as His." Amen.[71]

MOURNING RITES AND MEMORIAL PRAYERS

American Jews not only eulogized Lincoln as a kindred soul but also, as the following documents illustrate, mourned him with Jewish rites and prayers. In his eulogy, Rabbi Isaac Leeser recited a familiar phrase from Job that is frequently recited at Jewish burials: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken; blessed be the name of the Lord."[72]

We know that in some synagogues the traditional Jewish prayer for the soul's repose, the El Maleh Rahamim, *was recited.*[73] *In memorializing Lincoln on June 1, 1865, Rabbi Jacques Judah Lyons (1813–77) of New York's Shearith Israel Congregation compared the fallen president to the "head of the family [who] has been taken away." As such, the congregation was entitled to pray for "the happiness of his soul." In an excerpt from his sermon, (ch. 7, doc. 1, below) we see that Lyons went on to explain why reciting the Jewish tradition's "prayer for the dead" over Abraham Lincoln would undoubtedly "find favor with an all-merciful God."*[74]

9. MINUTES OF TEMPLE ISRAEL OF BOSTON, APRIL 18, 1865

Abraham Lincoln was most likely the first American president whose name was formally mentioned during the recitation of the traditional Jewish mourner's prayer, the Kaddish, in synagogues across the nation. According to the Jewish Messenger, *"at the conclusion of the worship service [that took place on the Sabbath of Passover, April 15, 1865] the whole congregation spontaneously arose and said the 'Kadisch.'" In describing the grief that enveloped the Jewish community of New York, the correspondent informed readers that "in all the synagogues [of New York] the prayer for the dead, the 'Kadisch,' was recited by the entire congregation present." The synagogues were all draped with black shrouds, the article continued, because Lincoln's death was a national calamity that was felt "by none more sincerely and profoundly…than the Israelites, who loved the lamented President for his good heart and his devotion to liberty.*[75]

On April 18, 1865, the Board of Temple Israel of Boston met and, according to the minutes,

resolved to urge its members to close their businesses the following day out of respect for Lincoln's funeral. The congregation's leaders also decided that, for the coming thirty days of mourning, "a prayer for the soul of the deceased President" would be recited during Sabbath worship in the synagogue.

> Mr. President opens the meeting and reports that he is considering it his duty to call this meeting on account of receiving the mournful news of the assassination of the President of the U.S.A. Abraham Lincoln. The whole country was grieved and we give expression of sorrow of the congregation in this general mourning.
>
> By demand of the State and City authorities the April 19th was declared as the day of the funeral of the passed President, it was therefore decided that mourning services should be held in all Churches and Temples and that this day should be considered as the general participation in the mourning of the loss of the nation.
>
> Decided to accede to the demand of the authorities. Wednesday 12:30 pm the Synagogue should be opened for the mourning services for the deceased. Mr. [Joseph] Shoninger[76] was requested to give a speech for this purpose and prayers in English language.
>
> Decided to ask the Shamas to inform all members of the congregation of the above mentioned services and to invite them to take part in them.
>
> Decided that the Synagogue should be decorated outside with signs of mourning for 30 days. Mr. Vice President and Davis Moos were elected as committee for doing this.
>
> Decided that during these 30 days on each Sabbath a prayer for the soul of the deceased President should be said.
>
> Decided that all members of the congregation should close their business establishments on the day of the funeral.
>
> Finally decided above resolutions as well as a short extract of the sermon to be published in the Boston Journal & Herald and the charges to be paid by the congregation.
>
> Meeting closed.
>
> *J[oseph] Shoninger*[77]

10. RESOLUTIONS TO MOURN LINCOLN

Isaac Leeser published several interesting documents pertaining to the Jewish community's response to Lincoln's death in his paper, the Occident and American Jewish Advocate. *First, Leeser provided a detailed description of the events in Congregation Beth-El Emeth in Philadelphia on the Sabbath when the horrifying news of Lincoln's assassination was announced to worshipers by the congregation's president, Alfred T. Jones. He simultaneously published the resolutions adopted by Congregation Mikvé Israel, also of Philadelphia, and the Executive Committee of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites. Both resolutions, reproduced here, testify that a grief-stricken Jewish community declared its corporate intention to mourn Lincoln both in their houses of worship and in the community at large.*

Events and Resolutions Published in the Occident and American Jewish Advocate

> The congregation Mikvé Israel have sent us the following proceedings, which we insert as requested:

A Special Meeting of the Trustees of the Synagogue Mikvé Israel, Seventh Street, above Arch, was convened on the 16th instant, to take action in reference to the melancholy tidings announcing the untimely death of the Chief Magistrate of the Union, when the following preamble and resolutions were adopted:

Whereas, The President of the United States having fallen by the hands of a traitorous assassin on the night of the 14th instant; therefore,

Resolved, That this congregation, in common with the whole American nation, mourn the loss of Abraham Lincoln, one of its best and purest Presidents, who, like our own law-giver, Moses, brought a nation to the verge of the haven of peace, and, like him, not allowed to participate in its consummation.

Resolved, That this Synagogue be draped in mourning for the space of thirty days, and that these resolutions be published and entered on the records of the congregation.

On motion adjourned.

L. J. Leberman, Parnas.
A. Hart, Secretary pro tem.
Philadelphia, April 19th, 1865

Resolutions of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites, April 23, 1865

The Executive Committee of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites had a special meeting on Sunday, April 23, for the purpose of taking suitable action with reference to the death of President Lincoln. Mr. Henry Josephi occupied the chair, Mr. M[yer] S. Isaacs acted as Secretary.

The following resolutions were proposed and unanimously adopted:—

Whereas, the Israelites of the United States, in common with their fellow citizens and all mankind, sympathize most profoundly in the nation's grief and desolation at this season of mourning for the lamented President, Abraham Lincoln,

And whereas, it is meet and proper that the Executive Committee should, in behalf of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites and their constituents, record their sense of the nation's loss, and the universal sorrow; be it, therefore,

Resolved, That the national calamity that has befallen our country in the cruel assassination of the good, the amiable, the beloved President, Abraham Lincoln, finds us overwhelmed with sadness and amazement, and prompts us to lift up our hearts to Heaven in humble reliance upon the all-gracious and all-merciful Providence who alone can heal the nation's woe and console a bereaved and lamenting country in the painful affliction of the hour.

Resolved, That the memory of Abraham Lincoln shall be forever cherished as that of an upright man, a zealous and patriotic citizen, a wise and beneficent Chief Magistrate, who, entrusted with the administration of the nation's affairs at a season of unparalleled difficulty, during a long and terrible conflict with a gigantic rebellion, has left an imperishable monument to his virtue, his sagacity, his singleness of purpose in the universal homage paid by an afflicted people, the admiration and reverence of friends of human freedom and progress.

Resolved, That the Israelites of the United States are deeply sensible of the loss humanity has sustained in the painful death of the lamented President; that the trial strikes us with peculiar solemnity and significance at this momentous period of the nation's history when we behold so nigh the end of that unhallowed combination

against the government, to the hastening of which consummation the good, the honest Abraham Lincoln contributed so largely, and with all the zeal, the sincerity and the prudence of his kind heart, his clear, practical judgment, his steadfast, unfaltering fidelity to the Union.

Resolved, That as a mark of reverence for his memory, this Executive Committee and all the members of the Board of Delegates now in the city will participate in the obsequies on Tuesday, and that the several Jewish congregations and societies of this city be invited to co-operate with this committee.[78]

11. THE NEW YORK TIMES' ACCOUNT OF THE DAY OF FASTING AND HUMILIATION

The New York Times *published a detailed account of the mourning observances that took place in New York City's synagogues on April 19 and 20, 1865. The correspondent recorded an array of fascinating details demonstrating that the entire Jewish community responded to Governor Reuben Fenton's proclamation calling on the citizens of the state to render the day of Lincoln's funeral in Washington D.C. (April 19, 1865), a day of "fasting and humiliation."*[79]

A Day of Fasting and Humiliation in New York, April 19–20, 1865

The Jewish Synagogues throughout the city were well attended yesterday. The American flag was half-masted and the banner itself often enshrouded with folds of crape; long festoons of black and white overhung the entrance-doors; the galleries were draped in black, and the huge tapers almost concealed beneath the somber cloths of mourning. As on Saturday last, when in all the city synagogues the prayers for the dead and dying were repeated by the minister and sorrow-stricken people, so, yesterday, were the buildings crowded with assemblages, whose earnest attention and fervent responses to the supplications of the officiating clergymen, gave evidence of the deep grief that bowed down the hearts of the congregation. As announced in the morning prayer, divine service was held at the various synagogues, appropriate discourses being delivered by the minister or lecturer, and the prayers for the dead and for the welfare and prosperity of the country fervently offered up.

The house of worship of the congregation Shearith Israel, located in West Nineteenth-street, was well filled by a most attentive assemblage. After the singing of some psalms by the choir, the officiating minister, Rev. J[aques] J[udah] LYONS, delivered a short but eloquent address, in which he frequently adverted to the qualities of the man and the unswerving loyalty and honesty of the statesman, whose loss they were thus suddenly called upon to mourn. The kaddisch, or prayer for the dead, was then offered up, and after the recitation of a special prayer for the recovery of Secretary SEWARD and the future prosperity of the country, the choir chaunted a few additional psalms and the deeply-impressed congregation dispersed.

At the synagogue of the congregation B'nai Jeshurun, situated in West Thirty-fourth-street, after the chaunting of several hymns by Rev. Mr. [Judah] KRAMER, minister to the congregation, Rev. Dr. [Morris J.] RAPHAEL [*sic*], lecturer, ascended the pulpit and delivered a very impressive discourse. After alluding to the mournful events which they had assembled to weep and sorrow over together, he adverted, with much feeling, to the remembrance of the personal acquaintance that had existed between Mr. LINCOLN and himself. He reviewed the career of the late Chief Magistrate, expressing

the firm conviction that he had been chosen, after four years of ill fate, to save the country from ruin. He spoke of the late President's political errors, and of the spontaneity with which he recognized them, heedless, however, of the perils with which he was constantly surrounded. The speaker, having referred in a feeling manner to the widows and orphans now abandoned to the protection of God, the father of the fatherless, referred to the President elect, in whose steadfastness and loyalty he placed, he said, the utmost confidence, doubting not but that he would punish rebellion and treason as the very exponents of all wickedness. The Rev. Dr. concluded by appealing for mercy to the God of nations, who had ever watched over the destinies of America and sent to us a WASHINGTON and a LINCOLN, whose memories would remain enshrined in the hearts of the people, and offered up a fervent prayer for the repose of the President's soul and the future welfare and greatness of the country.

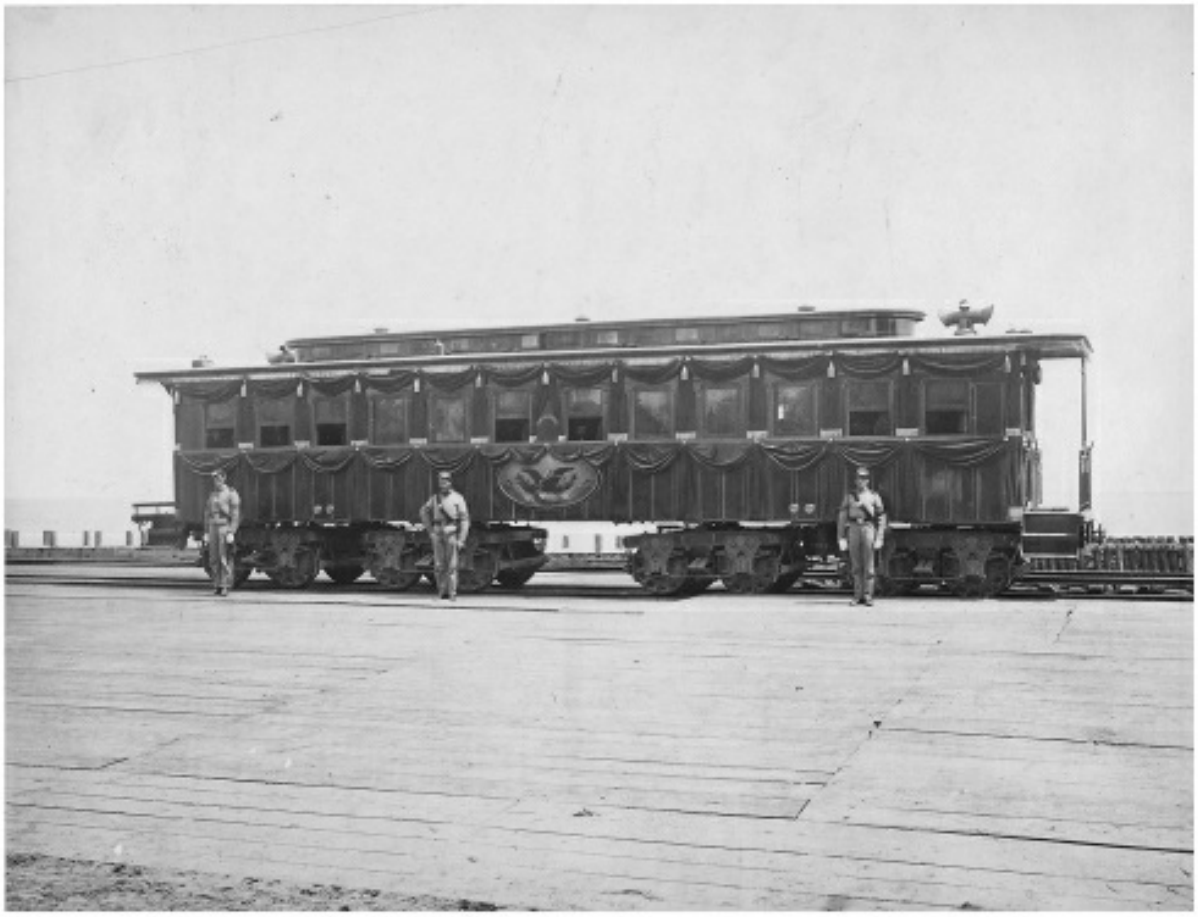
At the Broadway Synagogue, the ceremonies were inaugurated by the chaunting of a hymn and psalms by the assistant Minister, Rev. Mr. PHILLIPS. The Echol, or ark, wherein are deposited the scrolls of the law, was then thrown open and the officiating reader offered up the prayer for government, the minister to the congregation, Rev. S[amuel M.] ISAACS, terminating this portion of the service by a special prayer for the soul of the lamented President. After the return of the scrolls of the law to the Ark, Rev. Mr. ISAACS proceeded to deliver an eloquent discourse, taking his text from Genesis, chap. xv, v. 1: “Fear not, Abraham; I am thy shield. Thy reward shall be exceedingly great.” At the conclusion of the minister's highly impressive remarks, which were listened to with decided attention, a final prayer and choral ended the ceremonies for the day.

At the minor synagogues, the solemnity of the occasion was celebrated in a becoming manner. German discourses were delivered at the Norfolk-street Synagogue, by Rev. Dr. [Leon] STERNBERGER; at the Poel-Tzedek, by Rev. Dr. [Jonas] BONDI; at the Temple Emanu-El, by Rev. Dr. [Samuel] ADLER, Mr. [Simon] NOOTS, at the Greene-street, and Mr. WALZ, at the Twenty-ninth-street houses of prayer, made remarks suited to the occasion. In a word, the Jewish community fully evidenced its deep appreciation of the loss the nation has sustained, and gave an additional proof of its unfeigned loyalty and devotion.

The neat little synagogue of the Congregation Sheary Berochole,[80] in East Ninth-street, was the scene of very impressive ceremonies. At noon, the building was filled to overflowing with a very respectable audience, mostly dressed in deep mourning, to participate in the services commemorative of the death of Mr. LINCOLN, arranged by the congregation. After reciting Psalms 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 10, the Kadish, or prayer for deceased persons, was said, and the Minchah Prayer intoned, at the close of which Rev. H. WASSERMAN delivered the funeral sermon. His text was from Isaiah 44, 7: “For a small moment I have forsaken thee, and all forsook thee.” The tenor of his discourse was the necessity of trusting to the goodness of God, however mysterious his providences may seem. He exhorted all to imitate the honesty, charity and good will to all men which had distinguished the life and character of our deceased President. The Hebrew prayer for a deceased father was then said, coupled with an exhortation for the recovery of the Secretary of State and his son was then said, and after the recitation of five psalms, the congregation dispersed.[81]

12. THE JEWISH RECORD DESCRIBES LINCOLN'S FUNERAL PROCESSION

A final document, taken from the pages of the Jewish Record *of New York, offers us an interesting and detailed description of Lincoln's funeral procession in New York City and of the "hundreds of Jewish citizens" who participated in the pageant's Fourth Division. This article closes with an impassioned sermon and prayer, delivered by Rabbi Samuel M. Isaacs of New York's Temple Shaarey Tefila.*[82]



Abraham Lincoln's railroad funeral car, 1865. Courtesy Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.

Jewish Participation in the Lincoln Funeral Pageant, April 25, 1865, at Union Square, New York

With Oriental brightness and warmth did the sun shine down, on Tuesday last, upon crowded house-top and groaning balcony, haughty monument and unpretending dwelling, glorious banners, the emblems of victory, and trailing draperies, somber evidence of woe. Never before had the historian to chronicle so unaffected a display of universal sorrow, so grand a pageant testifying respect for a departed chief. Not in the old world could a monarch, with his unnumbered legion, command the payment of any such tribute of administration even to the memory of a fallen hero. Nor could the new world have beheld such an outpowering [*sic*] of its masses, had the object of popular

recognition been a great conqueror or a great king. It was reserved for the people of this country, through the masses, its true and sole representative, to drop a tear in the yawning grave soon to be closed upon the mortal remains of the late President of the Republic. Everywhere the seemingly silent grief of the people had found utterance in a display of draperies of woe. Everywhere huge banners with bindings of dark crape, forming a strange contrast with the crimson and azure of the stripes and fields, tiny bannerets, with appropriate inscriptions, epitaph-like mottoes of *immortelles*, pendent festoons, golden eagles enshrouded, as it were, by the cloud of gloom, pillars as somber as those of the catafalco itself, badges of mourning, saddened faces and sorrowing hearts. Artistic skill, the poetry of woe, the tenderness of women were alike brought into requisition to further demonstrate to the eye how solemn was the occasion.

The funeral was a grand pageant. Cavalry that had charged on many a battlefield, artillery-men that had planted their batteries and stared death full in the face, infantry that had shared the forced marches incident to the strategical combinations of war, benevolent and protective association having for object the assisting of the weak, the guarding of the helpless, the healing of mental and physical ills, all professions, all trades and social organizations were hand in hand testifying by their presence in the ranks to the respect they bore the deceased Chief Magistrate. It was a grand, an impressive scene; one which the youngest will remember to the last hour of life, with the recollection of the darkly-brilliant scene undimmed by the lapse of years.

The funeral pageant started from City Hall a few minutes before two o'clock, the military cortege forming the vanguard, followed by the representatives of the City, Country and State governments and of the United States Department. Then came the clergy, the press, the bar and several political organizations. The Fourth Division, in charge of General J. H. Hobart Ward, numbered in its ranks hundreds of Jewish citizens. Foremost of these came the FREEMASONS, in whose ranks were noticeable three organizations numbering none but Jewish members: the Adelphi Lodge, headed by P. M. W. Asheim; Mount Neboh Lodge, in charge of W. Bro. J. Sulzberger, and King Solomon Lodge, under the guidance of Bro. Koch. In direct advanced the INDEPENDENT ORDER OF RED MEN, in whose van there were borne three massive links of a chain, enshrouded with black crape, their banner being also draped in black. The order comprised some eighteen lodges, numbering in all about fifteen hundred members. In direct sequence marched the members of the INDEPENDENT ORDER OF B'NAI B'RITH represented by fifteen lodges and in charge of P. W. Frank, Esq., Grand Marshal, J. Ballin and N. Schainwald, Aids. Each lodge was preceded by its respective officers and all advanced in the following order: New York Lodge, No. 1; Zion, No. 2; Saran, No. 3; Hebron, No. 5; Lebanon, No. 9; Beer-Sheba, No. 11; Jordan, No. 15; Palestine, No. 18; Canaan, No. 29; Rhehoball,[83] No. 38; Arnon, No. 39; Isaiah, No. 41; Mordecai, No. 57; Hillel, No. 28; Tabor, No. 31. The order numbered in all twelve to fourteen hundred members. THE ORDER of B'NAI ABRAHAM, was represented by Abraham Lodge No. 1, mustering about fifty members. THE ORDER OF B'NAI MOSCHE mustered some four hundred members who bore in front two magnificent banners, bearing the mottoes of the Order, with the brilliancy of the gilding and the brightness of the hue dimmed by the somber shroud that embraces the folds. THE I. O. FREE SONS of ISRAEL numbered ten lodges under the command of the M. W. Grand Master Bro. Pettenger. In the ranks were the Constitution Grand Lodge; Noah Lodge, No. 1; Reuben, No. 3; Levy, No. 5;

Arich, No. 6; Issachar, No. 7; Zebulon, No. 8; Dan, No. 9; Napthali, No. 10, and Gad, No. 11, turning out in all some nine hundred members. THE CHEBRA ANSHE EMUNO numbered about one hundred representatives, headed by Mr. M. Stark, who brought up the rear in the Jewish department of the Fourth Division. In the Seventh Division, the CERES UNION one hundred and twenty-five strong, presented a good appearance, wearing a badge of white satin ribbon, with a heavy black border, bearing the inscription: CERES—[with picture of an] URN—WE MOURN OUR LOSS.

THE NATIONAL GLEE CLUB, a combination of the Henry Clay Debating Society, the Webster Literary Association, made a creditable display, and brought up the rear of the procession, inasmuch as their co-religionists were participants in its grandeur. The dense mass marched onward and upward, the sad music ever and anon swelling in volume and dying away upon the spring breeze and, at length, the lower portions of the city resumed its wonted aspect, no vestiges left of the mighty throng that so recently had invaded every foot of tenable ground. AT UNION SQUARE at four o'clock precisely were assembled at the Nineteenth street Synagogue, delegates from a number of congregations and associations who, in charge of Benj. I. Hart, Esq., marshal, and M. S. Isaac, Esq., aid, marched to Union Square. In the ranks of this large deputation were representatives of the congregation B'nai Jeshurun, Shaary Tefila, Anshi Chesed, Rodef Sholem, B'nai Israel, Ahavas Chesed, Beth Israel Bikur Cholim, Poel Tsedek, Bikur Cholim u Kadisha, Aderath El, Mishkan Israel; of the Hebrew Benevolent Y.M.H.B. Fuel, Hebrew Free School, Hebrew Mutual Benefit, Mutual Benefit and Burial, Jerusalem and Purim associations; and deputies from the Orphan Asylum and Board of American Delegates.[84] In all, the representatives numbered about two hundred; they proceeded through Fifth Avenue to Fifteenth Street, thence to the Maison Doree. The meeting was just being called to order.

On the speakers' platform we noticed the Rev. Drs. [Morris] Raphall, [Jonas] Bondi; the Rev. Mr. [Judah] Kramer; Henry Josephi, Esq., President of the Board of American Delegates, B[enjamin] I. Hart, Esq. and several other co-religionists. After a prayer by the Rev. Dr. [Stephen H.] Tyng, an oration by the Hon. George Bancroft, the reading of the late President Lincoln's last inaugural address, the further reading of a psalm by the Rev. Mr. [William H.] Boole, and the offering up of a fervent prayer by the Rev. Dr. [Ebenezer P.] Rogers, the Rev. S[amuel] M. Isaacs stepped forward and prefaced his prayer to the throne of grace, by the following passage from the scriptures:

"Remember, O Lord, thy tender mercies and thy loving kindness; for they are eternal.[85] Grant us to be among those who die by thy hand, O Lord! those who die by old age, whose lot is eternal life; yea, who enjoy even here Thy hidden treasures. His soul shall dwell at ease, and his seed shall inherit the land.[86] Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be overturned and though the mountains be hurled in the midst of the seas.[87]

"He redeemeth thy life from destruction; He crowneth thee with [loving] kindness and tender mercies.[88] Wherefore doth living [man] complain, he who can master sins?[89] Small and great are there; and the servant is free from his master.[90] For He remembered that they were but flesh; a wind that passeth away and cometh not again.[91] All flesh shall perish together, and man shall return unto dust—who rejoice even to exultation and are glad when they find a grave.[92]

"And such a frail mortal, shall be more just than God? Shall man be more pure than

his maker?[93] In God I will praise His Word; in the Lord, I will praise His word.[94] Man is like to vanity; his days are as a shadow of thing that passeth away.[95] Be kind, O Lord, unto those that are good, and unto them that are upright in their hearts.[96] Let the pious exult in glory; let them sing aloud upon their couches.[97] Then shall Thy light break forth as in the morning, and Thy health shall spring forth speedily, and Thy righteousness shall precede Thee; the glory of the Lord shall be thy reward.[98] The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil. He shall preserve thy soul.[99]

"Behold, the keeper of Israel doth neither slumber nor sleep.[100] The Eternal killeth and maketh alive; He bringeth down to the grave and bringeth up.[101] Wilt Thou not turn and revive us, that we may rejoice in Thee?[102] Let us, therefore, trust in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and with Him is plenteous redemption.[103]

"One generation passeth away and another generation cometh; but the earth abideth forever.[104] For the word of the Lord is upright, and all his works are done in faithfulness.[105] The dust shall return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.[106] His seed shall be mighty upon earth: the generation of the upright shall be blessed.[107] The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.[108]

"And as for him, righteousness shall precede him and form steps for his way.

"Ye are blessed of the Eternal, who made heaven and earth."[109]

The reverend gentleman then delivered the following impressive prayer:

"Thou, whose attributes are omnipotence, Thy eye unseen, sees, Thy direction unknown, guides; Thy mercy unbounded, upholds; our God, our Father. From hearts penetrated by grief, we pray; oppressed by the weight of our feelings, bruised in spirit, we most earnestly implore Thee, visit us not in Thine anger, nor chastise us according to our works. Enter not into judgment with us, look not to our iniquities. As frail, erring creatures, in faltering accents we confess our guilt. Who can be justified before Thy immaculate purity? In humble and reverential awe, we approach Thee, invoking Thee to inspire us with a proper spirit and temper of hearts and mind under the powers of Thy providence. God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, millions of beings Thy will has created this day fall prostrate at Thy throne, offering the overflowing of their hearts and their resignation to Thy will, as the homage of their adoration. The inhabitants of this land are overburdened with grief. The good being who, like Aaron of old, 'stood between the living and the dead,'[110] so that the war which decimated the land might cease. Alas! he is no more. Thy servant, Abraham Lincoln, has, without a warning, been summoned before Thy august presence. He has served the people of his afflicted land faithfully, zealously, honestly, and, we would fain hope, in accordance with Thy supreme will. O heavenly abode of bliss; that Thy angels of mercy may be commissioned to convey his soul to the spot reserved for martyred saints; that the suddenness with which one of the worst beings deprived him of life may atone for any errors which he may have committed. Almighty God! Every heart is pierced with anguish—every countenance furrowed with grief, at our separation from one we revered and loved. We beseech Thee, in this period of our sorrow and despondency, to sooth our pains and calm our griefs; and, as in days of old, before the sun of Eli went down, Thou didst cause that of Samuel to beam upon Israel, so it may be thy divine will, as the sun of our deeply lamented Abraham Lincoln had scarcely set, and darkness

covered the people, that the sun of Andrew Johnson, which has burst upon the gloom, may shed its brilliant rays as sparkling it is borne amid purity and innocence. Our Father, who art in Heaven, show us this kindness, so that our tears may cease to depict our sorrow and give peace to the joyful hope that, through Thy goodness, peace and concord may supersede war and dissension, and our beloved Union, restored to its former tranquility, may be enabled to carry out Thy wish for the benefit and the happiness of humanity. We pray Thee do this; if not for our sake, for the sake of our little ones unsullied by sin, who lisp Thy holy name, with hands uplifted, with the importunity of spotless hearts, they re-echo our supplication. Let the past be the end of our sorrow, the future the harbinger of peace and salvation to all who seek Thee in truth. Amen."[111]

7

Conflicting Obligations: Shavuot and the National Day of Humiliation and Mourning

On April 21, 1865, a nine-car funeral train, draped in the black habiliments of mourning, began a 1,700-mile trip that would carry Abraham Lincoln's remains from Washington, D.C., to the site of his final resting place at Oak Ridge Cemetery in Springfield, Illinois. American clerics, politicians, and communal leaders continued to deliver eulogies and tributes to Lincoln, especially in major cities where the public would be given an opportunity to view the president's body and mark the occasion with a funeral pageant.[1] Even as the funeral train was winding its way across the Old Northwest, a decision was made to schedule a special day of reflection that would help the nation bring the intense mourning period to a close. On April 25, President Andrew Johnson proclaimed that on Thursday, May 25, the citizens of the United States would commemorate a "day of humiliation and mourning." He urged them "to assemble in their respective places of worship,…[and] to unite in solemn service to Almighty God,…[and to meditate on Lincoln's] memory."[2]

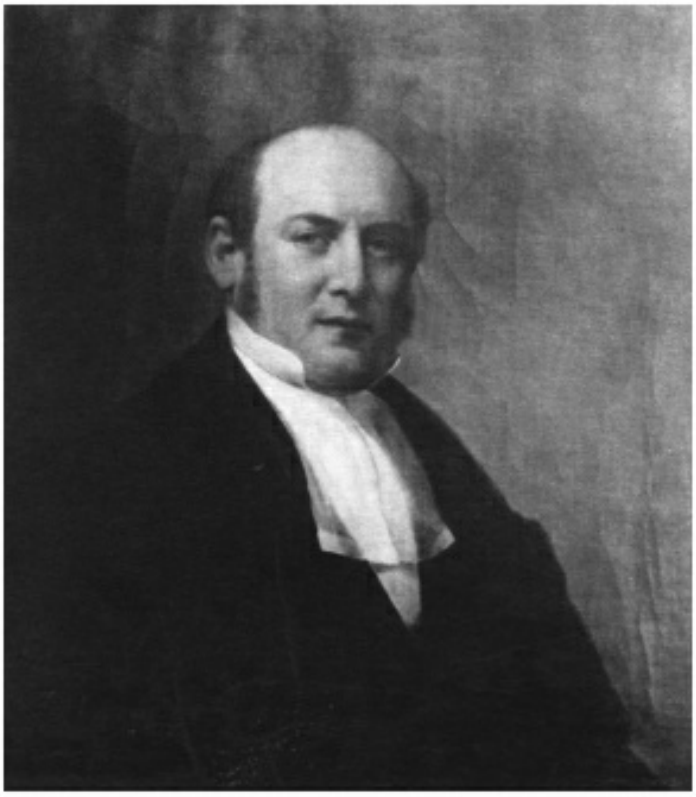
Unfortunately, the day President Johnson and his advisors had selected as the national day of mourning—Thursday, May 25, 1865—coincided with Ascension Day, a day of rejoicing that formally concluded the Easter season. Evidently, the conflict was promptly brought to the administration's attention, and four days later Johnson issued a second proclamation wherein he corrected the faux pas by rescheduling the day of mourning to June 1, 1865. The new date undoubtedly pleased Ascension Day observers, but in changing the date to June 1, Johnson unknowingly created an upsetting dilemma for many American Jews because June 1 corresponded to the second day of the Shavuot festival.

On Shavuot, as on all major Jewish festivals, Jews are commanded to rejoice—mourning and grief are strictly forbidden. American Jews recognized that, in some sense, they were caught on the horns of a dilemma; they wanted to express their allegiance to the nation and their reverence for Lincoln, as well as to properly observe the traditions of their faith. How could American Jews participate in a national colloquium of mourning for their beloved Lincoln and concomitantly participate in a Jewish holy day that literally commanded them to celebrate with "gladness and rejoicing"?[3]

In taking note of this circumstance, the editor of the *Jewish Messenger* expressed his impatience with the Christian clerics who complained about the original scheduling conflict. "It is not to be expected," he wrote, "that President Johnson shall, amid the trying and important duties that devolve upon him at the outset of his administration, keep in memory every festival, fast-day and ceremonial observed by [the various religious traditions]." Ascension Day was far from a major holiday, and by compelling the president to move the date of the day of mourning because of it, the editor suggested the clerics were making a tempest in a teapot. The Jews, the editor predicted, would take the high road; they would find a way to observe the "Feast of Weeks" even while they joined "in a sincere and earnest prayer to God for the repose of the soul of the late President Lincoln, whose memory all revere." Indeed, many of the sermons that American rabbis delivered on Shavuot day—the National Day of Humiliation and Mourning—prove that amid their gladness and rejoicing, most Jews were determined to "spare an earnest moment for communion with God, for heartfelt prayer in memory of the good Abraham

Lincoln."[4]

Jacques Judah Lyons, the rabbi of Congregation Shearith Israel in New York, was one of the few Jewish leaders who insisted that even at a time such as this, Jews could not serve two masters. He told his congregants that they had convened on Shavuot to mark the "great festival commemorating the revelation of God on Mt. Sinai," and they were therefore commanded to be glad and rejoice. "Sorrow and dejection, the chief characteristics of a day of humiliation," he told them, "are incompatible with our joy." Lyons quickly added, however, that had it not been a Jewish festival, "we too, in common with our fellow-citizens of all denominations, would have observed this day of humiliation."[5]



Jacques Judah Lyons, minister of New York's Congregation Shearith Israel, eulogized Lincoln and urged congregants to contribute to the Lincoln Memorial Fund.
Courtesy American Jewish Historical Society, New York, N.Y., and Newton Centre, Mass.

Rabbi Benjamin Szold told his congregation that Lincoln's "thought and his feeling . . . were truly Israelitish." Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

In Baltimore, Rabbi Benjamin Szold told his people they would not "lower [themselves] into mournful meditation" on Shavuot. He pointed out that since the traditional periods of official Jewish mourning for the president, *shivah* and *shloshim*, had elapsed, it would be improper, Jewishly speaking, to perpetuate an official period of lamentation.[6] The period of mourning was over, Szold reassured his congregants, and they had no reason to think they were desecrating the sacred festival. They could participate in the "National Day of Humiliation" not as mourners per se but as loyal Americans who were pausing to reflect on the life of Abraham Lincoln "in love, loyalty and respect."

> We will not shed tears when we remember him but will be seized with silent, holy joy. Let us delight in the thought that such a wonderful man lived in our time and in this country; let us delight in the thought that his name made this nation so much richer; that we not only have a George Washington, but a Lincoln as well, a glorious example of high virtues for us, and all who will come after us. Therefore, my friends, let us think of Lincoln enshrined in beautiful flowers, and let us in spirit visit his grave to admire the blossoms which his virtues made grow out of the dust.[7]

Alfred T. Jones, a newspaper editor, businessman, and community leader, spoke about Lincoln during Shavuot services at Philadelphia's Mickve Israel Congregation. Jones argued that American Jews wanted to participate in the national day of mourning along with their fellow citizens, and this was a duty that was so compelling that it superseded the obligations and duties traditionally associated with the holy festival: "It cannot be improper or inappropriate to recall and reflect upon the great event which sits so heavily upon the nation, thereby evincing to the

world that our hearts beat in unison with our fellow-citizens of other denominations; that although a peculiar people in many respects, we feel ourselves a component part of this great community of States, exulting in their triumphs, deploring their defeats, rejoicing in their joys and partaking in their sorrows."[8]

Worshipers at New York's Bene Israel Congregation may have been a bit surprised to hear Reverend Morris R. Deleeuw (d. 1915)[9] tell them that Shavuot was actually a most fitting day for Jews to mourn the martyred president. It was true, Deleeuw declared, that Shavuot was the day on which Jews rejoiced in remembering that God had given them the Torah. Yet the preacher reminded his congregation that on Shavuot and all other Jewish festivals, it is customary for Jews to recite memorial prayers (*yizkor*) for their deceased relatives. Was it not entirely fitting to count Father Abraham as one of their own departed loved ones? Therefore, Deleeuw concluded, "had the President done so wittingly he could not well have chosen a day more fitting the object of his proclamation."[10]

In the end, the scheduling of the National Day of Humiliation and Mourning for Lincoln on the Jewish festival of Shavuot proved to be a "conflict" that was easily resolved for most American Jews. They instinctively knew they would find a viable way to commemorate their festival as best they could, and, simultaneously, they would "set aside a solemn service in memory of the lamented Abraham Lincoln."[11]

DOCUMENTS

1. "We May Not Raise Our Voice in Lamentation"

2. We Should Regard Abraham Lincoln as a Son of Israel

3. Who Will Refuse to Mingle His Tears with Those Which Flow from a Sorrow-Stricken Nation?

4. "His Kind Nature Cannot So Easily Be Rejected from Our Disturbed Minds"

1. "WE MAY NOT RAISE OUR VOICE IN LAMENTATION"

On Thursday morning, June 1, 1865, Rabbi Jacques Judah Lyons of New York's Congregation Shearith Israel told his people that, much to his deep regret, the Jew was strictly forbidden to mourn on Shavuot. "We can comply but with one direction," he told his congregation, "'Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God.'"[12] Yet the rabbi did offer his people a useful dispensation. During the recitation of the "mourners' prayer"—the Kaddish—which was a regular feature of every Jewish worship service including Shavuot, there should be no objection if Jewish worshipers prayed for "the reception of [Lincoln's] soul into the kingdom of Heaven."[13]

Abraham Lincoln

Yesterday morning the Synagogue of the Congregation "Shearith Israel" on Nineteenth Street, near Fifth Avenue, was crowded with worshipers of the Jewish faith, the especial occasion being with them the commemoration of the Feast of the Pentecost, but also on account of the day being set apart by the President for humiliation and to testify the grief felt at the loss of our late Chief Magistrate.

The discourse was delivered by the minister, the Rev. J. J. Lyons, from the following text: “The Lord is in his holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before him.”—Habakuk 2:20.

These are the opening words of the lesson of the prophets of this festival. Throughout the land the court of every shrine is this day frequented; all earthly pursuits and worldly thoughts are set aside and the presence of the Merciful One is sought in his sanctuary by our fellow-citizens, to evince their resignation under the recent calamity that has befallen them, in the murder of their Chief Magistrate. We, as Israelites, however, have come here this day in accordance with our time-honored custom, to complete the celebration of our great festival commemorating the revelation of God on Mount Sinai. Then and there a government was inaugurated, which pointed to God, the Supreme ruler of Heaven and Earth as King, and made all men, of whatever rank, wealth, or learning, equals in the eyes of the law; and well may it be said, it was the occasion from which the world may date with propriety the commencement of its civilization. In the annual commemoration of the great event, during the period of our dispersion, we can comply but with one direction, which is thus recorded in Deuteronomy 6:11: “Thou shalt rejoice before the Lord thy God.” Joy, then, my friends, is enjoined upon us as our chief duty upon our present festival. You need scarcely be told that by that joy is meant the emotion excited by a proper appreciation of God's kindness, which excludes all evidence of grief, and is evinced in acts of gratitude and songs of fervent praise. Sorrow and dejection, the chief characteristics of a day of humiliation, are incompatible with our joy. The rules of our ritual prohibit every demonstration of sorrow and all supplicatory invocation on this day of joy. But for this restriction we too, in common with our fellow-citizens of all denominations, would have observed this day of humiliation. Had not the day that was originally appointed for this purpose been changed, we, too, would have mourned “with a great and very sore lamentation” the loss of a true and tried patriot; and like the Egyptians of old, at the death of one of our patriarchs.[14] We could have fulfilled the forty days of embalmment, in the hearts of the people, of that great and good chief, who in the hour of victory had malice for none and charity for all. The Rev. Mr. Lyons then went on to say that as Hebrews we regret that we are prevented by the restriction on our religious rules to give a full response to our feelings. He then went on and eulogized the memory of the President in a beautiful manner, and said that if we may not raise our voice in lamentation, we may as members “of that great house of mourning, where the head of the family has been taken away,” avail ourselves of the privilege of praying for the happiness of his soul. The prayer for the dead, which is so well intended to bring consolation to the heart of the mourner, so far from being prohibited, constitutes in some of our congregations a particular feature of the service, this being one of the days designated, whereupon a remembrance of our departed friends is calculated to sanctify our rejoicing, to impress us with the transitoriness of all that is of this earth, and make us aspire to the possession of the eternal joy, reserved for the righteous in a blessed immortality. As we have said from this place on a recent occasion, it is the assurance of our religion. Israel's bondage was broken, and seven weeks after the nation for the first-time was brought in communion with their God to witness the revelation of his power and will. Then and there men's liberty was defined, restraints were placed upon his passions when the all-saving lessons of truth and justice were promulgated, that with

the good and with the pious of all creeds it shall be well in the world to come. The religion of Israel, although it comprises the observance of the covenant to the descendants of the patriarchs, does so without any exclusive spirit. The restoration and consequent separation are intended to perpetuate the service, to keep from all possible injury the word of God and his promises to all men. Our holy religion dooms none because of this creed to eternal condemnation. It opens the gates of mercy, of divine knowledge and love to every race, every sect, every person. In this spirit, believing that the merits of our departed President will find favor with an all-merciful God, let us pray for the reception of his soul into the kingdom of Heaven.[15]

2. WE SHOULD REGARD ABRAHAM LINCOLN AS A SON OF ISRAEL

In Baltimore, on the National Day of Humiliation and Mourning, Rabbi Benjamin Szold addressed the members of Ohev Shalom Congregation in German. He told them it was his "solemn duty to dedicate [his] sermon to [the] late President Abraham Lincoln." Like his colleague Jacques Judah Lyons of Shearith Israel in New York, Szold informed his people that, strictly speaking, they were forbidden on Shavuot to lower themselves into a "mournful meditation." Szold quickly pointed out, however, that according to Jewish tradition, the formal periods of intense mourning for the president (shivah *and* shloshim) *had already elapsed. He was therefore free to expound upon Lincoln's extraordinary achievements without fear of fostering an atmosphere of mourning that the Jewish law forbade on holy festivals.*[16]

The following excerpts from Szold's lengthy holiday sermon—provided in the German original together with English translations—illustrate the essence of the rabbi's eulogistic message on the National Day of Humiliation and Mourning. He told his people that there are two kinds of flowers by the side of Lincoln's grave, the flower of love and the flower of hope. Sustaining the flower metaphor throughout his sermon, Szold linked it to the Jewish experience, enjoining his congregants to rejoice in Lincoln's love of freedom as well as in the spiritual kinship he had with the Jewish people.

Vaterland und Freiheit [Fatherland and Freedom]

Wir haben heute wieder in Gemäßheit der Proklamation unseres Präsidenten die Aufgabe, unsere gottesdienstliche Betrachtung dem Andenken des verstorbenen Präsidenten Abraham Lincoln zu weihen.—Aber heute wollen wir nicht, wie in unseren früheren, seinem Andenken gewidmeter Reden, das hohe Bild des Verstorbenen in jener blutig schaurigen Gestalt vor uns treten lassen…. Wir wollen heute nicht mehr in traurige Betrachtungen uns versenken; denn die von unserer Religion festgesetzten Trauerfristen, Schiwah und Schloschim, in welchen es allein dem Trauernden gestattet ist, mit schmerzvolle Gefühlen und mit blutendem Herzen dem Hingegangenen nachzublicken, sind bereits vorüber.—Außerdem feiern wir ja heute ein Fest, an welchem keine Trauer in israelitischen Gemüten Platz greifen darf, selbst wenn es von dem herbsten Unfallen betroffen wurde; da ja an diesen Feste die Erinnerung gefeiert wird an die Offenbarung am Sinai, welche uns den reichen und frischen Lebens-und Glaubens-quell erschlossen, aus dem wir Trost schöpfen für die herbsten Prüfungen, Linderung für die größten Leiden und Heilung für die blutendsten Wunden des Herzens.

[Today, in accordance with the proclamation of our president, we once more have been assigned the task of dedicating our service to considerations of the memory of our

deceased president, Abraham Lincoln.—However, we would not, as we did in our previous sermons devoted to his memory, evoke the noble image of the deceased as a blood-stained and frightful figure, because *shivah* and *shloshim*, the periods of mourning set down by our religion, have already passed, and these are the only times when it is permitted to think back on the deceased with feelings of pain and with bleeding hearts.—Moreover, we are after all celebrating today a festival when no mourning should fill the Jewish mind, even if it has been struck by a most severe disaster. For on this festival, the remembrance of the Revelation at Sinai is being celebrated, an event which opened for us the rich and fresh source of life and creed, from which we draw comfort for most severe tests, solace for greatest suffering, and healing for most heavily wounded hearts.]

…Die Liebesblume, meine Freunde, wurde einst an diesem Feste von dem himmlischen Vater dem Israeliten an den Busen gesteckt mit dem göttlichen Zurufe, der uns da erscholl: "Ehre und liebe deinen Vater und deine Mutter, auf dass du lange in dem Reiche lebest, das Gott dir zum Besitz eingibt."—Diese Liebesblume der Elternehrung schmückte auch den Busen des verstorbenen Abraham Lincoln; denn er ehrte und liebte seinen Vater—er ehrte und liebte das Vaterland! Er ehrte und liebte seine Mutter—er ehrte und liebte die Freiheit, die uns eine liebende und zärtliche Mutter ist.

…Und um dieser Liebe willen, die Lincoln zur Freiheit hegte,…müssen wir Israeliten das Andenken an Lincoln besonders hochhalten; denn die Freiheit ist ja besonders *unsere* Mutter, die uns zuerst liebend in ihre Arme schloss, die auf ihren Fittichen aus dem ägyptischen Sklavenhause uns zum Sinai hintrug….

Israeliten! Wir haben auf unserer großen Wanderung durch die Menschheitsgeschichte manches Vaterland gefunden; aber noch keine Mutter!…Erst hier in dieser großen Republik haben wir nicht nur ein Vaterland, sondern auch eine Mutter—die Freiheit—gefunden, die alle Kinder des Vaterlandes, ohne Unterschied der Abstammung und des Glaubensbekenntnisses mit gleicher Liebe und Innigkeit in ihre Arme schließt.

[…The flower of love, my friends, was once pinned by the Heavenly Father on the breast of the Israelite, with the divine admonition which resounded: "Honor and love your father and your mother so that you may long live upon the land which God gives you as a possession."—This flower of love, namely honor shown to parents, also adorned the breast of the late Abraham Lincoln, because he honored and loved his father—he honored the Fatherland! He honored and loved his mother—he honored and loved Freedom, our loving and tender mother.

…For the sake of Lincoln's great love of freedom,…we Israelites in particular must revere his memory because Freedom is in particular *our* mother who took us first into her loving arms and bore us on wings from Egyptian slavery to Sinai….

Israelites! On our long travels through the history of humankind we have found many a fatherland, but not yet a mother…. Only here, in this great republic, have we found not only a fatherland, but a mother—Freedom—who embraces all children of the Fatherland with equal love and sincerity, regardless of origin and faith.]

Darum, meine Freunde, sollten wir Abraham Lincoln, der unserer Mutter mit solcher Treue ergeben war, als einen Sohn Israels betrachten. Und wenn viele vom politischen Standpunkt aus ihm seinen Platz in der Geschichte neben Washington

anweisen, so wollen wir dagegen von einem höheren Standpunkt, vom humanistischen Standpunkt aus, ihm auch seinen Platz anweisen neben *unseren* Tugend-und Wahrheits-helden, neben den Hochgestalten *israelitischer* Vorzeit! War er auch nicht, wie manche behaupten, Fleisch von unserem Fleisch und Bein von unserem Bein, so war er doch Geist von unserem Geiste und Seele von unserer Seele. Sein Geist und seine Seele, sein Herz und sein Gemüt, seine ganze innere Natur und Anlage, seine glühende Begeisterung für alles Edle und Hohe, seine Liebe zum Vaterlande, zur Freiheit und zur Menschheit, alles an und in ihm, wodurch sein Wesen, sein Denken und Empfinden sich offenbarten, bis auf seine Redeweise, und die Methode, die ihm eigen war, erhabene Ideen durch Gleichnisse zu erläutern und dem Verständnis näher zu bringen, waren echt israelitisch, von echt alt israelitischem Geiste. Darum wie die alten israelitischen Glaubenshelden uns als ewige Musterbilder gelten, so lasst uns auch in ihm ein hohes und leuchtendes Musterbild erblicken.

[Therefore, my friends, we should regard Abraham Lincoln, so loyally devoted to our mother (= Freedom), as a son of Israel. And if many, from a political standpoint, assign him a place in history next to Washington, we, on the other hand, from a higher, from a humanistic standpoint, should place him next to *our* heroes of virtue and of truth, next to eminent figures of *Israelite* antiquity. And if, as some will have it, he was not flesh of our flesh or bone of our bone, he was indeed spirit of our spirit and soul of our soul. His spirit and his soul, his heart and mind, his innermost nature and disposition, his fervent enthusiasm for everything noble and lofty, his love for the Fatherland, for Freedom and humanity, everything about him and in him that manifested his nature, his thought and his feeling, down to his way of speaking and the method, all his own, of clarifying lofty ideas by means of analogies in order to make them understood—these were truly Israelitish, in the spirit of ancient Israel. Therefore, just as the old Israelite faith heroes are our eternal exemplars, let us also see in him a lofty and shining exemplar.][17]

3. WHO WILL REFUSE TO MINGLE HIS TEARS WITH THOSE WHICH FLOW FROM A SORROW-STRICKEN NATION?

Although some rabbis admonished their people to preserve their joyful spirit on Shavuot in accordance with Jewish law, there were those who disagreed. Speaking to the members of Mickve Israel Congregation in Philadelphia, Rabbi Sabato Morais explicitly directed the "Hebrews of America" to suppress the spiritual gladness that they would typically be expected to exhibit on the festival of Shavuot. In this excerpt from Morais's "Discourse," delivered on June 1, 1865, the rabbi acknowledged the tremendous grief that had overwhelmed American Jewry in the loss of their "good and great Abraham." Morais enjoined his congregants to acknowledge both their spirit of joy and their expressions of lamentation by vowing to give "unswerving fidelity to the Law of Sinai, and steadfast allegiance to the American Constitution."[18]

A Discourse

> From the uttermost part of the earth we have heard songs, "Glory to the righteous." But I said, Alas! alas! woe unto me! the traitors have dealt treacherously; yea, the traitors have dealt very treacherously."

Hebrews of America! Repress the joyful emotions that thrill your hearts! Heirs of the fiery law, which from the secret top of Sinai did, at this season, cast forth rays of unquenchable light! dismiss, if it be for a few moments, the pleasurable thoughts that cluster around your minds! True, when the residue of the chosen seed holds a feast to the Lord, you cannot afflict your soul with fasting. Sackcloth and ashes would ill become those who but yesterday came hither adorned with the garment of unfading beauty first donned at Horeb. Yet, the memory of the righteous must, even now, draw from our lips a blessing and a prayer.

We would fain have postponed the discharge of so solemn but mournful a duty. We would have, at least, wished that in this land of equal rights, where the religious tenets of a majority can claim no higher privileges than those revered by a minority, there should not have been found protestants against the first summons of the authorities. But who among us will, this day, let any motives sever him from the community? Who will refuse to mingle his tears with those which, like a swelling stream, flow from a sorrow-stricken nation?…

Men of Israel! At the foot of the altar let us vow again this day unswerving fidelity to the Law of Sinai, and steadfast allegiance to the American Constitution, which will henceforth secure to all their inalienable rights—life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

PRAYER

God, who amid myriads of saints didst appear to our fathers on the summit of Horeb! Save this people, and bless their inheritance: sustain them and exalt them for evermore. For the merits of the righteous founders of this Union, who opened for Israel a home of security, forgive the iniquities of their posterity. Remove the heart of stone, which renders them impervious to truth, and vest them with a new spirit and a ductile mind. Then will they know and understand that to uphold the ensign of universal freedom, is to do what is acceptable in Thy presence.

Heavenly Judge! Because of Thy rebuke, the foundations of this land shook, and the pillars thereof threatened to fall, but Mercy stood suppliant before Thy throne, and the disaster was averted. Great is our joy this day, O Lord! at the wondrous deliverance; yet, incomplete, by reason of the dear object so suddenly borne away from our earthly vision. His paternal look and genial smile would have enhanced our happiness. Oh! may the affectionate remembrance of a whole nation be an offering of sweet savor to his undying soul! Sphered in the realms of bliss, may he behold the seed he planted among us blossom like the garden of Eden. Liberty, equality, and fraternity spread throughout the habitable globe. And grant, O Sovereign Maker, the entreaty of the seed of “Abram, the Hebrew”: “Spread the fear of Thee upon all Thy creatures, and the reverence of Thee upon all beings, so that they all may form one band to fulfill Thy will with an upright heart. For we, Thy people, know that the rule is Thine; strength and power belong solely to Thee.” “Before Thee all knees must bend. All tongues shall swear by Thy Unity.”

So may it speedily be; and say ye, Amen![19]

4. “HIS KIND NATURE CANNOT SO EASILY BE REJECTED FROM OUR DISTURBED MINDS”

Perhaps the most radical solution to the conflicting obligations that required American Jews to mourn and rejoice on the same day was proposed by Morris R. Deleeuw of New York's Bene Israel Congregation. On June 1, 1865, Deleeuw not only endorsed the propriety of Jewish mourning on Shavuot but also forcefully insisted that there was “no more fitting day” than the festival of Shavuot for a “National Day of Humiliation and Mourning.” Deleeuw based this assertion on the fact that on all Jewish festivals, including Shavuot, memorial prayers for “the souls of departed relatives, friends and prominent men of Israel” are customarily recited during the worship service. For this reason, the preacher assured his people, President Andrew Johnson could not possibly have selected a more appropriate day on the Jewish liturgical calendar to memorialize Lincoln. Deleeuw consoled his listeners by reminding them that the “balmy peace [that] fills the land” testified to the fact that Abraham Lincoln had successfully completed his earthly mission.[20]

Abraham Lincoln

By me kings reign and princes decree justice.

Prov. 8:15

By these words it is clear that obedience to those in authority is a holy duty; this injunction is essential to the existence of government. Had the reverence due it been paid no such thing as rebellion would have found the means to exist, and we would have been spared on this day the solemn task of blending a day of joy with one of humiliation. But emanating as it does from the Chief Magistrate of the nation, we Israelites, as an obedient people, are prepared to observe it. Wanting the proclamation of the President, we have the observance of this particular day enjoined on us by the King of Kings in commemoration of the giving of the law upon Sinai as a day of rejoicing. It is also customary on this day to offer prayers for the repose of the souls of departed relatives, friends and prominent men of Israel. Had the President done so wittingly he could not well have chosen a day more fitting the object of his proclamation. In the words of the prophet:—

“Weep not for the dead, and do not bemoan him.”—Jer. 22:10.

The external signs of mourning have disappeared, the earth has closed upon the remains of Abraham Lincoln, and the loud wailing and cry of anguish consequent on the first intimation of the horrid deed have subsided, as it is natural in man that they should. But even if these have disappeared to our hearts the details are yet fresh, as they will ever be, and upon its tablets are deeply and ineffaceably graven a pure and solemn memory; his kind nature cannot so easily be rejected from our disturbed minds, and assuredly by those who loved the man for his principle. It must be clear to all that it was the Divine will to remove Abraham Lincoln from our midst. To his relentless foes his magnanimity was incomprehensible; and, despising it by their crowning wickedness, they have drawn upon themselves the just deserts of their iniquity. A punishment such as no human mind would have devised was meted to the assassin. For three long hours, in the full possession of his clear mind, and yet physically unable to execute its vindictive dictates, beyond all human aid he lay slowly dying, his pangs increased by the sting of his black conscience until he was dead. If we reflect on this

the majesty of avenging justice is belittled by the command so literally carried out:

"Vengeance and recompense is mine saith the Lord."[21]

And we know, Oh Lord, Thy judgment is righteous. We have humbled ourselves beneath the stroke of the hand of God, and we prayed to Him, in the midst of our distress, to direct the angel of destruction to stay his hand, and the Lord has heard our supplications.

"I will thank Thee, Oh Lord, that Thou wast angry with me. Thy anger now is turned away and Thou comfortest me."—Isaiah 12:1.

Therefore, war no longer rages in the land. Under the inspiration of our dead President the strife has ceased, and the glory of victory sits proudly on our banners, while balmy peace fills the land. His own life sealed the flow of blood, as it likewise marked the epoch that the task that he assumed at the commencement of his first term had been grandly and successfully accomplished. The successor of our late President has thus far, under Heavenly guidance, fully succeeded. We beseech thee, Oh Lord, not to withhold thy inspiration from him, to enable him to be a successful ruler. And now, my friends, we will pray for the repose of the soul of the illustrious dead.[22]

8

Criticisms and Commendations: Conflicting Views on the Lincoln Presidency

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, amid the many personal memoirs and reminiscences relating to Lincoln and his career recorded during this era, one finds a small array of noteworthy reflections that indicate that Lincoln's peers did not fully appreciate his importance while he was alive. For example, nearly four decades after Lincoln's death, Carl Christian Schurz—a Republican activist and the first German-born American to serve in the U.S. Senate—took note of the uncomplimentary barbs that had been hurled at Lincoln while he was in the White House. "In vain did journals and speakers represent him as a light-minded trifler, who amused himself with frivolous story-telling and coarse jokes, while the blood of the people were [*sic*] flowing in streams," but, Schurz continued, "the people knew that the man at the head of affairs, on whose haggard face the twinkle of humor so frequently changed into an expression of the profoundest sadness, was more than any other deeply distressed by the suffering he witnessed."[1]

Julia Ward Howe (1819–1910), the prominent social activist, outspoken abolitionist, and author of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic," agreed completely with Schurz's assessment. In her autobiographical *Reminiscences*, Howe explained that Lincoln was greatly underappreciated and often underrated by many of his contemporaries: "None of us knew then—how could we have known?—how deeply God's wisdom had touched and inspired that devout and patient soul. At the moment few people praised or trusted him. 'Why did he not do this, or that, or the other? He a President, indeed! Look at this war, dragging on so slowly! Look at our many defeats and rare victories!' Such was the talk that one constantly heard regarding him. The most charitable held that he meant well."[2]

Those who delve more deeply into the history of the Civil War are frequently surprised to learn that many of Lincoln's peers did not look upon him as a demigod. To the contrary, the spirit of admiration, respect, and near universal acclaim that has enshrined the memory of Lincoln since the day he was assassinated in 1865 often appears to be in stark contrast to the way he was perceived while he was alive. This phenomenon is particularly true of his years in the White House, when Lincoln had many fierce opponents.

Lincoln's political adversaries not only criticized the way he conducted the nation's affairs but frequently belittled his personal characteristics as well. Lincoln's humble origins, for instance, which today evoke such positive associations, were grist for the critics' mill during his years in office. Political partisans and biting journalists often portrayed Lincoln as a country bumpkin, an ignorant westerner, and a man who lacked the refinements that one would expect to find in the leader of a great nation.

His well-known ability to engage with all types of people, his wit, and the way he loved to hear and tell humorous stories has made him—in America's collective memory—a truly human, accessible leader. This Lincoln is down to earth, one of the people. Yet, especially during his presidency, these same qualities galled his critics. From their perspective, Lincoln was not fit to lead the nation. They insisted he was coarse, undignified, and indecisive.[3]

Between Lincoln's election in November 1860 and his inauguration in March 1861, many southerners had made up their minds that Lincoln planned to abolish slavery as soon as he arrived in Washington. Those in the North who wanted to avoid conflict and war at all cost

hoped the president-elect would offer conciliatory statements in an effort to cool tensions. Nevertheless, many in the North and the South held to the firm conviction that Lincoln's election made political compromise impossible, and it was this spirit that fueled a series of events that culminated in the outbreak of the Civil War on April 12, 1861. On December 20, 1860—six weeks after Lincoln was elected and three months before his inauguration—South Carolina seceded from the Union. Six more southern states followed within two months. In summarizing the situation that Lincoln faced as he awaited his inauguration, one writer noted: “The country was divided, hatred was the most prevalent emotion, and there was no effective leadership anywhere in the government.”[4]

Even before Lincoln took office, there were those who feared that he was not up to the task. Charles Francis Adams (1807–86), the grandson of John Adams and son of John Quincy Adams, was not impressed with the remarks the president-elect offered on the stops he made during his train trip to Washington in February 1861. Adams concluded that Lincoln's speeches were “rapidly reducing the estimate put upon him.” “I am much afraid that in this lottery we may have drawn a blank,” Adams wrote. Lincoln's words betrayed “a person unconscious of his own position as well as of the nature of the contest around him. Good natured, kindly, honest, but frivolous and uncertain.”[5]

As soon as he took office, Lincoln was subjected to more criticism. For example, his first inaugural address, which today is largely considered an oratorical masterpiece, fell short of some people's expectations. Two weeks after the inauguration, the speech was the subject of a cartoon drawn by a young caricaturist named Thomas Nast (1840–1902). Nast lampooned the fact that Lincoln's words were perceived differently depending on whether one was from the North or the South. For northerners, the first inaugural address appeared to be a plea for peace and conciliation. Yet for southerners, Lincoln seemed a menacing oppressor.[6]

Lincoln's determination to spend many hours each week meeting with office seekers, lobbyists, and constituents exasperated his critics. Editorials excoriated Lincoln for what seemed to be a colossal waste of the president's precious time—particularly at a time of national emergency. Murat Halstead (1829–1908), a prominent newspaper correspondent in Cincinnati during the Civil War, was vexed when Lincoln ignored his recommendation for a friend seeking a patronage position in the new government. Venting his spleen in a letter to a friend, Halstead's disdain for Lincoln was unambiguous: “I use the mildest phrase when I say that Lincoln is a weak, a miserably weak man…. He is opposed to stealing, but he can't see the stealing that is done.” According to Halstead, Lincoln was “very busy with trifles, and lets everybody do as they please.”[7]

Lincoln's most formidable opposition came from a political movement called the Copperhead Democrats. The Copperhead movement was a political coalition composed of different interest groups that shared a common opposition to Lincoln's political agenda. Some of the Copperheads were conservative Democrats who used the rhetoric of Thomas Jefferson and Andrew Jackson to defend states' rights. In addition, they wanted to limit the power of the federal government. Most of the Copperhead Democrats were strict interpreters of the U.S. Constitution. Since the founding document did not explicitly forbid secession, they concluded states had the constitutional right to withdraw from the union. Another faction of the Copperhead movement was composed of German and Irish Catholic immigrants who feared that if the slaves in the South were freed, they would migrate to the North and compete for their jobs. Yet another stream that flowed into this movement carried along those who, for one reason or another, sympathized with the South. These were people who simply wanted to maintain the status quo

ante at all costs.[8]

Initially, the Copperheads concentrated on challenging Lincoln's executive actions. In April and May 1861, for example, they opposed his decision to call out the militia, saying that only the U.S. Congress—not the president—was authorized to take such action. At the same time, they contended that Lincoln had exceeded his constitutional authority when he ordered the U.S. Navy to blockade southern ports. Blockading the ports, they thundered, constituted a provocative act of war when the U.S. Congress had not yet declared war. In July 1861, Lincoln asked Congress to pass legislation that would enable the government to raise the funds it needed to put down the rebellion in the South. A month later, he signed the Revenue Act, which, among other things, instituted the nation's first tax on income. Once again, the Copperheads condemned Lincoln's policies as an incursion on the rights of the individual.[9]

One of Lincoln's most controversial decisions occurred in 1862 when he suspended the writ of habeas corpus in order to prosecute the war more vigorously. By suspending habeas corpus, Lincoln hoped to defeat those who were undermining the government's effort to recruit enlistees for the army or who were otherwise aiding the rebel cause. Once the writ of habeas corpus had been suspended, Lincoln could then use the rules of martial law to incarcerate those who were accused of sedition. The decision captured the public's attention and was highly controversial. It rallied and strengthened Lincoln's opponents. The Copperheads called him a tyrant and a despot, and they focused their attention on throwing the Republicans out of office in the elections of 1862.[10]

Yet above all else, it was Lincoln's performance as commander-in-chief of the military that provoked the harshest criticism. Confidence in Lincoln's abilities ebbed and flowed with the battle news from the front. In the summer of 1862, the Union suffered a series of discouraging military defeats, and the public's appetite for the war began to wane. These conditions emboldened Lincoln's critics, and they rallied around a new slogan that would endure for the rest of the war: “The Union as it was and the Constitution as it is.” The Copperheads, also called the Peace Democrats, resolved to defeat the Republicans in 1862 and bring the war to a negotiated settlement as soon as possible.[11]

On September 22, 1862, Lincoln issued the preliminary Emancipation Proclamation. As far as Lincoln's opponents were concerned, this decision added insult to injury. The war was going so poorly for the North, and now Lincoln was proposing to abolish slavery in the South—a step that was certain to inflame the southerners and fortify their determination to fight. More and more critics clamored against Lincoln's policies. Henry J. Raymond (1820–69), founding editor of the *New York Times* and a prominent Republican leader, was convinced that in spite of the fact that the people did not care about the emancipation of the slaves, Lincoln was “fighting not for the Union but for the abolition of slavery.” Americans, Raymond concluded, were “tired & sick of war.” Like Raymond, Thurlow Weed (1797–1882), one of the most prominent Republicans in New York, disagreed with Lincoln's decision to promulgate the Emancipation Proclamation. By issuing it when he did, Weed concluded, Lincoln had made it “impossible” for him to be reelected in 1864. “The people,” he said, “are wild for peace.”[12]

As the 1864 elections approached, the Union suffered even greater losses on the battlefront, and it seemed unlikely that the Union's military would ever compel the Confederacy to offer an unconditional surrender. From May through the beginning of August 1864, the Union army endured unfathomable losses. Over the course of six short weeks, the Union lost 64,000 men, and 38,000 more died for the Confederacy. One of Lincoln's ardent opponents, Congressman Samuel S. Cox (1824–89)—a Democrat from Ohio—asked a rhetorical question that resonated

with an ever increasing number of Americans: “Is it butchery, or—war?” Criticism of Lincoln and his administration reached a crescendo in August 1864, and his prospects for reelection seemed negligible.[13]

Fearing that he might not be returned to office, Lincoln wrote a memorandum saying, “This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this Administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to so co-operate with the President elect, as to save the Union between the election and the inauguration; as he will have secured his election on such ground that he can not possibly save it afterwards.”[14] Most historians agree that two key factors contributed to Lincoln being able to come from behind and win a second term in 1864. First, news that General William T. Sherman's (1820–91) Union forces took the city of Atlanta on September 2 created a national sensation. Many began to see that this victory meant the end of the war really was on the horizon. Second, Lincoln had the electoral support of the military. Over the course of his presidency, Lincoln constantly visited the Union's troops. The soldiers liked him, and they had come to believe in him. Moreover, once Atlanta had been taken by the Union, those calling for a negotiated peace settlement in order to end to the war at all cost seemed to be denigrating the memory of the thousands of young men who lost their lives in order to preserve the Union. As one Union soldier said, “I do not see how any soldier can vote for such a man [George B. McClellan], nominated on a platform which acknowledges that we are whipped.”[15]

After Lincoln's reelection, the news from the war front seemed to reinforce the belief that the war would soon be won. With victory in the air, the bitter attacks on Lincoln's leadership finally began to wane. Richmond was captured on April 3, 1865. Six days later, on April 9, General Robert E. Lee surrendered to General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox. The nation rejoiced, and elation dominated in the streets of the North. Lincoln had preserved the Union, and a grateful nation exulted in the moment. These few days were certainly Lincoln's happiest in the White House. “The war is now closed, and we soon will live in peace with the brave men that have been fighting against us,” Lincoln told his son Robert on one of the last days of his life. Less than one week later, Lincoln was gone.[16]

Only a few months after Lincoln's assassination, Isaac M. Wise observed that “Lincoln was one of these uncommon men. The longer he was in office, the more we learned to respect him. The more we got acquainted with his homespun virtues the more he won our affections.”[17] With these words, Wise was attempting to explain how he had come to speak so highly of Lincoln when he had taken him to task so often while he was president. Indeed, Wise had been one of Lincoln's most outspoken critics.

Wise had long been a partisan of the Democratic Party, and though he was never a supporter of the Copperheads, he had voted for Stephen Douglas in 1860. Wise valued the preservation of the Union over the emancipation of slaves. It was not that he was a supporter of slavery, but he feared that the abolitionists were too radical. Wise agreed with Douglas's “Freeport Doctrine,” which maintained that local municipalities could slowly eliminate slavery by adopting laws that made the institution untenable on the local level. Yet Wise also shared Douglas's view that the federal government could not prohibit the establishment of slavery in the territories. To use twentieth-century terminology, Wise was a gradualist when it came to the eradication of slavery. He believed that when the proper conditions were legislated, slavery would ultimately collapse under its own weight.

Rabbi Isaac M. Wise, often a harsh critic of the president, claimed in his eulogy that Lincoln always believed he had Jewish ancestors. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Wise was a pragmatist. The moralistic and extremist rhetoric of the abolitionists gave him the shivers. As for the "irrepressible conflict," Wise wanted to avoid a civil war at all cost. Like many others, he worried that Lincoln's election might well lead to the Union's collapse. Even before Lincoln took office, Wise expressed his concerns about the president-elect in an editorial. He worried that the Republicans were not attuned to the practical realities of "conciliation and compromise." Their inclination to coerce and crusade was a dangerous instinct, he wrote, and it could spur disastrous consequences:

> Our legislators are forgetting, that the success of a purely Republican government, is not so much the doing the will of the majority, as the protection of the rights of the minority. Greece and Rome were mighty Republics in their time, but, alas! how fallen, and it may be traced to the fact that when the power fell into the hands of certain leaders they tyrannized over their fellow citizens. It is not so much the election of Mr. Lincoln [in itself] that now threatens the destruction of our Common Country, as his individual and the speeches of his colleagues heretofore on the irrepressible conflict doctrine. Another point forgotten by the corrupt politicians of the present day is, that this is a government of conciliation and compromise: not of coercion.[18]

On January 4, 1861, Rabbi Morris J. Raphall composed what would become a frequently cited sermon titled "Bible View of Slavery." The sermon was delivered to his congregation in New York, Bene Yeshurun, to commemorate the "National Day of Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer" that President James Buchanan had proclaimed. In this widely quoted sermon, Raphall did not mention Lincoln by name, but he explicitly addressed himself to all those who should be concerned about the impending crisis that was facing the nation: "I mean the whole of the people throughout the United States: the President and his Cabinet, the President elect and his advisers,

the leaders of public opinion, North and South."[19]

From his pulpit, Raphall urged compromise on both the North and the South. He asked the people of the North and their new leaders to be wary of the "mischief" that moralizing abolitionists had caused. Raphall reminded his listeners that southerners, too, possessed morals. What right did abolitionist radicals have "to insult and exasperate thousands of God-fearing, law-abiding Citizens, whose moral worth and patriotism, whose purity of conscience and of life" were "fully equal" to theirs? Raphall concluded his sermon by urging all northerners—including the newly elected government—to be "content with following the word of God, [and] not insist on being 'righteous overmuch,' or denouncing 'sin' which the Bible knows not."[20]

Like his other critics, Lincoln's Jewish opponents wondered whether the president-elect was the right man for the job. Wise took note of Lincoln's "primitive manner," and he predicted he would look "queer" in the White House.[21] Yet American Jews had their own distinctive grievances when it came to Lincoln. As we have seen, there was widespread concern among Jews over an increasing tendency to assume that America was a Christian nation. Many of the leading abolitionists were Christian pietists, and their commitment to ridding the nation of slavery was inextricably linked to their religious views. There was a great deal of overlap between the Christian abolitionists and the Christians who wanted the nation to adopt a constitutional amendment that would make explicit their belief that America was a Christian nation in both belief and practice.

Wise and many other American Jewish leaders strenuously objected to these views, and they did not appreciate it when Lincoln seemed to embrace this same perspective. Jewish newspaper editors and religious leaders opposed any perceived attempt to render American Jewry a tolerated minority or to suggest that Christianity was more American than Judaism. In 1862, for example, Wise received an angry letter from one of his readers complaining about this very matter and published the note:

> It has often been asserted and now seems to be the opinion of enlightened men in general, that the present distracted and unhappy state of our country is to be…attributed in a great measure to the venality and want of patriotism of the majority of the people, by the frequent election to office of mere political tricksters and demagogues and fanatics becoming a darker age.
>
> If any one doubts the truth of the above assertion let him examine and peruse the acts and speeches of our modern law-makers and so-called statesmen; let him read a President's (Lincoln) message, "who trusts to a Christian people," let him travel thro' our Secretary Seward's speeches wherein "Christianity will give the country peace;" or let him read the military bill passed in July last, which owns [*sic*] its paternity to (Natick Cobbler) Senator Henry Wilson,[22] which reads that for the benefit of the souls of our patriotic soldiers, "Chaplains" should be ordained, they to wear military clothes, but to be of Christianity dress or "Christian denomination," or if one not yet satisfied with the many proofs given and wants more of the stupidity of our leaders, then let him read a speech made on the 31st of Jan., 1862, by Union Senator, Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee in which he says, the Constitution must be upheld at all hazards to save the country, and he ends with the following short and significant sentence: "*Christ first, our country next.*"[23]

Wise was not the only Jewish newspaper publisher to insist that in the United States, the

American Jew be given equal footing in all matters pertaining to religious practice. Isaac Leeser, a proponent of traditional Jewish practice, disagreed with Isaac Wise on a range of matters. Yet the two men agreed that Judaism was fully entitled to equal recognition with Christianity in the United States. In his newspaper, the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, Leeser published a copy of a letter he received from one of his readers. The letter was addressed to Abraham Lincoln, and it was written by the father of a Jewish soldier who recently heard that Lincoln had instructed his generals to make every effort to permit the country's soldiers and sailors to observe a Sabbath on Sunday. The father wanted Lincoln to permit his son—and all non-Christian soldiers—to observe a day of rest that accorded with their own religious practice, in this instance, the seventh day. In addition to publishing the letter, Leeser composed his own lengthy opinion on the topic, which was included as a preface. Leeser insisted that the U.S. Constitution guaranteed equality to Jews as a natural right.

American Jews also took umbrage whenever politicians assumed that the word "prayer" meant *Christian* prayer. Jews wanted to join with their fellow citizens when the government urged them to commemorate a "Day of Humiliation and Fasting," and they took pride in responding to the proclamations even when their Christian neighbors began to grow weary from them.[24] Nevertheless, Isaac Wise did not approve of the government telling its citizens when and why they should pray, and he expressed his annoyance bluntly on the pages of his newspaper: "If President Lincoln can not give everybody a turkey and minze [*sic*] pie, he had better not always trouble us with thanksgiving days, fasts, &c. It is too ridiculous to be always annoyed with those hypocritical demonstrations. The emperor Joseph of Austria saw much trouble in abolishing holidays for the benefit of the operatives, and Mr. Lincoln gives us one every other week. We do not like the religious proclamations, or religion imposed by foolish proclamations."[25]

In the sliver of time that separated the end of the Civil War from the day that Lincoln was assassinated, American Jews shared in the general spirit of jubilee that prevailed throughout the nation. In the pages of his diary, Simon Wolf described the atmosphere in the nation's capital on the day that Richmond surrendered: "Washington in a delirium," Wolf wrote; "men walked the streets as if they were intoxicated." Many of the rabbinical eulogies on Lincoln, as well as the many newspaper accounts describing events that took place in American synagogues after the assassination, begin by noting that the tremendous sense of grief and loss was exacerbated because there had been such rejoicing the week before. A Jewish immigrant named Isaac Goldstein was so overwhelmed with joy by the end of the Civil War that he composed an acrostic prayer in tribute to Lincoln. By the time he submitted it to the Jewish newspapers, however, Goldstein's poem of praise had been transformed into an elegy in memoriam.[26]

Most of the Jews living in the American South left historians no way of assessing how they felt when they first received word that Lincoln had been murdered. Only a few documents of this ilk remain, but the very existence of these rare examples suggests that others must certainly have had similarly harsh reactions—even if they never committed their sentiments to paper.

Ultimately, Lincoln's opponents in the North and the South were silenced by the Confederacy's surrender, and although it is impossible to know precisely how they would have criticized Lincoln and the way in which he might have led the nation through Reconstruction, there can be little doubt that his political detractors would have regrouped and lived to fight another day.

As for Lincoln's most vocal Jewish critics, men like Wise, Leeser, and Raphall joined with the rest of the Union in exalting Lincoln and paying homage to his towering achievements. It is interesting to note, however, that Raphall's lament for Lincoln is distinct in its carefully

measured praise. In contrast to almost all of the Lincoln eulogists—including those given by his critics—Raphall reminded his people that for "three-fourths of his term in office [Lincoln] had stumbled, endeavored to advance, and failed in his attempt." While praising Lincoln, Raphall awkwardly rehearsed his shortcomings. Lincoln selected the wrong generals, and he "locked up many a courageous American" when he suspended the writ of habeas corpus. The rabbi even seemed to blame Lincoln for losing his own life. "He had had more than one warning" that there were those who wanted him dead, Raphall told his congregation, yet Lincoln did not take the necessary precautions. It was this "imprudence that hastened on his end." In the end, Raphall conceded that despite his flaws, Lincoln was a "great man" who had "in all his loveliness" perished for the sake of America.[27]

Isaac Leeser reminded his congregation that Lincoln corrected the wrongs that were perpetrated on American Jewry in the chaplaincy controversy and in the revocation of Grant's General Orders No. 11. These acts, Leeser declared, "speak loudly for the natural kindness of the late President, which all can cheerfully acknowledge, whatever their political opinions may be."[28]

In his eulogy on Lincoln, Wise also charged his people to embrace the ambitions of this "generous, genial, and honest man." In doing so, they would succeed in transforming America into a "chosen people."[29]

Wise realized that when Lincoln was taken from America by "the assassin's hand in the midst of his people," the world changed overnight.[30] "The impression of this concluding scene (Lincoln's assassination) [was] so powerful and ineradicable, so moving and profound that no one can forget this great drama of truth. The consequences for history are incalculable."[31]

Wise was correct. As the documents below illustrate, even Lincoln's harshest Jewish critics would soon be transformed into Lincoln admirers and more so. Lincoln's critics as well as his longtime boosters embraced and began the process of memorializing him as an adoptive Jewish brother, as one of their own.

DOCUMENTS

LINCOLN'S JEWISH CRITICS

1. Isaac M. Wise's Editorials Criticizing Lincoln

2. Isaac Leeser Publishes a Letter from a Concerned Jewish Father

3. Rabbi Morris J. Raphall's Critical Thanksgiving Day Prayer

4. An Evaluation of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address

LINCOLN'S JEWISH COMMENDATIONS

5. Lincoln's Conduct Has Been Invariably Straightforward

6. "I Am Now a Strong Abolitionist"

7. A Hebrew Tribute to Lincoln

REACTIONS TO LINCOLN'S ASSASSINATION

8. "God Grant So May All Our Foes Perish!"

9. Some Southern Sympathizers Cheered
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11. Isaac M. Wise's Reflections on Lincoln's Religion

LINCOLN'S JEWISH CRITICS

1. ISAAC M. WISE'S EDITORIALS CRITICIZING LINCOLN

Rabbi Isaac M. Wise of Cincinnati was frequently a harsh critic of Lincoln. While serving as the rabbi of Congregation Bene Yeshurun, a thriving synagogue in Cincinnati, Ohio, Wise simultaneously edited two newspapers—an English paper named the Israelite *and its German language counterpart,* Die Deborah. *In 1875, Wise would found the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, a rabbinical seminary for American Jewry.*[32]

Although Jews all across the nation subscribed to Wise's newspapers, his publications had the greatest circulation in the Midwest and the South. Politically, Wise was firmly aligned with the Democrats. He was ready to make concessions to the South in order to avoid war and to preserve the Union. As the documents below illustrate, Wise fulminated in opposition to those whom he considered to be zealots, ideologues, and extremists on both sides of the conflict. These “champions of abstractions,” as Wise called them in one editorial, were, in truth, fanatics who were prepared to sacrifice peace and harmony for their own moralistic agenda. It is clear that even before Lincoln took office in 1861, Wise was concerned that his policies would only fan the fire of conflict.

In contrast to the glowing eulogies he famously delivered only days after Lincoln's assassination, while he was in office Wise often criticized Lincoln and his administration in the newspapers he published. Each of the editorials below sheds light on a different facet of Wise's point of view on Lincoln, politics, and the Civil War.

———

Abraham Lincoln became president-elect on November 6, 1860. Two weeks later, Isaac Wise described the decision to elect Lincoln and place the Republican Party in power as one of the nation's greatest blunders. Decrying fanaticism on both sides of the Mason-Dixon Line, Wise expressed the strong hope that “Mr. Lincoln” would want to avoid war at all cost. To do so, the president-elect would need to placate “Southern demands” vis-à-vis slavery and tone down the inflammatory rhetoric that prevailed during the election. Now that the election of 1860 had been decided, Wise anticipated that uncompromising political positions would “soon give way to the sober and practical schemes.”

Above all, Wise wanted to assure his subscribers that he was ready to accept their payment for his paper in any currency they cared to offer!

The People Have Just Committed One of the Greatest Blunders

November 30, 1860

To our Subscribers,

We deem it necessary to inform our subscribers that we take in payment any sort of bills bankable at par in any state of the union, and desire of all friends who are in arrears to this establishment to pay in bills current with them or in any other state of the union, and they will receive full credit for it.

The artificial panic which just now frightens the community is no more than the

product of the present state of politics and the cunning contrivance of bankers, brokers, etc. In politics the hottest fanatics will get quiet and cool in quite a short time. The republicans in this section of the country and, it appears also elsewhere, have turned lambkins, tender and innocent, immaculate and bashful. Not one of them ever was an abolitionist, ever talked of "A house divided against itself can not stand," of the "irrepressible conflict," of the "higher law," and such other grandiloquent terms as they usually had on hand. They are as tame and obliging now as the peasant the first time in the city. Hence fanaticism on one hand is gone overboard. The same thing precisely, we have strong reasons to suppose, is the case in the extreme south with fire-eaters, seceders and political circus riders; they have found out by this time that people care very little for abstract ideas, extreme views and false conceptions of honor when their material interests are neglected or even ruined; and if they have not learned yet to appreciate the opinion of the people they will do so in a short time without any civil war, bloodshed or even military maneuvers.

The people of the United States just committed one of the greatest blunders a nation can commit, for which we must pay at once; they permitted extreme fictions to play the hazardous game of the country's welfare and peace for an abstract idea, and the whole issue of the last campaign was an abstract idea and a division of the spoils. Whatever faction was victorious nothing could be gained and the peace of the country lost. Nations have insane moments as well as individuals. In a few short months, however, the champions of abstractions will be taught the Alphabet of politics, viz.: a government is not constituted to protect abstractions, but to protect the material interests of the country. These interests being shaken to their very center, so that every individual throughout the whole land feels its effect, the intoxication of the abstractionists will soon give way to the sober and practical schemes. The reaction has begun already. The republicans already exclaim with the Roman hero: "If we gain one more such victory we are lost,"[33] and the southern abstractionists will say so in less than two months.

In support of what we have said, we cut the following paragraph from the *N.Y. Times*, and let the reader judge they did not give in:

> What are we to concede? Can any of all the opponents of Mr. Lincoln here in the north tell? Of all the issues which have from time to time, since the beginning of the Government, so far as regards the Slavery question, been discussed by the people, there are none of which Mr. Lincoln has not given responses in accordance with former Southern demands. He will comply with the Constitutional requirements to deliver fugitive slaves; he will not oppose the inter-State trade in slaves; he will not oppose the admission of new States applying to be admitted with Slavery; he will not advocate the abolition of Slavery in the District of Columbia unless the owners of slaves themselves desire it, and are compensated; and he abjures all claim on the part of the Federal Government to interfere with Slavery in the States. What more in the name of all that is just, can be asked from a man or party?

The bankers, stock jobbers and brokers made a mistake. They started the cry of bankruptcy with the intention to make money out of it; but now the flames envelope [*sic*] them on all sides, and they are bankrupt themselves. Now they themselves must

quench the fire or they will have the worst part of their hasty transactions.

Therefore we came to the conclusion to take in payment, all sorts of bills bankable in any state of the union, and request our subscribers to pay without delay in bills as they have them. We also offer all our stock for sale at fair prices and take for it South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Virginia, Missouri, Illinois, Baltimore or any other bills bankable anywhere in the union. Nay we even propose to take Massachusetts money notwithstanding Caleb Cushing and Senator Summer. The extremes will soon be cured.[34]

Two weeks prior to Lincoln's first inauguration, Wise published a sarcastic editorial condemning the Lincoln partisans for what he believed to be excesses of public display and an irresponsible use of public money in their celebrations of Lincoln's election. All of this was little more than sycophancy and humbuggery, Wise asserted, insisting that the new president had yet to prove himself and, until he did so, was not worthy of such adulation. He suggested that most of the celebrators were nothing but partisan politicians who were looking for patronage once Lincoln came to power. The rabbi/editor compared these loyalists to the biblical Philistines who worshiped before the false god of "Dagon."[35]

Once again, we see that in spite of the fact that Wise praised Lincoln after his death in 1865, he had criticized him during his presidency. At best, Wise expressed ambivalence about President-elect Lincoln. The rabbi admitted that he seemed to be "an honest man" and "an intelligent man," but he nevertheless had trouble imagining him as the nation's president. "He will look queer, in the white house," Wise concluded, "with his primitive manner."

No Life without Humbug

February 15,1861

It is strange at the prima vista observation, that the American people, so eminently practical in every respect and living fully up to the rule "time is money," should at the same time be so fond of public spectacles, flimsy demonstrations, noisy processions and all sorts of humbug. Poor old Abe Lincoln, who had the quiet life of a country lawyer, having been elected President of this country, and going now to be inaugurated in his office, the Philistines from all corners of the land congregate around their Dagon and worship him. Here in Cincinnati the post-masters, collectors, judges, marshals, commissioners, *in spe*,[36] begged together about $1,500 to hire some carriages, give a banquet in the evening, drink champaign [*sic*], and sing hymns to Dagon. They disturb the people in their usual occupations, nay even the children in their schools, start an absurd tumult, and the masses run and gaze. Why? Wherefore? To what purpose? None can answer these questions. Why did the patriots not pay for the noise from their own pockets? Why can our big men not entertain the president elect on their own expense? Why all this noise? Nobody can answer.

We can not say what Mr. Lincoln has done for this country in politics, warfares, science or art; being a foreigner we can not be expected to know every man's biography; hence we can not tell why these extraordinary demonstrations, processions, banquets, &c., should be made. Wait till he has done something, then show him the honor due to the man; but even then do not imitate the man-worship of the Philistines; bow not down to Dagon. So we should think; rational men must think. Of course, office-hunters are prompted by other motives. But that the masses should thus blindly

be led and confused by the seekers of office, is a poor testimony of the common sense of the multitude.

It strikes us that there is no life without humbug. The multitude must have a spectacle occasionally, and will run whenever and wherever a noisy demonstration is made. There is a tendency in the American people for diversions and spectacles; but it has no great influence upon anybody. Now they run to see and hear Mr. Lincoln. If in two weeks he should say or do anything they dislike, they would drag their own idol into the dust and decry him in the same ratio as they formerly deified him. It is a poor policy to honor a man publicly without knowing by settled precedents what he will do hereafter, just as poor as to decry a man we honored heretofore. Therefore we consider all those man-worshipping demonstrations unprincipled and unbecoming honorable men—of course the office-hunting Philistines always excepted: they must bow down to Dagon. The private citizen should never forget his own dignity as a man, and a republican chief should never accept of any public demonstrations which only degrade the citizen, and do no honor to anybody, especially not to him who knows he has done nothing yet to merit any public demonstrations.

Certain men who are the real benefactors of humanity, such as George Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, or Cromwell, and others in politics; or Bacon, Isaac Newton, Humboldt, and others in science; none of them received honors in advance of the actions; neither of them was fond of public demonstrations. But this is an age of humbug and spectacle, and myriads of thoughtless Philistines are glad when they hear some noise, or see some flimsy display, and must always have some Dagon to worship; because they find not dignity enough in themselves to live without noise; not sense enough to do without humbug. The madness of reckless demagogues having led this country to the brink of destruction, certainly will find pleasure in public demonstrations, to heat up the declining fire of sectionalism, they are excusable. But it would not do for peaceable citizens.

Some of our friends might like to know how the president looks, and we can tell them he looks like *Der Landjunker das erste Mal in der Stadt*, which is in good English, "like a country squire for the first time in the city." He wept on leaving Springfield and invited his friends to pray for him; that is exactly the picture of his looks. We have no doubt he is an honest man and, as much as we can learn, also quite an intelligent man; but he will look queer, in the white house, with his primitive manner.[37]

Lincoln concluded his first inaugural address by appealing to all citizens for peace and tranquillity. "My countrymen," he pleaded, "think calmly and well *upon this whole subject." He reminded the nation that the values they shared in common were more powerful than their political divisions: "Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, and a firm reliance on Him who has never yet forsaken this favored land are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty."*[38]

According to Wise, he received at least a dozen letters expressing dismay over Lincoln's apparent assertion that the nation shared a common bond of "Christianity." Did Lincoln mean to say that American Jews were not part of the nation's social fabric? Lincoln was not the first U.S. president to employ such language in public address. Two decades earlier, for instance, John Tyler issued a proclamation stating that it was the duty of the Christian nation to mourn the death of his predecessor, William Henry Harrison. Many Jews wondered if they should be

concerned about Lincoln's choice of words.

Although Wise was known to take notice of such slights, in this specific instance he advised his readers to pay little attention to Lincoln's phrasing. Ironically, Wise—an immigrant who spoke English with a German accent—criticized Lincoln's writing abilities. He explained to his readers that Lincoln, the man who two years later would compose the Gettysburg Address, was a "careless" writer who expressed himself without "either correctness or elegance."

Lincoln Does Not Care for Words

March 15,1861

Editor's Remarks.—From a dozen letters on the same topic we publish only the above, because it comes from a particular friend. We only have to say for Mr. Lincoln, that his style of writing is so careless and without any successful attempt at either correctness or elegance that he must not be criticized on using this or that word to express an idea. He takes domestic words, as used in Springfield and vicinity to express familiar ideas. In Springfield religion is called Christianity, because people there do not think of any other form of worship, hence Mr. Lincoln uses the same word to express the same sentiment. Mr. Lincoln received the heaviest vote of infidels ever given to any man in this country. We do not believe there is a German infidel, American eccentric, spiritual rapper or atheist in northern states who did not vote for Mr. Lincoln. Let us see how much benefit he will derive from their Christianity, or how he will settle the political troubles with such piety. But his words must not be criticized too closely. He does not care for words. By and by he will learn the precise use and import of terms.[39]

In the context of an editorial on the Jewish holiday of Passover that appeared in the March 26, 1861, edition of the Chicago Tribune, *Rabbis Wise of Cincinnati and Raphall of New York were criticized for their anti-Republican and proslavery views. The unknown writer claimed that these two "pro-slaver divines" were notable exceptions to the vast majority of American Jews "who love freedom."*

In a fiery rejoinder to the Chicago editorial published in the Israelite *on April 5, 1861, the pro-Democrat Wise vigorously denied he was proslavery, but he also insisted that the Republicans were not friends of the Jews. As we have just seen, the rabbi had recently told his readers to ignore Lincoln's allusion to America as a Christian nation. In Wise's editorial response to the* Chicago Tribune, *Wise charges Lincoln with deliberately "forgetting" America's Jewish citizenry by contending that a common faith in "Christianity" could hold the nation together. As further proof of the Republican Party's disrespect for American Jewry, Wise lambastes the new Lincoln administration for failing to give "one single office to an Israelite."*[40]

The Jewish Passover

An editorial from the *Chicago Tribune*

March 26, 1861

Today, the 15th day of Nissan, according to Jewish chronology, the Israelites all over the world celebrate a truly abolition holiday—their Passah, or Passover. This day is kept in memory of the deliverance of the Israelites out of the Egyptian slavery, and though more than 3,000 years have passed since that event, by which the Hebrew nation was born, still today the Israelites praise every year the Lord most fervently for such deliverance; and, on the evenings of these holidays every Jewish family is

assembled in its respective house in festive circle, and by hymns and songs express their thanks for being freemen. Taking the history of their people, and considering further, that still, in many parts of our globe, their co-religionists are oppressed, deprived of their natural rights, and looked upon as an inferior race, it is no wonder that the bulk of our Jewish fellow-citizens belong to the anti-slavery party, and fight in the ranks of the Republicans. They consider it their duty to accelerate the arrival of the time when *every* chain of bondage is broken, and *all* mankind celebrate their great Passah. True, the Jewish Synagogue in America is also blessed with some pro-slavery divines, just as well as the Christian churches. But, happily, such abnormalities as Rev. Dr. Wise of Cincinnati, and Rev. Dr. Raphall of New York, are scarce amongst our Israelites, and are the exception to the rule.[41]

Isaac M. Wise's reply to the editorial from the Chicago Tribune

The *Chicago Tribune* of March 26 in an article headed "The Jewish Passover," did not complete the sentence: the antithesis was forgotten altogether, and we must write it down for gentlemen with the expectation to complete that subject. You must continue that article thus: "Therefore Abraham Lincoln in his inaugural said: 'Intelligence, patriotism, Christianity, etc., are still competent to adjust in the best way all our present difficulty,' forgetting altogether his Jewish compatriots."]—Therefore Senator [Henry] Wilson[42] of Massachusetts said: This country "gives equality of rights EVEN to that race who stoned the prophets and crucified the Redeemer of the world," and did not remember the patriotic supporters of the *Chicago Tribune*.—Therefore the *Boston Transcript* and other Republican organs hurl disgrace on the *Israelite*, forgetting the great devotion of the *Tribune* friends.—Therefore the present government which, as it appears from all transactions, being constituted only to make officers and divide the spoils among the sons of the Philistines has not given one single office to an Israelite, say not to one of all those whom the *Chicago Tribune* compliments.—Therefore "but we shall say no more, we know you and the world knows you."] Please add this to your article in order to complete it, and do not drag us before the public through your sheet.[43]

In June 1864, the number of lives lost in Civil War battles overwhelmed and appalled the nation. Ulysses S. Grant sacrificed nearly 64,000 lives over the course of a six-week period in May and June 1864. The public had serious doubts that the war could be won, and thousands called on their government to negotiate a peace. Copperhead Democrats were determined to defeat Lincoln in November, and by August of that year, even Lincoln began to believe he was likely to lose his bid for a second term.

The editorial below sheds light on the gloomy atmosphere that prevailed during this time of despair and doubt. Like so many of his contemporaries, Wise had had his fill of "this terrible chaos." He desperately longed for "the blessings of union and peace," but it seemed to so many Americans that their politicians and their government had let them down. Only God, Wise confessed, knew how all of this would end.

This is a powerfully instructive editorial, because it illustrates the inscrutability of the future. In August 1864, Wise deeply resented "the blunders of [the nation's] military leaders" and Abraham Lincoln's "thousand and one demonstrations of imbecility." Eight months later, Wise would memorialize Lincoln as "the chosen banner-bearer of our people [and] the Messiah of

this country."[44]

The Situation

August 19, 1864

If God in His infinite mercy should, as once he called into the dark chaos "let there be light," call this chaos of political opinions, pervent [*sic*] passions, horrid bloodshed and devastation, into this chaos of misery and affliction—"Be united!" how the deadly arms would sink from the hands of enraged combatants; how the thunders of cannons would suddenly cease, and the voice of song and joy be heard again; how cheerfully and soothingly the tidings of peace and union would sound from ocean to ocean, re-echo from every hamlet of this large country, and bring gladness home to every heart. How millions of people would shout with joy, if once more the sun should rise over a united country, and the armies beating their swords into plaugh-shares [*sic*], return home, each, to the cheerful hearth of domestic happiness. What a blessing to this country and to the world, it would be, if we should hear of joyous feasts in the place of carnage and conflagrations; if the telegraph informs us daily of the progress of science, art, industry and humanity, in place of the progress of armies! Not even those who, by official positions, family connections, or contract chances are becoming millionaires; not even the dupes of the men in power and legions led by burning passions, dare gainsay the great blessings of union and peace, or the calamity of war, hatred and disunion. All agree on this point; still, unless God in His infinite mercy calls into this terrible chaos "Be united!" no earthly power can heal our wounds, silence our raging passions, or give us back the blessings of union and peace; because we live in the land of extreme factions. God only can help us, no man and no class of men can.

Two factions, the one holding slavery to be a divine institution and the basis of civilized society, and the other considering it intolerable, disgraceful and outrageous—two extremes hurled the country into this abyss of destruction, and both factions are as mad, unscrupulous, reckless and fanatic to day after a million of men were buried or crippled, as they were ten years ago, when either of them was considered as harmless fanatics. The extremes are still as extreme as they were, and sway the scepter of power as they did. A man must either hate every man, woman and child in the rebellious states, or he must worship them as demigods; he must either speak of exterminating them and beg their pardon, in order to belong to the one or the other faction. Either he must rejoice over the defeat of our armies and pray for their destruction, or he must blindly admire the blunders of our military leaders and shout Hosanah to Abraham Lincoln and his thousand and one demonstrations of imbecility, in order to gratify one or the other faction. Either one must believe the Negro was created to be a beast of burden to others, or you must say, he is just as good as you are; in order to gratify your neighbors. Either you must shout the union without slavery or none, or you must say slavery first and liberty then in order to belong to this or that faction. There is no medium way, the factions, the extremes are as mad today as they ever were, the voice of moderate and considerate men is cried down. God alone can heal us of our madness.[45]

2. ISAAC LEESER PUBLISHES A LETTER FROM A CONCERNED JEWISH FATHER

Isaac Leeser, although not formally ordained as a rabbi, functioned in that capacity. He was an extremely knowledgeable lay leader, and he became a pioneering religious leader in Philadelphia. In contrast to Wise, who was an ardent religious reformer, Leeser sought to perpetuate traditional Jewish practice in an American setting. Toward this goal, Leeser worked as an author, translator, editor, and publisher of a journal titled the Occident and American Jewish Advocate.[46]

In January 1863, Leeser published a letter he had received from one of his subscribers, an immigrant Jewish farmer named Bernhard Behrend (1793–1865). Behrend was deeply disturbed about a general order Lincoln promulgated on November 15, 1862, "Respecting the Observance of the Sabbath Day in the Army and Navy." In this order, Lincoln declared that it was the sacred right of "Christian soldiers and sailors" to observe their Sabbath, and as commander-in-chief, he wanted "Sunday labor in the Army and Navy [to] be reduced to the measure of strict necessity."[47] *According to Leeser, "Jewish editors throughout the country [took] due notice of the proclamation of the President of the United States."*

Behrend, whose son Adajah Behrend (1841–1932) was in the Union army, promptly dashed off a letter of complaint to President Lincoln.[48] *Reminding the president that "according to the Declaration of Independence and according to the constitution of the United States, the people of the United States is not a Christian people," the upset father asked Lincoln to issue a subsequent order granting his son—as well as Seventh Day Baptists—the right to observe the Sabbath on the seventh day. "Now I stand before you as your namesake Abraham stood before God Almighty," Behrend emoted; "I do not want [my son]…dragged either to the stake or the church to observe the Sunday as a Sabbath."*

Although there is no record of Lincoln having responded to Behrend's letter, many years later his son Adajah, who became a highly regarded physician, claimed that in 1863 a general order was issued permitting Jews to be furloughed over the High Holy Days.[49]

Behrend's letter to Lincoln is reproduced below together with most of Leeser's prefatory remarks. Although Leeser noted he did not entirely agree with Behrend's style of expression, he firmly concurred with Behrend's fundamental point: America was not a Christian nation, and the government should not favor the religion of the majority over that of the minority. The editor of the Occident and American Jewish Advocate, *Leeser opined, should not be "placed in a position inferior to that of the Christian."*

Excerpts from "Are We Equals in This Land?"

December 4, 1862

This question obtrudes itself very often on our attention in spite of the most callous indifference to the possession of office by Israelites. Our readers have been often informed incidentally by us that we would look on with perfect equanimity were never a public position conferred on an Israelite in the army, navy, or civil life; for this depends on the relative position as regards numbers and influence, even more than on qualification or talents. Besides which, the men who are called to exercise public trusts think themselves generally absolved from all religious bonds, and transgress the divine precepts as though they had not been written down for the guidance of our conduct. It is moreover notorious that both here and elsewhere no sooner is a Jew dressed up "in little brief authority," than straightways he fancies himself elevated above his fellows, and is taller by a head than all his former companions and relatives: he is a new man and he hardly recognises himself in his new fashion. There now and then have been

exceptions, but they only prove the rule; humility is now as always beautiful to Israel.

While therefore we should not utter a complaint if no Jewish names should encumber the lists of the various departments, or offices of whatever kind, save and alone in medical and academical [*sic*] positions: we cannot consent to have any disqualification fastened on us for the sake of our opinions, which do not attach themselves to our fellow citizens of other persuasions for the sake of their respective creeds. Offices may be withheld, though harshly, simply because they who bestow them choose not to confer them on us; it may be against equity and fairness, but it is not against any legal claim which we can set up; yet it is something very different when our personal rights are abridged while we never can have placed them without our consent in the safe keeping of others; wherefore no one has any right, in any conceivable manner, to abridge or to take them away from us.

…If for instance it is asserted that the minority of a community must not labor on a certain day in a manner which could confer no possible personal injury on their neighbors, solely because these choose to believe that work on that day is sinful, it says simply that the few who find no wrong in their contemplated action, which is supposed either not injurious or may be even beneficial to others, must forego their purpose, to please the sentiment of those who pay no deference whatever to the convictions of the former. Is this equality?—By what natural right, which only has to yield to the peace of society, can it be made apparent that I am bound to yield to my neighbor in a matter in which he would scout the idea of paying the least deference to my prejudices, convictions, sentiments, opinions, or whatever you may call them? I may yield my possessions from charity to individuals; the State may take my means for its support or defence equally with the possessions of others, because all this is needed for the general good, to which all must contribute as a simple matter of right; but sentiments and acts springing from them cannot be claimed or yielded, as the State cannot have an equitable claim to decide which are proper and which are not.

When therefore the constitution of the United States prohibits the imposition of any religious test, it meant evidently to prevent any part, however large, of the inhabitants of the country to make their religion a concern of the State, by which any one might think himself abridged in his right to think and act in matters which have reference to himself only in his relation to the Creator, but which do not prevent all others to pursue a similar course with respect to their conscientious convictions. It surprises us therefore, that people have by degrees learned to acquiesce in the gradual enforcement of Sunday-laws and similar enactments, as though they were matters which belong to the civil government of the State; when it is evident that Israelites are thereby placed in a position inferior to that of the Christian. We do not say that the latter should not keep the Sunday sacred, if they are so minded, any more than we would find fault with Mahomedans, if there be any in the country, for going to their Mosque on Friday, and fasting through the month of Ramadan. It is certainly within the limit of their reserved rights; they do no injury to the State thereby, and no one individual has the least pretension to complain that they act differently from him. But with this privilege of doing as they please, their claim to protection for their opinion ceases; they must by the same law under which they take shelter, we mean that of equality, let every other person go his own way unmolested. They have no business to be worried or offended if one or many not sharing their convictions do what they will not practise; for there is no

equitable tribunal before whom the parties could appear and have the question settled how far one must abstain from wounding his neighbor's feelings, for which he has no sympathy. The Christian may therefore keep his Sunday without asking the Jew's permission; but so may the latter do with his Sabbath without being justly amenable to the other. And still, every opportunity is seized to gratify the Christian's scruples at the expense of the Jew; a thousand safeguards are thrown around the Sunday to protect those who observe it against all inconvenience liable to arise from their abstaining from work, while everything is done to make the observance of the Seventh day burdensome to the Jew. Is this equality? Or are the rights of the minority of no importance in the eyes of the law-makers and the law-dispensers? But if this be so, we would ask, What use there can be in constitutional guaranties? Were they made to offer to the world a beautiful system in theory, the practice under which should be like that of Europe, which has no written fundamental law springing from the popular will?

The matter is worthy of our earnest attention, and we are pleased to learn that the Jewish editors throughout the country have taken due notice of the proclamation of the President of the United States, wherein he orders the strict observance of the Sunday in the army and navy, while the Sabbath is not even alluded to, in order to dispense thereon Israelites from unnecessary work, such as standing sentinel, while they could exchange their duties with one who felt no scruples for working on that day. For our part we should have passed the matter in silence, had we not received the subjoined from an old correspondent with the request to insert it; we did not think it proper to refuse compliance, although the petition contains a few passages which we do not approve of, and which will strike the reader at first sight. The complaint however is just, and should have met with a prompt redress, of which we have not heard as yet through the usual channels. While thus we present the remonstrance of Mr. Behrend, we thought it proper to append a few remarks of our own, if it be but only to show that we feel a deep interest in the maintenance of the rights of conscience guaranteed in the fundamental law of the land, which are often nevertheless violated, for instance in the late thanksgiving proclamation of the Governor of Pennsylvania, who in recommending that people should “especially pray to God to give to Christian churches the grace to hate the thing which is evil,” &c, actually excluded Israelites from participating in the observance of the day. We deemed it useless to complain through the press of this forgetfulness of our presence in the commonwealth, as we had done so on several previous occasions, only to find the offence again and again repeated. But when the same thing strikes others no less than us, we may fairly join our voice to theirs, in the hopes of sooner or later succeeding in having the matter put at rest by acknowledging our equality on all fitting occasions.

To His Excellency the President of the United States

By your order of the 16th day of November, 1862, you recommend that the officers and men of the army shall observe the Sabbath and do no work on Sunday, because we are a Christian people. But according to the Declaration of Independence and according to the constitution of the United States, the people of the United States is not a Christian people, but a free, sovereign people with equal rights, and each and every citizen of the United States has the right and liberty to live according to his own consciousness [*sic*] in religious matters, and no one religious denomination, be it a majority or

minority of the people, can have a privilege before the other under this our beloved constitution.

Now by the order of your Excellency you give the privilege to those officers and men in the army who by their religious creed do observe the Sunday as a holy day and a day of rest; but you make no provision for those officers and men in the army who do not want to observe the Sunday as a holy day, (as for instance those Christians called the Seventh-day Baptists and the Jews, who observe the Saturday as a holy day and a day of rest,) that they may enjoy the same privilege as those who observe the Sunday as a holy day, as well as for the heathen or the so called infidels, who do not want to celebrate either the Sunday or the Saturday as a Sabbath, but choose perhaps some other day as a day of rest.

Now I stand before you as your namesake Abraham stood before God Almighty in days of yore, and asked, "Shall not the Judge of all earth do justice?" so I ask your Excellency, the first man and President of all the United States, Shall you not do justice? Shall you not give the same privilege to a minority of the army that you give to the majority of it? I beseech you to make provision, and to proclaim in another order, that also all those in the army who celebrate another day as the Sunday may be allowed to celebrate that day which they think is the right day according to their own conscience; and this will be exactly lawful, as the Constitution of the United States ordains it, and at the same time it will be exactly according to the teaching of the Bible, as recorded in Leviticus xix. 18: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

I gave my consent to my son, who was yet a minor, that he should enlist in the United States army; I thought it was his duty, and I gave him my advice to fulfill his duty as a good citizen, and he has done so. At the same time I taught him also to observe the Sabbath on Saturday, when it would not hinder him from fulfilling his duty in the army. Now I do not want that he shall be dragged either to the stake or the church to observe the Sunday as a Sabbath. Your Excellency will observe in this my writing that I am not very well versed in the English language, and if there should be found a word which is not right, pardon it, and never such a word shall be construed so as if I would offend your Excellency or the people; for I love my country, the Constitution, and the Union, and I try to be always a loyal citizen.

I remain, respectfully, your most obedient servant and fellow citizen,

B[ernhard] Behrend

Narrowsburg, Sullivan Co. N.Y. Dec. 4, 1862[50]

3. RABBI MORRIS J. RAPHALL'S CRITICAL THANKSGIVING DAY PRAYER

On March 30, 1863, Abraham Lincoln issued yet another proclamation that urged the nation to mark a "Day of National Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer" thirty days later on April 30.[51] *In its coverage of the somber day's activities, the* Jewish Messenger *of New York City observed: "It was very evident that less respect was manifested for the recommendation of the Executive, than has heretofore been characteristic of Gothamites. One very large denomination omitted to notice the day; among citizens generally, there was a less cordial and hearty recognition of the*

necessity of national prayer and humiliation."[52]

Despite the lack of interest in the general community, the Jewish community of New York dutifully complied with Lincoln's request. The following week, the local Jewish press published a number of the rabbinical addresses that were delivered on the occasion. As we see from the following document, Rabbi Morris J. Raphall of Bene Yeshurun Congregation reflected the cheerless mood that had overtaken a nation weary of bloodshed and strife. His rhetorical question was the same as that of his colleague Isaac M. Wise: When would the bloodletting stop, and when would peace return? There was no answer to this query, because reasonable leaders —"the best men,/i north and south"—had been "driven" from public service and the reins of power "had fallen into the hands of demagogues, fanatics, and a partisan press."

The prominent Washingtonian Adolphus S. Solomons has recorded that he once helped Raphall obtain a personal audience with Lincoln on a National Day of Humiliation and Fasting —presumably a day other than the one that Lincoln proclaimed on April 30, 1863. Solomons recollected that on that occasion, Raphall wanted Lincoln to promote his son Alfred to the rank of lieutenant. "After Lincoln had heard the Rabbi's request he blurted out, 'As God's minister is it not your first duty to be at home today to pray with your people for the success of our arms, as is being done in every loyal church throughout the North, East and West?'" As Solomons recollected, Raphall was embarrassed by the question, so he assured Lincoln that his assistant was "doing that duty."

"Ah," said Lincoln, "that is different." After agreeing to promote his son, Lincoln supposedly told Raphall—with a smile—"Now doctor, you can go home and do your own praying."[53]

According to the newspaper report reproduced below, on this National Day of Humiliation and Fasting, Raphall was in his pulpit and illustrated his point about the nation's moral decline by noting that the U.S. government had refused to recompense the heirs of a Jew residing in Philadelphia who in the darkest hours of the War of Independence had devoted his vast wealth to the service of his adopted country. Raphall was probably referring to the family of Haym Solomon (1740–85), a Jewish Revolutionary War hero, whose family had been trying to recoup Solomon's personal funds that had been loaned to the fledgling U.S. government.

The National Fast Day

May 8, 1863

The Rev. Dr. Raphall then ascended the pulpit, taking his text from Nehemiah IX:35, which he rendered: "In their dominions, in all the great prosperity Thou didst bestow upon them, and throughout the large and rich land which Thou gavest them, they did not serve Thee, neither turned they from their evil deeds."

> Hitherto the government, in the full pride of national prosperity had deemed one annual day of public thanksgiving a sufficient expression of gratitude; but not that evil times had befallen them, they came again and again, and called upon the people to weary heaven with fruitless professions of a penitence they did not feel, and a humility they did not practice. These proclamation-fast-days, on which no one fasted, were too much like those denounced by the prophet Isaiah. The parallel between the people of Israel and that of the United States was most striking.
>
> All the earthly blessings which as Nehemiah confessed, had been

possessed and abused by ancient Israel, had equally, though a more extensive scale, been possessed and perverted by the U.S., for “they served not God.” His hearers need not remind him of the many steeple shops,—as the Puritans called them—that every where met the eye. But these brick-and-mortar-witnesses of sectarian rancour, afford no proof that within their precincts God is served. The prophet Hosea tells us that tho' “Israel forgot their Maker, they built temples,” and the parallel holds good in the U.S.[54] While in some of these churches the torch of civil war had been kindled; while in others, bloodshed and havoc had been preached; while each church claimed for itself perfection, and consigned all others to perdition, while this world with its sinful passions and vile selfishness reigned paramount in every one of them, it was plain that God was not served in any of them. The only subject on which the fanatic and ever-rangling teachers in these strongholds of spiritual pride could agree was to hate and revile us, to persecute and falsely to slander the dispersed ones of Israel. If we leave the churches and enter the daily walks of life we shall find that “like priest like people.” Every one serves, but not God. It is assumed that the Almighty Creator has, if not quite abdicated, at least delegated a great portion of His power to the almighty dollar. In this service every house is a church, every heart an altar, and every worshipper sincere. Accordingly they do not turn from their evil deeds. The two greatest early blessings Providence has placed within the reach of mankind, education and freedom, had both been perverted by the people on whom they had been so fully bestowed. Education in the U.S. taught neither respect for free institutions nor patriotism nor even common honesty. The simplest precept to the individual, “Honor thy father and mother” was by American education, tested by its priests, perverted into “old fogyism”; the highest duty of the community, a pure administration of justice, was by American education perverted into venal justice, partisan justice, and denial of justice.

As a proof of the latter, we had the action of Congress which evaded the payment of a very large sum of money, long and justly due to the heirs of a Jew residing in Philadelphia who in the darkest hours of the war of independence had devoted his vast wealth to the service of his adopted country.—At the time of his death the country was not yet in a condition to pay him. Since then, it has grown rich and powerful. Millions have been squandered; millions had been pilfered; but tho' the claim of his heirs had been repeatedly examined by committees of both houses of Congress, who reported favorably and recommended immediate payment,—not one cent had ever been repaid.

The abuses of freedom were even worse than those of education. While the best men, north and south, had been driven to stand aloof, public affairs had fallen into the hands of demagogues, fanatics, and a partisan press. The consequence was an atrocious and devastating but needless civil war, at which humanity wept, while we must suppress our sympathy.

Dr. Raphall concluded with a fervent prayer.[55]

4. AN EVALUATION OF LINCOLN'S SECOND INAUGURAL ADDRESS

Some have called Lincoln's second inaugural address his "greatest speech"; Frederick Douglass was deeply moved by Lincoln's words, and he told the president his address was a "a sacred effort." In his autobiography, Douglass said the speech was "more like a sermon than like a state paper."[56]

As we see from the following document, at the time Lincoln's address did not meet with universal acclaim. A Washington, D.C., correspondent with the initials "S. W.,"[57] *writing for the* Jewish Messenger, *described the speech as "decidedly Lincoln, original, terse, and an insinuating desire for a joke all over."*

The President's Inaugural Was as Brief as He Is Long

March 17, 1865

Dear Messenger:—Some months have elapsed since I last had the honor of contributing a moiety of news from the capitol of the nation. This being a pleasant, beautiful day (of which, here, we have few), I feel constrained once again to essay, by informing you that the City of Magnificent Distances is, as in the days of yore, watered by Potomac, that here blatent [*sic*] politicians must do congregate, that Mr. Lincoln, late from the West, was, on the fourth day of March, inaugurated Chief Clerk of the people of the United States, that last night we had an Inauguration Ball, which, by the authority of Jenkins and his tribe, was a "*recherché* affair," visited and enjoyed by the President and lady, Vice-President, Cabinet Officers, Diplomatic Corps, members of Congress, representatives from the Army and Navy, civilians, petroleumites, oilites, shoddyites, and gentlemen about town, with their attendant satellites. Admission was ten dollars, and, from the vast number present, the display of toilettes, diamond, &c., there can be no doubt that greenbacks are plenty, gold on the decline, and glorious peace dawning upon us. Remember, this ball was given to benefit the families of soldiers, and the nett [*sic*] balance will make the anecdote of "catching the tartar" very applicable….

The Re-inauguration, in consequence of bad weather, it having rained incessantly for forty-eight hours, was a small affair, the President's Inaugural was as brief as he is long, and evinced more of the priest than the statesman. It was decidedly Lincoln, original, terse, and an insinnating [*sic*] desire for a joke all over: "The rebels have prayed, so have we, it is yet doubtful whose have been answered."…

I am, as ever, truly yours, S. W.[58]

5. LINCOLN'S CONDUCT HAS BEEN INVARIABLY STRAIGHTFORWARD

On January 17, 1862, New York City's Jewish Messenger *began to publish an ongoing series of firsthand accounts of life in the Union army, written by a Jewish soldier. The column, titled "Sketches from the Seat of War," appeared in nine installments, with the last edition of "sketches" appearing on March 14, 1862. The sketches were written by an unidentified Jewish soldier who wanted to give the paper's readers a personalized account of his experiences and thoughts over the first several months of the Civil War.*

In the third installment in the series, the Jewish soldier shared his opinion of President Lincoln, whom he clearly admired. The soldier expressed broad sympathy for Lincoln's political struggles. The president had barely taken up the reins of office when he was confronted with

open rebellion and civil war. In spite of these challenges, Lincoln's conduct was genuinely admirable. "Under all these trying circumstances," the soldier opined, lesser men would have resorted to "humiliating concessions…duplicity or treachery."

In analyzing why Lincoln became so popular with the enlisted soldiers in the Union army, one historian pointed to the president's remarkable accessibility.[59] *The Jewish soldier's testimony lends additional credence to this contention. The writer saw Lincoln with his own eyes when he was reviewing the troops. "You will always find him neat [and] civil," the soldier wrote, "and,—if common report be true—always ready for a joke." These sketches exemplify how Lincoln, through conversation, intelligence, and good humor, earned the support, affection, and admiration of his troops.*

Excerpts from "Sketches from the Seat of War"

January 31, 1862

The great issues dependent on this conflict, will give prominent place in History to all those who are now directing the affairs of the nation, and either cover them with glory, or disgrace them in the eyes of posterity, in the same proportion as success or failure will result from their plans and efforts. Foremost among these, is of course, the President Abraham Lincoln, held forth on the one side as the cause of the Rebellion, and on the other as the champion of constitutional government, but in reality representing before his election, nothing more than the principles of a majority in the free states on the subject of slavery, though, after having been constitutionally elected, all loyal citizens of other parties, as well as of his own, look upon him as the chief magistrate of the Republic, whose authority could not be questioned without giving a deathblow to the Union and the Constitution. Having been raised by the whims of fortune from the humble position of a country lawyer, to the most exalted office it is in the power of the American nation to confer, he no sooner hears the gladdening news of his election, than the diabolical spirit of discord and disunion, overshadowing the land, dispels from his mind the pleasing anticipations of a peaceful and harmonious administration. Before he is enabled to wield the power of the government, he sees the national difficulties encouraged and aggravated by a traitorous administration, a rebel government, obeyed by seven states, and enlisting the sympathies of five others,—forts and national vessels freely given up, mints and other public property appropriated by lawless politicians; and when at last, he sets out to assume the reins of government, the assassin's knife is whetted to slay him, whilst a rebel force are lurking in Virginia to seize the capital. Under all these trying circumstances, which a coward would have me[t] with humiliating concessions, and a villain with duplicity or treachery, Mr. Lincoln's conduct, as well as professions, has been uniformly, and invariably straight-forward, exhibiting, on all occasions, an unwavering honesty of purpose, and integrity, earnestness and patriotic devotion, as well as moral courage and firmness, which no failure can ever tarnish nor reverses obliterate from the records of History. His political opponents admit this, and his friends claim nothing more for him.

Like Saul of old, he is head and shoulders taller than his brethren, so that he has actually to stoop when he enters into conversation with ordinary mortals, and it is this, more than his figure, that gives him such an awkward appearance. He is by no means a bad-looking man, nor is his hair uncombed, not his dress disorderly, as most people seems [*sic*] to infer from the wretched pictures exhibited in the stores. Whether you

meet him taking his morning walk, or at a *levee*, you will always find him neat, civil, and,—if common report be true—always ready for a joke. Those that have known him in his social relations, speak of him as a kind father, a too indulgent husband, and a sincere friend.[60]

6. "I AM NOW A STRONG ABOLITIONIST"

Many Union soldiers did not understand the horrors of slavery until they saw the institution with their own eyes while fighting in the South. Such was the case of Colonel Marcus M. Spiegel (1829–64). Spiegel, who served in the 67th and 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantry regiments, wrote detailed letters to his wife, Caroline ("Cary"). More than 150 of these letters survived, and they constitute a rich resource shedding light on the everyday experiences and thoughts of a Union soldier.

In late 1863 and early 1864, when the 120th was stationed near Plaquemine, Louisiana, not too far from Baton Rouge, Spiegel had ample opportunity to observe slavery firsthand. Writing to his wife on January 22, 1864, Spiegel confessed, "I have learned and seen more of what the horrors of Slavery was than I ever knew." After seeing the "peculiar institution"[61] with his own eyes, Spiegel understood Lincoln's decision to emancipate the slaves, and he informed his wife he would never again cast his vote for anyone who supported slavery.[62]

Writing a month later—ironically, on Lincoln's birthday—Spiegel's views on slavery had obviously become more resolute, and he informed his wife, "I am now a strong abolitionist."

Excerpts from Marcus Spiegel's letter to his wife, Caroline

Plaquemine La Feby 12/64
My dear good and kind Cary!

Yesterday I received your very good and loving letter of the 22nd ultimo and I have been joyous ever since; I say like you this is the first real good and lovely letter I have received since I left home; the others all were as blue that they made everything look black to me, but thank God "Richard is himself again."[63]

…I have been to see several large Planters and find them very hospitable; they live like princes, are proud and aristocratic, but exceedingly pleasant and agreeable to the Federal Officers. Slavery has been abolished in Louisiana[64] and they are just as keen to get the negro to work for pay as they used to while slaves, and I am satisfied in twenty five years from now, the negro will be an educated, well to do laborer and the white man none the worse. This you know I see from my own experience; I am now a strong abolitionist, but I want laws and regulations by which the negro must be made to work and educated and the present Master be compelled to do it. Slavery is gone up whether the War ends to day or in a year and there is no use crying over it; it has been an awful institution. I will send you the "black code" of Louisiana[65] some of these days and I am satisfied it will make you shudder.

Now understand me when I say I am a strong abolitionist, I mean that I am not so for party purposes but for humanity sake only, out of my own conviction, for the best Interest of the white man in the south and the black man anywhere.[66] I find some few large slaveholders concur in my opinion; of course the major part of them would prefer the old System. The poor white man, the mechanic and laborer in this country however, find that a new era is dawning for them in this Country (South); herethefore they were

almost worse [off] then the negro slave here.

…As long as the war looks so important and call after call for men, it seems as though a soldier and Patriot could have no rest except in the Army. I have an excellent Regiment, my men almost worship me, and if I were to resign to day, one half of my officers would also and perhaps demoralize the Regiment which could be doing the Government more harm then [*sic*] my humble efforts perhaps ever done it good; but never mind, I do not believe you really want me to resign. I think you are really proud of your Soldier man, only you do not like to let on.

Good bye. God bless you, my love to the children and all friends.

Ever your true
Marcus

7. A HEBREW TRIBUTE TO LINCOLN

In 1865, Isaac Goldstein,[67] *a Jewish businessman, composed an original Hebrew poem exulting in Lincoln's achievements. The poem is an acrostic; each line of the poem (which is read from right to left) begins with a different Hebrew letter so that the name "Abraham Lincoln"—in Hebrew—appears vertically on the right.*

In Jewish liturgical tradition, the acrostic was a popular genre that can be traced back to the biblical era. Goldstein, a Hebrew aficionado, seemed to have modeled his tribute to Lincoln after Psalm 145 (he also borrowed Hebrew verses from Psalms 84, 144, and 115). Traditional Jews recite Psalm 145 daily, and they would undoubtedly be familiar with Goldstein's allusions in both form and content.

POEMS

Who Is Like Unto Thee, O Lincoln

by Isaac Goldstein, *the Levite*

Acrostic

On Abraham Lincoln, Assassinated Nisan 18th, 5625.

רחם לבי דבר טוב אומר אני מעשי למלך :

א שריך לינקאלען מי כמוכה
ב ין מלכים ושרים מאוד נשאת ·
ר בות פעלת בנפש נמוכה ·
ה נך ליחיד בארץ דמית ·
מ י ברוזנים כלינקאלען ומי יתהלל כמוהו :

ל ך שם גם בגבורים ·
י מינך עשה חיל ·
נ גדם. חגרת חרב חללים ·
ק שתך דרכת יומם וליל ·
א ב אחד בראנו · אמרת ·
ל כן דרור השמעת פקודיך ·
ע ם הכושים לחירות גאלת ·
נ צח יפארו ויברכו שמיך ·

מי ברוזנים כלינקאלען ומי יתפאר כמוהו
נאדיק גאלדשטיין הלוי

The above is a reproduction of a poem, in its original Hebrew, as it appeared in the *Jewish Messenger*, May 26, 1865.

Happy art thou, Lincoln, who is like
unto thee
Among kings and princes thou art exalted.
Much thou didst with an humble spirit.
Thou art like a unique person in the land.
Who among princes is like Lincoln?
Who shall be praised like him?

Thou hast also a name among heroes!
Thy right hand has achieved prowess
against them.
Thou hast girded on the sword of the
slain.
Thou hast drawn the bow by night
and by day.
One Father has created us, thou hast said;
Therefore thou hast proclaimed
Freedom in thy land.
The black people thou hast redeemed
unto Freedom:
Forever they will praise and bless
thy name.

Who among princes is like Lincoln and
who can be praised like him?

(Translated from the Hebrew)

Isaac Goldstein's Hebrew "Acrostic" appeared in the *Jewish Messenger*, May 26, 1865, p. 165, and was republished in Philip Goodman, comp. and ed., *Lincoln's Birthday: Program Material for Jewish Groups* (New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, Jewish Center Division, 1953), 53. The acrostic, probably written prior to Lincoln's assassination, lauds Lincoln for his courage and valor and for freeing the slaves. Courtesy JWB Jewish Chaplains Council.

Although it is impossible to date the poem with certainty, the fact that the acrostic makes no reference to Lincoln's death implies that the poem may very well have been written to celebrate the surrender of the Confederacy and the Union's victory. By the time it appeared, however, the president had been assassinated, and Goldstein's poem was published as a postmortem elegy.[68]

8. "GOD GRANT SO MAY ALL OUR FOES PERISH!"

The year that Lincoln was assassinated, Eleanor H. Cohen (1841–74) was a twenty-six-year-old Jewish woman living in Columbia, South Carolina. Cohen had begun keeping a diary only a few months earlier, in February 1865. On April 30, 1865, Cohen wrote her private thoughts about Lincoln's murder into the pages of her diary. The young woman was an ardent patriot of the Confederacy, and as far as she was concerned, Lincoln deserved the punishment he had received.

It is extremely rare to find such sentiments preserved in writing. In this instance, Cohen was confiding in herself; she assumed no one else would read her words. If Cohen felt as she did about Lincoln, there must have been many others who shared this same point of view. The majority of these people, however, did not preserve such opinions in written form.

Cohen's entry on June 2, 1865, is equally noteworthy. Her slaves had chosen freedom and left her; Cohen still blamed the deceased Lincoln. She believed in the "institution of slavery," and she did not want to see it abolished.

Excerpts from Eleanor Cohen's diary

April 30 and June 2, 1865

April 30th: Politically I have much to say. No peace yet agreed upon, but negociations [*sic*] are being carried on, and people generally think peace will follow. Abram Lincoln was assassinated in the Washington theatre by a man who exclaimed: "Death to traitors; Virginia is avenged!" So our worst enemy is laid low, and [Secretary of State William H.] Seward, the arch fiend, was also stabbed, and today we hear the glorious tidings that the Yankee Congress had a row and [Vice President] Andy Jonson [Johnson] was killed. God grant so may all our foes perish! I had a short letter today from Mr. S.,[69] but it told me he was well, and loved me; so I am happy.

In her diary, Eleanor H. Cohen, from Columbia, South Carolina, expressed satisfaction that Lincoln, the South's "foe," had been assassinated. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

June 2d: I cannot but blame myself for my long neglect of this dear old book, but really I have lived in such a whirl that I entirely forgot to note events, important as they are. Peace has come, but, oh, God, what a different peace to the one we prayed for! We are conquered by superior numbers. Sherman and Johns[t]on declared an armistice; since then, the war is over, we know not on what terms.

Slavery is done away with. Our noble [Confederate president] Jeff Davis, as well as all of our great men, are prisoners; even the governors of the several states have been arrested. Confederate money is worthless and greenbacks rule the day. Columbia and all the principal [cities] are garrisoned by Yankees. How it makes my Southern blood boil to see them in our streets! Yes, we are again in the hated Union, and over us again floats the banner that is now a sign of tyranny and oppression. [Andrew] Johnson was not killed and is now President. Sad, sad is the change since the days of [President George] Washington. My brothers are all home after fearful deprivations and hardships. Thank God, they are spared. Poor Josh Moses, the flower of our circle, was killed at Blakely [Alabama, April 1865]. He was a noble man, another martyr to our glorious cause….

Our servants, born and reared in our hands, hitherto devoted to us, freed by Lincoln, left us today. It is a severe trial to mother, and quite a loss to me. Among them went Lavinia, a girl given to me by my grandmother, very handy, and who had promised always to remain with [me] and, when I was married, to go with me. Mr. S. was so pleased; he wrote me to tell her, if she proved faithful, he would take her North and show her [off] as one faithful servant. But she went. She behaved better than most of them; she offered to come to me in town and do anything. She gave me notice and showed regret at parting. This is one of the fruits of war. I, who believe in the institution of slavery, regret deeply its being abolished. I am accustomed to have them to wait on me, and I dislike white servants very much….[70]

9. SOME SOUTHERN SYMPATHIZERS CHEERED

Harris Newmark (1834–1916) was born in Löbau in the province of Saxony. He immigrated to the United States in 1853 and soon settled in Los Angeles. A merchant who later in life began to invest in real estate, Newmark was one of the founders of the Los Angeles Jewish community. Toward the end of his life, Newmark wrote his memoirs, which are an invaluable source of information on the history of Jewish life in Los Angeles during the last half of the nineteenth century.

In the following excerpt from Newmark's memoirs, he recollected how some southern sympathizers cheered when they learned of Lincoln's death. His family physician did so, as did a young German-Jewish immigrant named Henry Baer. Newmark's reminiscences confirm that there were unquestionably some instances of "ill-advised exultation" on the part of southern Jews, but most Jews thought such behavior was improper.

Celebrating Lincoln's Assassination in Los Angeles

On the fifteenth of April, my family physician, Dr. John S. Griffin, paid a professional visit to my house on Main Street, which might have ended disastrously for him. While we were seated together by an open window in the dining-room, a man named Kane ran by on the street, shouting out the momentous news that Abraham Lincoln had been shot! Griffin, who was a staunch Southerner, was on his feet instantly, cheering for Jeff Davis. He gave evidence, indeed, of great mental excitement, and soon seized his hat and rushed for the door, hurrahing for the Confederacy. In a flash, I realized that Griffin would be in awful jeopardy if he reached the street in that unbalanced condition, and by main force I held him back, convincing him at last of his folly. In later years the genial Doctor frankly admitted that I had undoubtedly saved him from certain death.

This incident brings to mind another, associated with Henry Baer, whose father, Abraham, a native of Bavaria and one of the earliest tailors here, had arrived from New Orleans in 1854. When Lincoln's assassination was first known, Henry ran out of the house, singing *Dixie* and shouting for the South; but his father, overtaking him, brought him back and gave him a sound whipping[,] an act nearly breaking up the Baer family, inasmuch as Mrs. Baer was a pronounced Secessionist.

The news of Lincoln's assassination made a profound impression in Los Angeles, though it cannot be denied that some Southern sympathizers, on first impulse, thought that it would be advantageous to the Confederate cause. There was, therefore, for the moment, some ill-advised exultation; but this was promptly suppressed, either by the military or by the firm stand of the more level-headed members of the community. Soon even radically-inclined citizens, in an effort to uphold the fair name of the town, fell into line, and steps were taken fittingly to mourn the nation's loss.[71]

10. "NEW YORK IS LITERALLY CLAD IN BLACK"

The reaction of a young Jewish woman named Josephine Phillips (1814–96) to Lincoln's assassination contrasts sharply with the sentiments expressed by southern partisans like Eleanor Cohen and Henry Baer. Phillips was deeply disturbed by the news of Lincoln's assassination, and in a letter she wrote to her brother-in-law, Adolphus S. Solomons, on April 20, 1865, less than a week after Lincoln was killed, she conveyed a sense of her profound grief as well as the great sorrow that enveloped New York.

Josephine's sister and brother-in-law were prominent citizens in the nation's capital. Lincoln associated with the Solomons, and the family was invited to attend White House receptions and various events together with the president. Adolphus and his wife, Rachel, frequently hosted family members in their home, and some of these familial guests wrote down their memories of these special events.[72]

Having met Lincoln personally, Josephine wrote as though her loss was personal. Citing words written by the poet William Cowper (1731–1800), she memorialized Lincoln "with love & veneration for the man 'whose heart was warm whose hands were pure whose doctrine & whose life coincident exhibit lucid proof that he was honest in the sacred cause & to such are rendered more *than mere respect.'"*

Dear Adolphus:

I received your letter last Monday & presume you also got mine containing our mutual sorrow & horror at the sad event that has plunged all in profound grief, *never* in history has *any* event in *any* nation brought forth such real regret, & the loyalty of the people high & low rich & poor is seen mingled with love & veneration for the man "whose heart was warm whose hands were pure whose doctrine & whose life coincident exhibit lucid proof that he was honest in the sacred cause & to such are rendered *more* than mere respect." These lines from Cowper are forcibly brought to my recollection as illustrating much of the character of our lamented President. New York is literally clad in black & it is more rare to see a house without it than with it, from the splendid mansion to the smallest Shanty, even the gates of the poorest black or white display their emblem of sorrow; full well I can imagine how badly you feel it was only last week you wrote me about your being at his house & seeing him come out & request the band to play Dixie, & to-day that he appointed to celebrate our victories, his own funeral takes place. I have not yet recovered from the shock of last Saturday. Yesterday we had shool[73] & a very large assemblage, the services were very solemn, the Tabah[74] was covered with black also the pillars & gallery, to-day we have it again at three o'clock nothing is thought or talked of today *no stores* are opened & the poorest person will not work. I see by the paper the body will be here on Monday,[75] his poor wife & children what a sad change for them! I am truly glad Mr. Seward & son will recover[76] & also that his assassin is arrested, but it seems strange Booth has yet eluded the vigilance of the police, his Mother I hear resides in 19th St. N.Y. & is of course in the greatest affliction, what a villain he is!

People already have changed their opinion regarding the new President & seem to think he will carry out the programme in a great measure of Mr. Lincoln.

I trust this will find you all well. Pa has a cold Beck has suffered considerably with Neuralgia.[77] Pa felt very badly about the news, & I dare say all the children from Ida down were grieved, you remember how he noticed them the last visit I was there to see him with you, his likenesses sell like wildfire, the one I bought on the Carte de visit[e][78] one that he sat last for[79] I gave to Isaac[80] when I first came on & he now has it in his window. I may as well leave off for I can write about nothing else, the late victories are not spoken of. I see by this morning paper Mosby & seven hundred guerillas had surrendered.[81] All send much love to dear Rachel, Mary Jane[82] yourself & kisses to the dear children as ever yours most aff—

Josephine[83]

11. ISAAC M. WISE'S REFLECTIONS ON LINCOLN'S RELIGION

In the following document, which appeared in the April 28, 1865, edition of the German language periodical Die Deborah, *Isaac M. Wise provided his readers with his own reflections on "Lincoln's religion." Just days after Lincoln's death, Wise declared that not only he but three other witnesses as well were present when Lincoln announced he had long believed he had "descended from Jewish parents" and, also, that he even looked Jewish!*[84]

In spite of the fact that the rabbi had never hesitated to criticize Lincoln when he was president—even accusing him on one occasion of being an imbecile—Wise nevertheless heaped praise on Lincoln in his eulogies and described the fallen leader as "the most outstanding hero who determined and controlled the conditions."

Wise implies that Lincoln was a Jewish sojourner. Although it is highly doubtful that anyone will be able to validate Wise's story asserting that Lincoln thought he came from Jewish stock, Wise was thoroughly convinced that Lincoln was never a believing Christian. His religious convictions, Wise implied, were spiritually aligned with Judaism's ancient teachings.

Abraham Lincoln's Religion

Honored readers will find in the *Israelite* two speeches delivered in Cincinnati synagogues on the 19th of this month during memorial services for the slain President of the United States. One speech, to appear next week, was by Dr. Lilienthal, the other by the editor of the *Deborah.*

No poet has ever thought up a more magnificent dramatic topic than the Civil War, lasting four years and ending with the most complete victory of freedom and with the death of the most outstanding hero who determined and controlled the conditions. The impression of this concluding scene (Lincoln's assassination) is so powerful and ineradicable, so moving and profound that no one can forget this great drama of truth. The consequences for history are incalculable. Lincoln's murderer has inflamed the heart of this nation. The fire will consume every trace of slavery and oppression, its flame will flash across the seas to rattle the tottering frames of European politics.

The deceased has rendered an important service to the cause of freedom of religion. As I explained in my sermon, Lincoln maintained before four witnesses, I being one of them, that he believed he was descended from Jewish parents, and he insisted that his face had Jewish features, which was indeed so. In spite of his puritanical piety, which surfaced at times in most poignant expressions, he never in public or in private spoke of a triune God, of a crucified savior, or of anything specifically Christian. He was not baptized, did not belong to any religious denomination and had none of his children baptized or confirmed. The numerous Christian clergymen who, on the 19th of this month, talked about each trait of his character and every action of his life, made no mention of Lincoln's religion. Mr. Chalfant of Cincinnati[85] said in his address: "Of Mr. Lincoln's Christian character, I have said nothing, for I know nothing, but by inference." They all remained silent [on this subject] for the same reason.

A little known clergyman from Illinois, though, recently stated that Lincoln, on being directly asked whether he was a Christian, had replied: "At Gettysburg [after the battle], I was a Christian. I love Jesus," which, in reality, indirectly answers the question in the negative.

There is no need to spell out that this fact will forever stamp the American people with freedom of conscience. The Messrs. Bigoted will do well to refrain from once

more asserting one had to be a Christian to be a good human being and a good citizen. On the 19th of this month they all resorted to Old Testament texts, or compared Lincoln to Old Testament heroes like Moses, Joshua, Samuel and others. What they think of his eternal bliss cannot be ascertained; he was not baptized and believed himself to be of Jewish descent. The American people have canonized him and the bigots remain silent.[86]

9

Memorializing and Judaizing Lincoln

The process of memorializing, dignifying, and ultimately transforming Lincoln into a national icon took place incrementally and over the course of many decades. Historians have noted how the American people's perception of Lincoln has steadily evolved in response to the ever-changing needs, interests, and priorities of the nation. Or, as the distinguished American sociologist Charles Horton Cooley famously observed, “present function, not past” shapes the way in which we perceive significant historical personalities and institutions. Analytical interpretations as to how the “Lincoln legend” evolved over time first began to appear in the early decades of the twentieth century, and historians have continued to identify a wide range of factors that influenced the exaltation of Lincoln's reputation over the course of time.[1]

Most scholars agree that it was the shock and grief over Lincoln's horrific murder that “suddenly lifted [him] into the sky as the folk-hero, the deliverer, and the martyr who had come to save his people and to die for them.” A very real hysteria engulfed the nation in the wake of the president's assassination and his elaborate funeral, and there arose a “collective impulse” to praise and honor the fallen leader. The historian Merrill Peterson has argued that five large themes have contributed to the apotheosis of Abraham Lincoln over time: Lincoln as the savior of the Union, Lincoln as the Great Emancipator, Lincoln as a man of the people, Lincoln as the first American, and Lincoln as the self-made man.[2]

The memorialization of Lincoln began practically from the moment of his death. As soon as Lincoln drew his final breath, Secretary of War Edwin Stanton declared, “Now he belongs to the ages.” As we have already seen, eulogies on Lincoln multiplied, and shortly after the first wave of grief had subsided, the process of memorializing Lincoln's life and career began in earnest. On May 11, 1865—twenty-seven days after the assassination—a National Lincoln Monument Association was formally organized in Springfield, Illinois. The association immediately issued “numerous appeals for aid” and spearheaded a national fundraising drive in order to erect a suitable “Memorial Structure” to honor the memory of the fallen president. The association reached its goal, and in 1874, the Lincoln Memorial in Springfield was dedicated at the Oak Ridge Cemetery.[3]

American Jews participated actively in the fundraising efforts for the Lincoln Memorial Fund, one of the first stages in the ongoing process of Lincoln's beatification. One of Lincoln's Jewish friends, the haberdasher Julius Hammerslough of Springfield, Illinois, was charged with the responsibility of raising funds from the American Jewish community. On May 29, 1865, Hammerslough distributed a circular that he hoped would reach all of the “Hebrew Congregations, Corporations, Associations, Schools and Colleges in the United States.” In his communication to Jewish newspaper publishers like Rabbi Isaac M. Wise of Cincinnati, Hammerslough asked the Jewish community to support what he called “the great and holy work” of the Lincoln Monument Association. It was proper for the Jewish community to contribute to this philanthropic endeavor not merely because it would be a fitting “tribute to the merits of our fallen Chief” but also because it would be seen as an act of “the most grateful remembrance.” He wanted American Jews to join with their fellow citizens and contribute a dollar to the cause.[4]

Appeals for contributions were made in synagogues and in various Jewish organizations, and by the beginning of June 1865, the *Jewish Messenger* proudly advertised the fact that in New York, nearly 100 Jews had already donated to the cause. In Cincinnati, Jews voted on this matter

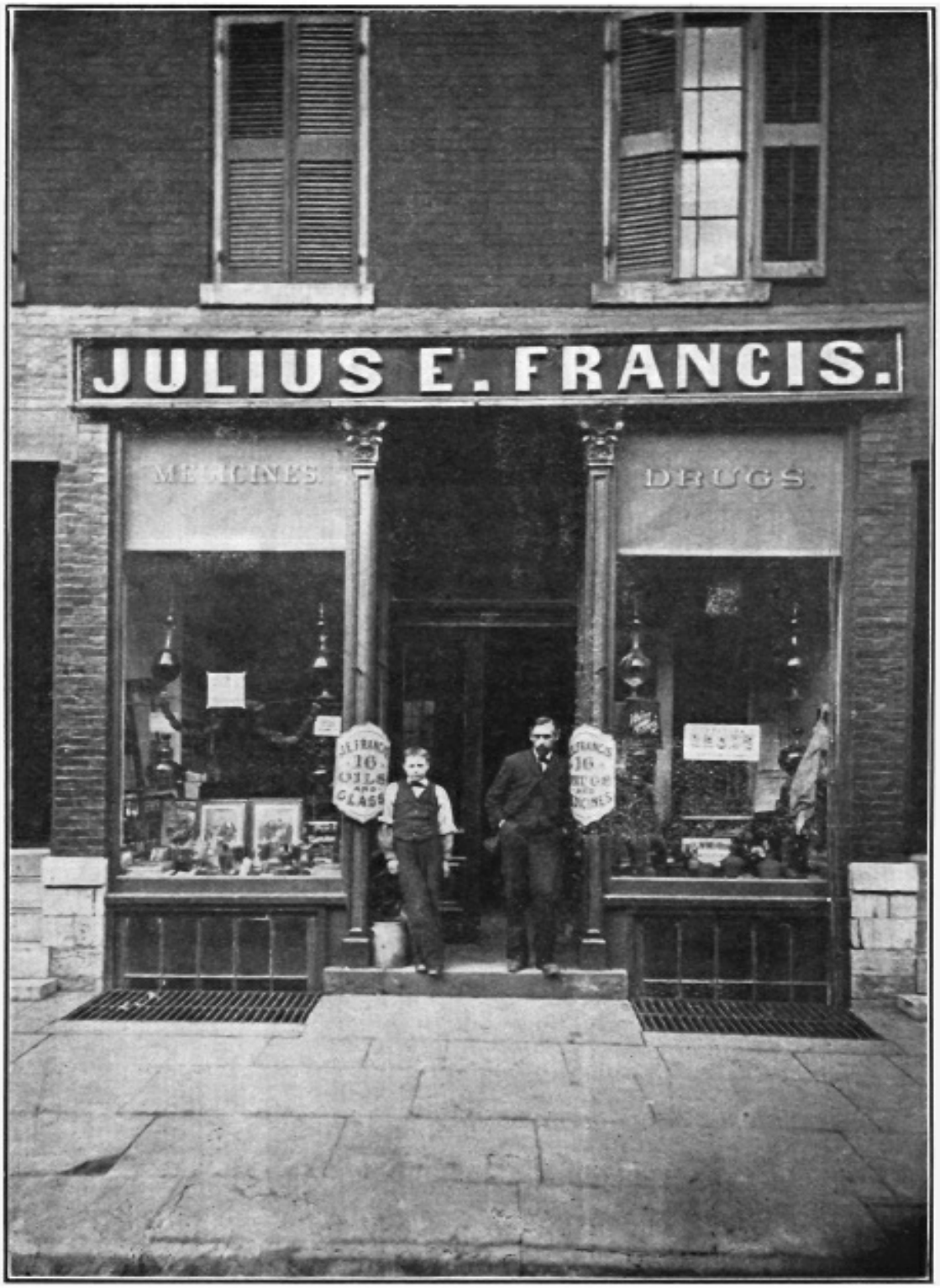
during a “general meeting of the Israelites of Cincinnati” and decided to establish a committee that would raise funds for the Lincoln monument from that city's entire Jewish community.[5]

By the tenth anniversary of Lincoln's death in 1875, communities all across America had dedicated a cornucopia of Lincoln monuments, shrines, statues, state portraits, historical paintings, and prints.[6] In Washington, D.C., for example, the sculptor Lot Flannery (1836–1922) won the commission to produce a life-sized sculpture of Lincoln, which was unveiled by President Andrew Johnson on April 15, 1868. In 1869, the *Washington Times* informed its readers that the state of Illinois marked Lincoln's birthday by decorating his tomb with evergreen wreaths.[7]

It was at this same time that the practice of commemorating Lincoln's birthday began to take root. In Buffalo, a well-to-do drug store owner named Julius E. Francis (1822–81) dedicated the remainder of his life to the cause of preserving and promoting the martyred president's memory. Francis initiated numerous Lincoln memorial projects. First, he wanted the nation to establish a national day of memory for the late president, and in 1874 Francis organized, in Buffalo, the first of seven annual observances of Lincoln's birthday. Each year until his death in 1881, Francis rented a hall, underwrote the fees for speakers, poets, musicians, and essayists, and invited the public to attend the occasion free of charge.[8]

The public's enthusiastic response to Francis's commemorations led to the creation of a “Lincoln Birthday Association” in Buffalo, and Francis petitioned the U.S. Congress on two separate occasions for the establishment of a national Lincoln Birthday holiday. Although these petitions failed to rally Congress, the concept of establishing a holiday honoring Lincoln's birthday may be traced to Francis's early and indefatigable efforts in Buffalo. By 1879—the seventieth anniversary of Lincoln's birth—birthday observances were being held in many cities in the nation.[9]

In addition to the work he did to mark Lincoln's birthday, Francis also pioneered in the establishment of Lincoln memorials and the preservation of Lincolniana. Obsessed with the idea of memorializing Lincoln, Francis gathered so many Lincoln artifacts and relics that, by 1872, a visual display honoring Lincoln's achievements—the “Lincoln Memorial Collection”—was formally dedicated in Buffalo. By the end of the nineteenth century, efforts to collect Lincolniana and Civil War memorabilia intensified. As we will see, many American Jews became prominent collectors of Lincoln memorabilia.[10]



Julius E. Francis, of Buffalo, New York, was dedicated to making Lincoln's birthday a national holiday and founded the Lincoln Birthday Association.
Frank Severance, *The Picture Book of Earlier Buffalo* (Buffalo: Buffalo Historical Society, 1912), 227.

Reconstructing and preserving the story of Lincoln's life went hand in hand with the effort to collect and preserve his personal belongings, his papers, and a record of his life. Soon after Lincoln's death, the first Lincoln biographies began to appear in print. The authors of the earliest such works were more interested in taking financial advantage of the public's preoccupation with Lincoln than in historical accuracy. Lincoln's peers and associates began to publish biographical studies as well. The novelist and journalist Josiah G. Gilbert (1819–81) provided the public with a popular, though flawed, biography in 1866. In 1872, Lincoln's friend and colleague Ward H. Lamon (1827–93) published a more substantial biography of Lincoln that took advantage of a rich collection of primary source documents and irreplaceable oral histories that belonged to William H. Herndon (1818–91). Yet it was Herndon himself, Lincoln's longtime law partner, who published his own very extraordinary biographical study on Lincoln in 1888. Herndon's biography of Lincoln has repeatedly been characterized as "the most influential Lincoln biography ever written because it shaped the public perception of Lincoln in a very profound way."[11]

A decade or so after his death, American schoolchildren began to read about Lincoln in their textbooks. Benson J. Lossing's *A Centennial Edition of the History of the United States* was the first American textbook to discuss Abraham Lincoln. This book portrays him as the Great Emancipator, an equanimous political personality, and a man who was one of the people. Before long, schoolbooks in the North and the South taught pupils about Lincoln, who was described—even in the South—as a noteworthy American figure, a man of strong character, and a successful leader. Reverence for Lincoln continued to burgeon throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, and by the centennial of Lincoln's birth, the sixteenth president had become a national role model and "a man for all seasons."[12]

As the nineteenth century drew to a close and the Civil War generation began to fade from the scene, there arose a pressing interest in documenting the history of the great conflict as well as the many significant personalities who played a leading role in that national drama. In 1886, John G. Nicolay (1832–1901) and John Hay, Lincoln's private secretaries, began publishing their ten-volume study titled *Abraham Lincoln: A History*. Although the work has been consistently criticized for its highly partisan tone, Nicolay and Hay's massive tome was a landmark achievement in that it made extensive use of Robert Todd Lincoln's invaluable documentary collection along with the authors' own documentary resources. Toward the fin de siècle, as the centennial of Lincoln's birth appeared on the horizon, another wave of interest in Lincoln's life swept over the nation.[13]

Not surprisingly, the American Jewish community was keenly interested in participating in the efflorescence of Lincolniana. In 1892, the *American Hebrew* published a long book review describing all of the biographical studies on Lincoln that had recently appeared. "We are just beginning to appreciate the character of the great President who guided the destinies of our nation during the Civil War," the editorial began. "It is a source of great pleasure that poets have found it worthy to sing the praises of so genuine a character as Abraham Lincoln."[14]

Jews participated enthusiastically in all of these efforts to memorialize Lincoln. Like all other American citizens, Jews admired Lincoln and considered him a great American. Yet from the moment Lincoln was assassinated, American Jews regarded the martyred president as a national icon who, though not a Jew by birth, was genuinely imbued with Jewish values and had a "Jewish soul." From the time of his death and through the present day, Jews have cherished the belief that Lincoln was truly a fellow spiritual sojourner whose moral instincts and spiritual

impulses were closely aligned with those of the Jewish people.

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, as the eightieth anniversary of Lincoln's birth approached, rabbis, educators, and communal leaders began to deliver special homilies and oratorical lessons in commemoration of Lincoln's birthday. “It is not without significance,” the editorial column of the *Jewish Messenger* observed, “that as the years fade the character of Abraham Lincoln shines forth with greater splendor and his name and record acquire a deeper, holier meaning…. We Americans need the inspiration of Lincoln's memory.”[15] The speeches of the Jewish leaders contained inspiring exhortations based on lessons learned from Lincoln's life. Many of the lessons they derived benefited all Americans, but for many Jewish orators, Lincoln's life served as a particularly valuable model for Jewish living.

For example, on Sunday, February 12, 1888, Simon Wolf delivered the Lincoln Day Address in the nation's capital. It is interesting to note that Wolf began his remarks by explaining why he had agreed to speak on Lincoln's birthday: “I came here as one whose ancestors also were in bondage;…not in this, but in other countries, and to whom and for whom Abraham Lincoln achieved as much freedom and liberty as ever the laws of my ancestors have conferred religion and civilization upon mankind.” Lincoln's birthday, Wolf declared, provided the nation with an annual opportunity to expose the American people to the life of a man who was an archetypical American. If, as Walt Whitman observed, America was a “teeming nation of nations,” then Abraham Lincoln was the embodiment of the loftier ideals such a nation's leader should possess: “[Lincoln was] not only an American [but] in the highest ideal a typical American—the very incarnation of all that was just, true, and manly, not only for the Christian, but for the Jew; not only for the white man, but for the negro; not only for the American, but for all men, no matter from what part of the world they came.”[16]

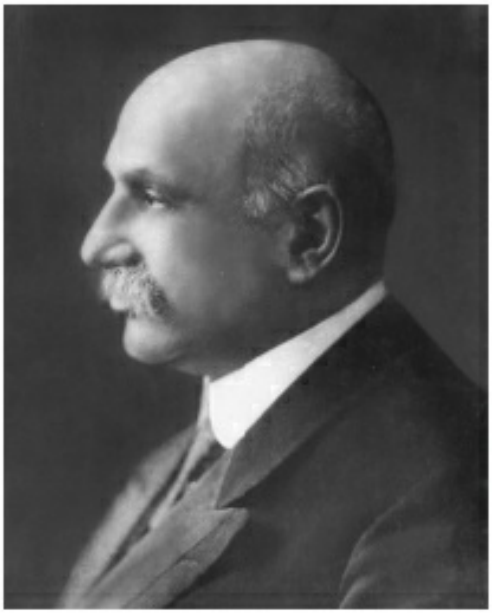
Wolf proceeded to regale his listeners with stories of his own personal encounters with Lincoln, all of which emphasized that Lincoln was the Jew's friend and a man who harbored no bigotry. Wolf stressed the bond that Jews felt for Lincoln as well as the friendship that Lincoln extended to the Jews. Alluding to the social mores of the Gilded Age and, perhaps, the troubling rise in Judeophobia and Jewish social exclusion that typified that era, Wolf expressed his hope that Lincoln's birthday would soon become a national day of education dedicated to teaching “our young men and young women, who perhaps may be falling by the wayside into materialistic views; [that]…it is not birth, it is not wealth, that alone accomplishes great things in this country; but it is character and truth, nobility of soul and virtue of example that shall live for all time.”[17]

A paradigmatic example of how Jewish leaders embraced Lincoln as an American and as a sojourner among the Jewish people comes from an address that Dr. Herman Baar (1823–1904), superintendent of New York's Hebrew Orphan Society, delivered to the children of the orphanage on the occasion of Lincoln's birthday in 1897. “My children,” the headmaster began, “yesterday we celebrated the birthday of one of America's best and greatest sons, Abraham Lincoln…. No one deserves more—though he was not of our creed—to be mentioned in our ‘Kaddish’ prayer today than Abraham Lincoln. Kaddish means holy, and Lincoln's life was a life of holiness. He was a high-priest in the service of humanity; he was a soldier in the battle of human right and liberty; nay he was a champion for the cause of justice and heaven-born freedom!…[M]ay he ever inspire us with his lovable and noble heart, with his brave and gentle spirit, and with his kind and generous sentiments!”[18]

As the centenary of Lincoln's birth approached, rabbis were increasingly invited to speak at citywide Lincoln Day festivities. They used these public occasions to emphasize Lincoln's unswerving commitment to the biblical values of justice, liberty, and compassion. During the

1890s, the brilliant rabbinic orator Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch (1852–1923) composed several addresses on Lincoln, whom he described as “the greatest star in the constellation of men [who led the nation] into the glorious path of a larger freedom.” Rabbi David Philipson (1862–1949) preached a long sermon on Lincoln to his congregation in Cincinnati in 1898, comparing him to the prophet Amos. Truly great people, Philipson preached, are fighters for justice and righteousness. “Of such was Lincoln's faith,” Philipson declared, “an immovable belief in the right.” In Philadelphia, Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf (1858–1923) of Rodeph Shalom Congregation frequently preached on Lincoln. Using an effusion of religious allusions, Krauskopf crowned Lincoln “the Nation's Saint, its greatest Master, its holiest Martyr, a people's Messiah and Redeemer, the Talisman and Patron forever of every tyrannized people, of every down-trodden, God-given right.”[19]

In one of his Lincoln addresses, Rabbi Hirsch observed that “Abraham Lincoln belongs to no one State.” Although he was “in the flesh” an American, Lincoln was “in the spirit” a model for all humankind. “The whole earth is a pedestal to his fame,” Hirsch declared, “and the best and noblest of all nations asks for the privilege to garland afresh every year his memorial in their hearts.”[20]



Chicago’s Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch frequently paid tribute to Lincoln in sermons that commemorated his birthday. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

In the 1880s and 1890s, when thousands of East European Jewish immigrants poured onto the American continent, Lincoln served as an American beau ideal. In fact, Lincoln's image and his saga even attracted the interest of Jews who had not yet set foot in the New World. In his autobiography, Ephraim Lisitzky (1885–1962), a highly regarded American Hebraist who spent most of his career working as a Jewish educator in New Orleans, recollected that he and other Jews held Lincoln in special reverence even before they immigrated: “I was fascinated by the emancipation of the slaves and even more so by the personality of Abraham Lincoln, the hero of the event. Lincoln's Jewish name, Abraham, his bearded face with its Jewish expression of sorrow, made him look like a Jewish prophet of old whom Providence raised up for the Americans to free them from the shame of slavery.”[21]

One historian has contended that the primary political challenge facing the United States

between 1880 and 1920 was "how to assimilate…an almost unmanageable influx of people who were not Americans by birth but by immigration. Americans had to be made." During this period, many leaders of the American Jewish community were keenly interested in addressing this same challenge. East European Jewish immigrants needed to become Americans, and Abraham Lincoln proved to be a catalyst in this endeavor. Native-born Americans were convinced that by compelling immigrants to celebrate the life of Abraham Lincoln, they would succeed in their ambition to give nationhood primacy over ethnicity.[22]

Lincoln often served as an agent of acculturation for the millions of Jews who immigrated to the United States from eastern Europe between 1881 and 1924.
Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

In 1905, the Jewish Chautauqua Society convened a special conference in New York to deliberate on how best to Americanize the Jewish immigrant. Some of the most distinguished Jewish philanthropists and communal leaders of that era participated in this colloquium, including Jacob Schiff (1847–1920), Jacob Gimbel (1850–1922), Simon Wolf, and Rabbis David Philipson and Kaufmann Kohler (1843–1926). Schiff laid out the problem the community faced in the starkest of terms: "The Americanization of the Jewish immigrant well deserves the most earnest consideration of the best minds, for with something like a million newcomers, of which a

hundred thousand are of our race, a year, the very foundation upon which the Nation rests, may become displaced, unless we succeed in making Americans in the very highest sense of the word of those, who, year in, year out, flock in such large numbers to these shores; people who come to remain and to make these States the permanent home of their families."[23]

Yet, Rabbi Philipson hastened to urge the leaders of the Jewish community to be careful and strategic in this process lest they unintentionally drove the Jewishness out of the immigrant altogether. "If they can be made to feel they are American and Jewish at the same time," Philipson stated, "then great things can be done." To achieve this objective, Lincoln was one of the most valuable resources because, for the American Jew, Lincoln was not only "the first American" but also a spiritual brother.[24]

In the 1880s, Rabbi David Philipson of Cincinnati began delivering annual sermonic tributes on Lincoln's birthday. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Time and again, Lincoln served as a metaphoric nexus that linked Americanism and Judaism together for the East European Jewish immigrant. Rabbi Abba Hillel Silver (1893–1963) crowned Lincoln "a saint of Democracy" and told his people that "Lincoln somehow reminds one of the ancient prophets of Israel. He seems to possess the same colossal height, the same sweep of spirit, and the same outreaching power that we are accustomed to associate with the ancient prophets." Rabbi Samuel Sale (1854–1937) of St. Louis asserted that Lincoln's religion was "the religion of humanity." He was the "best and noblest" because he modeled his life on the teachings of the Hebrew prophet Micah, who compelled us "to do justly, to love mercy, and to

walk with [God] in humility." For Jewish settlement houses and immigrant educational institutions, Abraham Lincoln's life served as an enduring proof text that it was possible to be a great American and, concomitantly, a great Jew. In fact, Milwaukee's settlement house for immigrant Jews was actually called the "Abraham Lincoln House." The Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society and the Educational Alliance in New York engaged the renowned Yiddish orator Zvi Hirsch Masliansky (1856–1943) so that he could instruct hundreds of East European Jewish immigrants in their mother tongue about the life of Abraham Lincoln.[25]

In a 1917 article titled "Lincoln and the Immigrant," fiction writer Grace Humphrey (1882–1961) observed that "Lincoln makes the immigrants feel this is their country as well as the country of the native-born far more than any other American." For Jewish children, she continued, "Lincoln was the epic rescuer of the oppressed, the man who freed the slaves." Yet Lincoln also served as a vehicle for Americanization—he was an iconic American who bore the name of the biblical patriarch and first Jew. As a popular song from the era demonstrates, Lincoln made the Jewish name Abraham patriotic:

> You say you're ridiculed by all the boys in school…
> But when they call you Abie don't you mind.
> There was a man named Abraham not many years ago,
> A better man you'll never find.
> We didn't have the power to make you look the same,
> The best we could do was to give you his name.[26]

Over the course of the Progressive Era, Lincoln was arguably "the nation's most preeminent historical figure," and there can be little question that the East European Jewish immigrants easily embraced Lincoln as an American Jewish exemplar. In this capacity, Lincoln was sui generis among American icons. As one rabbi observed: "America has given the world many outstanding men. There was Washington, the staid and courtly gentleman whom circumstances made a revolutionist. There was Jefferson, the scholarly and cultured liberal. There was Theodore Roosevelt, the dynamic administrator. There was Woodrow Wilson, the isolated intellectual of exquisite world visions. They were all great men; each had his message and all are revered by mankind. Yet Abraham Lincoln alone is loved…. Why? Because in him the world sees itself reflected."[27]

One demonstration of Lincoln's stature as an American Jewish icon may be seen in the custom of naming Jewish children after him. An indeterminate number of American Jews—those who emigrated from Central and Eastern Europe—eagerly embraced the sixteenth president's legacy with the same honor they might have bestowed on a beloved and lamented parent or grandparent. When one of a set of Jewish triplets in northern California in 1867 was given the name Abraham Lincoln Danziger, it may have been the first documented example of a naming trend that would become a true American Jewish tradition. Twenty years later, particularly for the massive wave of East European immigrants seeking to Americanize, "Abraham Lincoln" became a popular Jewish moniker that authenticated their children's status as both Americans and Jews. Some prominent examples include Abraham Lincoln Fechheimer (1876–1954), a highly regarded Cincinnati architect; Abraham Lincoln Filene (1865–1957), from the famous department store family; Abraham Lincoln Neiman (1875–1970), a founder of Neiman Marcus; Abraham Lincoln Erlanger (1859–1930), a theatrical manager; Abraham Lincoln Polonsky (1910–99); a distinguished American screenwriter; and Abraham Lincoln Marovitz (1905–2001), a well-known Chicago jurist and political activist. Some Lincoln namesakes—such as Abraham

Lincoln Feinberg (1899–1986) and Abraham Lincoln Krohn (1893–1958)—became prominent American rabbis.[28]

During the years leading up to the U.S. entry into World War I, Lincoln's legacy was used as a narrative to explain the country's involvement in this overseas conflict. As one scholar noted, after the United States entered the war, “Lincoln and Wilson began to look increasingly alike.” In newspapers, magazines, congressional speeches, and sermons, Americans heard that Wilson was following Lincoln's lead in prosecuting his foreign policy. As one newspaper summarized, “Lincoln was the apostle of democracy and before he died he lived to see the whole of America come to him. Today we have a new apostle of democracy: we will live to see the whole world come to him.” Speaking from his pulpit in Carnegie Hall, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise (1879–1949) told his listeners that “Lincoln moved cautiously; so does Wilson. Lincoln took the long view; so does Wilson. Lincoln lifted the war to a higher level; so does Wilson. Lincoln won the war and ended slavery; Wilson will win the war and end war.”[29]

By the end of World War I, Lincoln had become “part of the substance and continuity of the American soul.” Yet for the American Jew, Lincoln's name had become a summons to fulfill a distinctly double obligation. The Lincoln legacy called on Jews to dedicate themselves to the American nation while simultaneously remaining loyal to their Jewish heritage. Speaking to a large Jewish audience at Temple Beth-El in Dorchester, Massachusetts, a future governor, Frank G. Allen (1874–1950), told the state's Jewish community that “a true Jew is a true American.” He urged them to emulate the life of Abraham Lincoln by rendering “distinguished service to this great democracy by helping instill the element of spirituality in our life, by showing we are truly our brother's keepers, by practicing the ideals of the Hebrew prophets, and thereby [making] America a blessing for all who are here.”[30]

Within months of the date when Allen spoke to his Jewish audience outside of Boston, a New York businessman and Jewish communal leader named Henry M. Toch (1862–1933) was stressing another view about the role Lincoln should play for American Jewry. “The great prophet and emancipator in America,” Toch asserted, should serve as a source of inspiration that would compel Jews to be good Jews, “for good Jews make good citizens, good Americans.” After all, Toch declared, Abraham Lincoln was “like Abraham the founder of our faith.” Just as the biblical Abraham said, “Here I am,” when he was called to duty, so too did Lincoln say, “*Hineni*—Here I am,” when he was called to serve the American nation. American Jews, Toch exhorted, must follow Lincoln's example and say, “*Hineni*—Here I am,” when they are called upon to strengthen and sustain Jewish life in America.[31]

American Jews shared in the nation's increasing veneration of Lincoln. Yet Lincoln evolved into much more than an American icon for Jewish citizens. He became a unique role model who could teach Jews to be better Americans as he concomitantly inspired them to be better Jews.

DOCUMENTS

JEWS AND LINCOLN MONUMENTS

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2. Let Us Vindicate Ourselves by Contributing to This Holy National Work

LINCOLN BIRTHDAY HOMILIES

3. America Is Opportunity
4. He Had Within Him the Spirit of the Ancient Prophets
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6. Lincoln the *Tsaddik*
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9. Citywide Ceremony Marking the Lincoln Centennial Held at Temple
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JEWS AND LINCOLN MONUMENTS

1. BEAR TESTIMONY OF YOUR LOVE OF A GOOD MAN

Within days after Lincoln's burial, calls for the erection of Lincoln memorials were heard throughout the Union. On May 21, 1865, the New York Times *informed its readers that a "One-Dollar-Lincoln-Memorial-Fund" had been established and had already gathered 119 subscribers.*[32] *The following document testifies to the fact that American Jews actively participated in these early fundraising efforts. In his handwritten announcement to the members of New York's Congregation Shearith Israel, Rabbi Jacques Judah Lyons declared, "A common calamity calls for united and universal sympathy." The rabbi urged his people to support this "noble and commendable" undertaking.*

Subscriptions Announcement in the Handwriting of Reverend Lyons

I have been specially requested by the Committee to call the attention of my Congregation to the project in contemplation to erect a monument in or near one of our public squares, as a lasting tribute of respect of the citizens of New York to the memory of their late beloved and lamented President. A subscription paper has been sent to me, and I can but say I shall be happy to be chosen by you the medium of transmitting your contributions and those of the members of your families to the Committee which has the matter in charge. "A common calamity calls for united and universal sympathy." The amount of subscription is limited to one dollar per person so as to embrace people of all conditions in life, and it is expected that you, my friends, men, women and children, will all avail yourselves of the opportunity to assist in the furtherance of so noble and commendable an undertaking, which will in future bear testimony of your love of a good man, and your appreciation of the services of a faithful officer—peace be unto his memory.[33]

2. LET US VINDICATE OURSELVES BY CONTRIBUTING TO THIS HOLY

NATIONAL WORK

One of Lincoln's Jewish friends, the Springfield haberdasher Julius Hammerslough, volunteered to collect funds from the American Jewish community for the National Lincoln Monument Association. As we see from the Israelite *article reproduced below, Hammerslough took his assignment seriously and wrote an appeal to Jewish leaders throughout the nation.*

Rabbi Isaac M. Wise published Hammerslough's written appeal to American Jewry on June 9, 1865. On the basis of this ardent published petition, we know that American Jews contributed to the fundraising effort.[34]

Lincoln National Monument

We received the following circular, which we gladly lay before our readers, and appeal to their sincere attachment to the late and lamented President of the United States:

Springfield, Ill., May 30, 1864
Rev. Dr. I. M. Wise:

Dear Sir:—Benevolence, one of the cardinal principals upon which Judaism is founded, appeals to your kind and noble heart, and solicits your earnest assistance in aiding this great National work. I entrust to your good judgment the annexed Circulars of the national Lincoln Monument Association, and by distributing the same among your Congregation, Schools and Colleges, in your city and surrounding country, you will not only pay tribute to the merits of our fallen Chief, but will also confer a great favor upon me, which shall always have the most grateful remembrance. I would kindly ask you to have the Appeal read in your Synagogue, and impress upon each and every one present the importance of the great and holy work before us.

Trusting your kind assistance and cooperation in the cause for which I appeal to you will bear fruit and meet with success everywhere, I have the honor to remain,

Your obedient servant,
Julius Hammerslough

National Lincoln Monument
Springfield, Ill., May 29, 1864

To the Hebrew Congregations, Corporations, Associations, Schools and Colleges in the United States.

At a meeting of the National Monument Association, held on the 18th last, it was unanimously:

Resolved, That the Hebrew Congregations, Corporations, Associations, Schools and Colleges, throughout the Nation, be requested to contribute to the National Lincoln Monument, at some time in the month of June next; and that Julius Hammerslough, Esq., of Springfield, Ill., be appointed special agent to bring the subject to their notice, and request their favorable action.

In accordance with the above resolution, this is respectfully addressed to the distinguished bodies embraced in it, and it is to be hoped that this appeal will inspire all patriotic hearts, and should insure the liveliest action.

Let the high position that we as Hebrews have ever maintained for generosity and liberality on minor occasions, be still manifested, and let it be evidence to all how highly we, as a race, appreciate freedom and the martyrs of liberty.

It is above all fitting in this land, where the Hebrews have won so proud a name, and are so generally respected and honored that they should thus show their love and veneration for the fallen Chief of the Nation, whose wisdom, honesty and purity of purpose were so highly appreciated by foreign nations, and who was so beloved at home.

Let it be remembered that we have, as a race, despite the advanced and enlightened age, to meet prejudices still existing in the minds of many. Let us quell this feeling, and vindicate ourselves by contributing to this holy national work, in a manner that shall prove that the Hebrews are, as they have ever been, the staunch friends of freedom and liberty, and the foes of all oppression and wrong.

In the responsible position in which I have been placed, I beg the most prompt and heartiest support of one and all of my co-religionists.

It is to be hoped that all patriotic hearts will be moved to show their love and admiration for the character of Abraham Lincoln, and the cause for which he died.

It is to be hoped that we build a monument to such a man—a monument that shall not only be worthy of the immortal dead, but one that shall essay to express the homage of our people for an exalted character, whose greatness is made complete by goodness. Will not such a monument teach all future generations that "he is but half great who is no good," inspiring all with a worthy ambition and the lofty courage which dares to do right for right's sake, while it rebukes and shames the selfish, groveling, politic compromiser? Do we not well to build a monument, to which every parent may point his child and say: "So let it be done to him whom the people delight to honor?" Will not a new era in our national life be marked by such a monument?—will it not still seem grand and worthy, when in the coming centuries, the nation having consummated the policy for which he died, and, become strong and glorious in a Union without a slave, and, appreciate, honor, love and revere, as it cannot now, the sublime character, life and work of her martyred President?

The honor of the State of Illinois is pledged for the faithful application of every dollar contributed to this sacred fund, in accordance with the wishes of the donors.

His Excellency Richard J. Oglesby, the Governor of the State, is President of the Association; Hon. Beveridge, State Treasurer, is Treasurer of the Association, and the other State officers are members. The other corporators are among the most distinguished citizens of the State.

In addition to this the Association is a corporate body; having organized in strict conformity with the forms of law, and the Treasurer is under adequate bonds for the faithful discharge of his duties.

These particulars are given because all who contribute have a right to know to whom the money is paid, and what are the guarantees that it will bear appropriate with scrupulous fidelity and honor.

All contributions should be forwarded to Hon. James H. Beveridge, Treasurer National Lincoln Monument Association, Springfield, Illinois, who will immediately acknowledge receipt. All sums from the largest to the smallest will be accepted and duly acknowledged. Remittances may be made by Letter, draft, or otherwise at the option of the donor.

Any person may become an honorary member of the Association by the payment of ten dollars to its funds, which will entitle him to an appropriate certificate of such

membership.

All letters of inquiry should be addressed to me at this place, and will be promptly answered. Each of the different bodies addressed will, of course, adopt its own plan of action, but it is hoped that such action may be had as early in June as possible, and the contributions be immediately forwarded to Hon. James H. Beveridge, as above directed.

The congregation that still adheres to the usual offerings made on Sabbaths and holidays, will thus have excellent opportunities of contributing to aid in this work.

All contributions will be published in the press of the city, and the entire Jewish press of the country.

And now let me appeal to you once more, to manifest your liberal contributions to this great national work that we as Hebrews are not behind the very chiefest in our love for liberty and in our reverence for her *noblest martyr.*

Julius Hammerslough[35]

LINCOLN BIRTHDAY HOMILIES

3. AMERICA IS OPPORTUNITY

Rabbi Emil G. Hirsch, the spiritual leader of Chicago's Sinai Congregation from 1880 to 1922, was a renowned orator and community leader. On February 12, 1892, Hirsch served as the keynote speaker for the city's commemoration of Lincoln's birthday. Central Music Hall held nearly 2,000 people, and the rabbi knew he would be speaking to a general audience.[36] *Instead of highlighting the reasons that Lincoln appealed to American Jewry, Hirsch decided to address himself to Lincoln's role as an American moral lodestar. "America has given to the world many a true man," the rabbi told his listeners, but "among them Lincoln is indeed the greatest." Yet even a universalist thinker like Hirsch could not refrain from employing allusions from the Hebrew Bible when speaking of Lincoln's immortality. Lincoln ascended to heaven, Hirsch told his audience, like "the prophet of old, in a golden chariot of fire," and his disciple—the American nation—exclaimed, "Father, father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen."*[37] *For Hirsch, Abraham Lincoln was the human embodiment of all that can yet be great in America.*

Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln's birthday signifies much more than a mere sentiment. If Washington's birthday opens for us that volume of our history which records what the Eastern colonies, the first states skirting the Atlantic ocean have accomplished; what their spirit contributed to our national wealth; Lincoln's anniversary symbolizes what the West has wrought, how the West has supplemented the productions of the East, yea, given them a wider scope and therefore a truer possibility.

…Our Lincoln was tried in the school of disaster. The man loomed up all the higher.

…Our Lincoln is not merely our great statesman, the great son of this great land; he types the highest nobility which God has ever given to humanity…. Yea, that man, for all his physical affinity with brute worlds, is of higher mold than mere dust, is proclaimed by none more strongly, than by our own Abraham Lincoln. And again, not what he became makes him so illustrious, as what he remained. America is opportunity. We are familiar with the stories of the great men risen from the valleys to the Alps. We are conversant with the career of our generals, our statesmen, our presidents, most of

whom in their early youth had to follow avocations which we count menial. None of them remembered the days of his youth so willingly as did Abraham Lincoln. In the White House he was the same man as he was when he split the historic rails. He was without presumption or arrogance; he withheld from none the warm touch of his hand. In his lank and over-grown frame beat a heart as wide as the country that he had sworn to save. He whose official duty it was to send to bloody fray hundreds of thousands of men, had a soul spun of the tenderest chords of sympathy. When the fate of a deserter court-martialed to be shot, waited upon his final decision, sleep would flee from his weary eyes. He, upon whom weighed the concerns of a nation fighting for its very life, found ever time to console the widows or to cheer the wounded in the hospitals. He whom princes addressed as their friend, remained in every detail a man of the people, proud to belong to the people, feeling with the people. President of the United States, master of the tersest English, and the writer of a style so clear and so concise, gifted with an eloquence of which Demosthenes might well have become envious, he was not ashamed to speak the dialect of the backwoods villages, and illustrate, even in the most fateful moments, his arguments by some apt story or other. He remained true to himself, true to his friends. The *man* Lincoln eclipses even the President Lincoln. He will be loved and honored by all who have understanding for the genuine essence of true manhood; he will live in the affections of all true men, when perhaps the greater deeds of the greatest generals on battle-fields will be forgotten; when the glory of many a central sun around which the planet circled will have been clouded in the mists of oblivion. America has given to the world many a true man; among them Lincoln is indeed the greatest. He is a monument to our civilization, which can make of the backwoods boy a president, shaming in his sagacity the kings born to the purple, and vying in renown with the greatest men that ever time did fashion. With the sentiments of the prophets will forever be quoted his words, hallowing the graves of the soldiers who fell on the hotly contested cemetery of Gettysburg, so touching in their appeal and so tender in their simplicity: “with malice toward none, with charity toward all.” And when this man fell at his post of duty, the whole world paused and wept…. He ascended heavenward as did the prophet of old, in a golden chariot of fire, and his disciple, the nation at large upon whom his mantle fell, looked up to the heights to which he had gone, and exclaimed. “Father, father, the chariot of Israel and its horsemen.”[38] He ascended to the realms of immortality, carried upward by a flame of fire, but in his death he sealed a new covenant of love, which today binds together both those that wore the gray and those that wore the blue. Today our flag floats over one country, one union, one freedom. May that flag float on forever. Its stars shine out in the darkness of despotism, beacons of hope wherever human beings are crushed and downtrodden, wherever shackles of slaves are clanking! May its stripes stream out like the forerunner of the rising sun to herald to the world that the mists of slavery are lifted and the day of freedom is here. Lincoln died for this flag, let us live for it. Washington planted it, Lincoln preserved it. Let us be true to the great heritage of the fathers. Each one as far as in him lies in his sphere, must remember that that which the fathers planted and the sons preserved, we the grandsons enjoy, merely to enrich it and to enlarge it, and to become worthy of it. America, land of freedom, washed by the blood of martyred presidents, America, hope of humanity, star of the morning, sing thy song, “Today a child was born unto us, a son was given unto us. Upon him was the dominion,

his name was great counselor, mighty in deed, witness of the great Father in heaven; Prince of Peace!"[39] For in this old biblical description of Israel's ideal ruler, America, thou mayest well breathe thine appreciation of thine own son, immortal Abraham Lincoln.[40]

4. HE HAD WITHIN HIM THE SPIRIT OF THE ANCIENT PROPHETS

Rabbi David Philipson's sermon, delivered to Congregation Bene Israel at the Mound Street Temple in Cincinnati, Ohio, on February 12, 1898, exemplifies the stirring encomia that American rabbis used in praising Lincoln to their communities. Philipson described Lincoln as a man whose lips "were touched by the coal of living fire taken from the altar of God" and as a "messenger of the Lord of Hosts…, sent unto [the] people." The mere contemplation of Lincoln's life, Philipson effused, would lift one's "soul to the empyrean heights."

Abraham Lincoln

Had, in Lincoln's case, externals been decisive, no man would ever have imagined that his was to be that great, providential career. Gaunt, ungainly and unprepossessing in appearance, the casual onlooker would never for a moment have dreamt that within that homely frame there dwelt one of the greatest souls that ever breathed the breath of life. Yes, yes, again was the old word exemplified, "Men look upon the outward parts, but the Lord looketh upon the heart."[41]

Who has not been thrilled, whose nerves have not been set atingling when reading the plain, unvarnished tale of the life of this masterful man, so wonderfully astute, so wise, simple, sagacious, honest, patient, courageous, humane and tender? There are so many facets to this brilliant diamond, the character of Lincoln, that we can find time to view but few. First of all there was the supreme honesty of the man; he was honest in every fibre of his being, true and straightforward, uncompromising for the right as he saw the right. He had within him the spirit of the ancient prophets; aye; he was a modern prophet in his firm insistence on the right, in his clear view of the external issue between right and wrong. This appeared most strongly in the famous debate with Douglas, when he used the words, so daring in those days of compromise (it was in the year 1858), "A house divided against itself can not stand. I believe this Government can not endure permanently, half slave and half free. I do not expect the Union to be dissolved—I do not expect the house to fall—but I do expect it will cease to be divided. It will become all one thing or the other." When his friends remonstrated and begged him not to use this bold language, urging the plea that it would surely cause his defeat for the Senate, he gave the characteristic answer that he "would rather be defeated with this expression in his speech than to be victorious without it." Time and again he took his firm stand on the pedestal of the right. At the close of a speech in New York he uttered the ringing words: "Men of America! History through the centuries has been teaching us that might makes right. Let it be our mission in this nineteenth century to reverse the thought and to declare that right makes might." It was thought that Amos had come back to earth, as though there was reincarnation of that mighty spirit that twenty-seven hundred years before had declared to the people of Israel, "Let justice flow like water and righteousness like a mighty stream!"[42] The truly great of earth, the prophets, ancient and modern, stand squarely on the moral issue: there is the eternal

struggle between right and wrong, the two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time; but for the true man there is no question of the final outcome; before the tribunal of the eternal Justice right is right—no half measure, no timid time-serving. Of such was Lincoln's faith, an immovable belief in the right, in the justice of eternal God moved him in his every action. “The purposes of the Almighty are perfect and must prevail, though we erring mortals may fail accurately to perceive them in advance,” was another of his winged sentences. Words more deeply religious than these were never spoken by preacher or seer. Truly the lips of this great man were touched by the coal of living fire taken from the altar of God and a messenger of the Lord of Hosts was he, sent unto this people in the most critical time of its existence to lead them by his wisdom, his courage, his prophetic utterances, through the dread years that tried men's souls, he himself burdened with the awful responsibility which seemed too great for any one man, and therefore so often solitary, so pathetically sad, for he was bearing a Nation's woe, his heart was wrung with sympathy for the thousands of firesides made desolate, the tears of widowed mothers, the pains and tortures of brave, sacrificing men.

The contemplation of a life such as Lincoln's lifts the soul to the empyrean heights, and the words that fell from his lips will echo and re-echo in the hearts of men unto latest generations. Many of these words deserve and have found a place in the Bible of humanity. From out the dim vista of the past there looms before us the sad, sad face, furrowed with the lines of care, and there beams upon us the light of the far-seeing eyes, and from his lips we hear fall those great, undying Words, “With malice towards none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right.” Aye, truly, we feel, we know, with our great poet that

> Standing like a tower,
> Our children shall behold his fame,
> The kindly, earnest, brave, far-seeing man,
> Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame.
> New birth of our new soil, the first American.[43]

5. THE SAVIOR OF HIS COUNTRY

Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf delivered a memorial sermon marking Lincoln's birthday on February 11, 1906, at Congregation Keneseth Israel in Philadelphia. In this address, Krauskopf asserted that Lincoln's humble roots and simple manner were inexorably linked to his unrivaled purity of character, his honesty, and his spiritual nature. In this markedly religious sermon, Krauskopf encouraged his listeners to accept Lincoln's death as part of God's plan. He compared Lincoln to Moses, Jesus, and Luther and crowned him “the savior of his country,…the Chosen of God.”

Lincoln, the Chosen of God

It was on February 11, 1861, forty-five years ago this day, that Abraham Lincoln left Springfield, Illinois, to proceed towards the capital of the Nation, as its chosen President. His friends and neighbors came to take leave of him, and, while their hearts rejoiced at the honor that had been conferred upon their fellow-townsman, there were tears in the eyes of many in the hour of parting. Lincoln himself was deeply touched. Had he and they a presentiment that they might never see each other again? “Friends,” said he in solemn farewell, “I know not how soon I shall see you again. A duty has

devolved upon me greater than that which has devolved upon any other man since Washington. He never would have succeeded except for the aid of Divine Providence, upon which he at all times relied. On the same Almighty Being I place my reliance. Pray that I may receive that Divine assistance, without which I cannot succeed, but with which success is assured."

I have no doubt but that the prayers thus asked for were fervently lifted up for the President-elect, and not by his townspeople alone but also by millions of his supporters throughout the troubled land. Was their prayer answered? Many there are who will at once say *no*, and, in proof, will point to a whole Nation inconsolable, aye, to a civilized world in tears, because of his death of martyrdom, a little more than four years after his leave-taking at Springfield.

As for me, I know of no better instance of prayer answered than the success that attended the supplications that were offered up for Lincoln when he entered upon his perilous office. He did not ask that supplications be offered for his escape from a death of martyrdom; he but asked for prayers that success might attend his labors to save the country from dismemberment and to remove a malignant cancer that threatened the very life of the Nation. In a little more than four years, the Union was saved and slavery was abolished, and, his work being done, the greatest since the days of Washington, martyrdom came as a halo of glory rather than as a sign of failure or as a token of divine disapprobation.

Of course, had mortals had the disposition of it, they would have assigned a far different end to the savior of his Nation and to the emancipator of the slave than death by an assassin's bullet, five short days after General Lee's surrender at Appomattox, on the very day of the rehoisting of Old Glory over Fort Sumter, and but a little more than a month after a grateful people had entrusted itself to his wise and fearless leadership for another term of four years. They would have had him live to a good, old age, they would have had him continue in the full enjoyment of the fruitage of his labors, the idol of his people, the inspiration of all living kind, until a gentle death would have translated him from his field of earthly labor to the regions of his celestial rewards.

But God's ways are not our ways, says the prophet, neither are His thoughts our thoughts. When I consider the wisdom that was manifest in the choice of this peerless leader, I cannot but feel that in his tragic taking-off, when his work was done, there may have been a wisdom no less divine than that which called him when his work was needed. Probably his highest reward lay in having been spared the ingratitude of the Nation he had saved. Many a savior might have died happy had he died when his work was done, had he died before adulation could turn to envy and envy to malice, and malice to calumny, and calumny to base ingratitude.

Every move in this wonderful man's career seems to speak of providential call and guidance. No man was ever more the chosen of God than was Abraham Lincoln, and yet no man ever gave less evidence and promise of it than he. What people, unaided by divine direction, would have dared to select for its leader this untried man of the untrained West, in the crisis in which our Nation found itself prior to the outbreak of the civil war? They would have sought among experienced statesmen, among men of proven executive power, of tried leadership, of great military prowess. They would have inquired among the universities for those of marked attainments and of brilliant records, or among the illustrious families for one whose distinguished name and

descent might dazzle the masses and command the largest following of the select. Only the intermixture of the will of Providence with the will of man can explain the daring choice our fathers made when they selected Abraham Lincoln for their chief-executive. The capitol of Washington had never before, and has never since, seen a President like him. Never before had a man received so little training for so exalted a place, never had a man possessed such few graces for a position that was to throw him in contact with the most polished of the land, never had a man had so little schooling for an office that required profound knowledge in many of the most intricate problems of political and economic and military science.

And never before nor since did man master such gigantic problems, within so short a time, as they were mastered by the first of our martyr-presidents. Long before his first term expired, there was no statesman in all the land comparable to him, no master of the English tongue superior to him, no military strategist like unto the chief-commander of the Nation. Read his deliberations with his cabinet, read his consecration of the battlefield of Gettysburg, his second inaugural address, his orders to his generals, or, better, retrace your steps to the wretched log-cabin in the mountain-wilds of Kentucky, where his cradle stood, and then follow his career, step by step, from cabin to capitol, and tell of another like it, in history or in literature, in fiction or in truth.

His father a backwoodsman, unlettered, unmannered, thriftless. His mother an invalid passing into the grave before her boy is yet nine years old. We next see him in the new lands of Indiana but in the midst of the old hardships, differing only from the other in finding here some opportunity for schooling, seven months long in all—the only schooling in all his life. But, if of the school of letters he had little, he had an abundance of the school of life. Life for him, from earliest childhood to manhood's estate, meant hard toil, from early morn till late at night, for little more than the absolute necessities of life. And full of hard toil his life continued to be till his last day, now as farm hand, now as rail-splitter, now as flat-boatman, as shopkeeper, soldier, legislator, lawyer, congressman, and finally as President of the United States.

And while that passage from log-cabin to White House, from farmhand to President was marked by wonderful flashes of intellectual genius and of moral and spiritual greatness, such revelations were vouchsafed only to friends and neighbors or to clients and constituents. To the eastern and southern people from among whom the Presidents and great men had hitherto come, when they first beheld him, he seemed a gnarled, homely-featured, horn-handed, hoosier from the uncultured West, more fit to drive a yoke of oxen than to guide a nation out of a sea of trouble into a haven of rest.

Listen to the impression his appearance made on our own townsman, Mr. Alexander McClure,[44] who had done much toward effecting his election, and who had proceeded to Springfield to confer with him on matters of national importance. “My first sight of him was a deep disappointment. Before me stood a middle-aged man, tall, gaunt, ungainly, homely, ill-clad—slouchy pantaloons, vest held shut by a button or two, tightly fitting sleeves to exaggerate his long, bony arms, all supplemented by an awkwardness that was uncommon among men of intelligence. I confess that my heart sank within me as I remembered that this was the man chosen by a great nation to become its ruler in the gravest period of its history.”

It was not long, however, before Mr. McClure discovered, as the Nation discovered later, that it was God who had chosen Lincoln, that, when the people cast their vote for

him, they but expressed the will of Providence, which had decreed that the Nation founded by the Colonial Fathers shall not be severed, and that the slave shall be free. They remembered what the Bible said respecting the choice of the shepherd David in preference of other men, who, in external appearance, seemed the better fitted for the kingship: “the Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.”[45] They recalled the humble origin of Moses and Jesus and Luther, and recognized that they whom God chooses for his work must have other distinctions than looks or wealth or name or culture. They must have hearts of saints, souls of heroes and martyrs. They must serve as anvils in the smithies of affliction so as to be able to serve as the hammer of God when the hour for striking comes.

It was a critical time in the story of our Nation, the most critical since the days of our conflict with our mother country across the sea. The hand of brother was lifted against brother. The South stood arrayed against the North. The hour called for a great man, for a man wise of heart as well as of mind, for a man of inspired soul and resolute will, for a man whose personalities and family traditions counted as nothing in the balance, for a man who, being of the common people, and the conflict of the hour having the greatest need of the common people, could easiest appeal to them and come in closest touch with them. The hour called for a man all whose labor and ambition were consecrated to his people and all whose purposes accountable to his God.

Such a man was Lincoln. A man more honest than he never lived. Rivals derided him, parties ridiculed him, papers caricatured him but no man was ever able even to breathe the breath of suspicion upon any of his motives. Unlike so many of the schooled diplomats and statesmen, who in their eager development of brain, starve the heart, his brain was all the keener because of its blending with heart, and his heart all the richer because of its blending with brain. An unkind word never passed his lips, an unkind deed never stained his hand, an unworthy thought never polluted his mind. His countenance, rugged and gnarled as it was, was as open as a page of Scriptures; his eye as clear as innocence itself.

Not ambition, not lust of power or wealth, of fame or name, bore him to the heights he occupied. He had never sought an honor or an office, had never thought himself fit for a position of responsibility when it was entrusted to him. Men in public office have been modest, have been unassuming, but never one like Abraham Lincoln. There was no more surprised man in all the land than he when the choice of President fell to him, and it would have been difficult to find one who could have accepted it with greater reluctance. Full forty years long had he yearned for the coming of a man strong and wise enough to rid the Nation of the curse of slavery, without severing its bond of union. Full forty years long had that hope and prayer burnt within him, and would not cease burning, like the vision of the burning bush that Moses saw in the wilderness. And when the call came to him at last, as it had come to Moses, when the voice of God, through the voice of the people, called out to him, saying: “I have seen the afflictions of a people unjustly enslaved; I have heard its cry of anguish by reason of its taskmasters. I know the strife that is tearing the Nation asunder, and I am resolved to deliver it, through thy hand. Get thee to Washington, and inaugurate there the work of redemption and of union,” when that call came, he, like Moses, had not the heart to rush upon a work, which the greatest had feared to touch, fearing lest, by unfitness, he overthrow all

future chance, all future hope. “Let another and an abler go,” he sadly said, “this is a work for giants, not for pigmies, like me.”

It was a work for a giant, and for just such a giant as Lincoln was. It required a giant's heart to make an entry into the Capital of the Nation, as President-elect, such as he was obliged to make, in the dead of night, by stealth and by circuitous routes, to escape the assassin's hand. It required a giant's mind to present an inaugural address such as he presented, on the fourth of March, 1861, and to outline a course of action such as he laid before his Secretary of State. The men of his cabinet, proud of their statesmanship and scholarship and polish and influence, had believed that the western hoosier, the accident of the polls, would but be a figurehead, that they themselves would rule and dictate the policies of the land. They soon learned that their chief was a ruler, not only by the grace but also by the call of God, a ruler with the inspiration of a prophet, with the wisdom of a sage, with the will-power of a conqueror. Before a month of his presidential term had elapsed, the Nation marvelled as much as it had doubted, and the South realized that it was a war to the death that it had entered upon.

And a war to the death it continued, four years long, till slavery was abolished and the union was saved. There was no abatement in its vigor, no change in its policy, no quarter to the enemy, until they recognized the stars and stripes as the common flag of all of the United States, until they conceded to the enslaved negro the human rights and political liberties which the white man enjoyed. There had been irresoluteness and vacillation too long, and at too terrible a cost. Had the issue been squarely met, had the voice of God instead of the voice of politics been spoken, had there been whole truths instead of half measures, in short, had their [*sic*] been a Lincoln in the Presidential chair fifty years earlier, there would have been no need of a civil war, no need of ravaged states, devastated homes, paralyzed industries, impoverished people, no need of brother's hand being raised against brother, no need of six hundred and twenty-five battles being fought, in which blood flowed like water, and which widowed and orphaned and darkened tens of thousands of homes.

Others before him had seen the calamity that threatened the Nation as clearly as he saw it, and had yearned for a redeemer as sincerely as he. Long before him, Patrick Henry had said the slave question “gives a gloomy prospect to future times,” and George Mason had written to the legislature of Virginia “the laws of impartial Providence may avenge our injustice upon our posterity,” and Jefferson had said: “I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, and that His justice cannot sleep for ever,” and Madison had said “where slavery exists there the republican theory becomes fallacious”—but, while they saw the danger and despaired, he felt it and acted.

Others dared not risk their political future, he dared to risk even his life. It was his innermost conviction that one nation, under one government, without slavery, had been divinely ordained, and he was resolved that not a State should be struck from the Union by treason. He saw no other assurance for lasting peace than war to the bitter end, no other promise of harmony between the North and South than a decision upon the battlefield whether or not all men are born free and equal politically, whether or not individual states had a right to secede. It was in our old Independence Hall where he solemnly declared that he believed in the Declaration of Independence, that he believed with all his heart that it guaranteed liberty to all, and reaching a climax of eloquence, and speaking as one inspired, he said: “If the country cannot be saved without giving

up that principle, I would rather be assassinated on the spot than surrender it."

And well did he see to it that the country did not surrender its principle. And dearly did he pay for it. That of which he had had a presentiment when he spoke in our city came to pass. The assassin's hand struck him down, but not till, by his labors, his country was saved, till the stars and stripes waved again over the North and South, till union and confederate soldier laid down their arms, never to take them up again against each other.

The turf has grown thick over the graves of those who paid with their lives for their country's honor. The bitter enmities of half a century ago are now forgotten. But not forgotten is the name of Abraham Lincoln. Not forgotten is the sacrifice of martyrdom which he laid upon the altar of his country. Annually the still remaining veterans of the long and deadly conflict assemble to do reverence to the memory of their well nigh canonized leader. Annually sons of these veterans assemble to pledge their fealty to the memory of him who led their fathers and their country to victory. Annually, on his natal day, a grateful posterity burnishes into new lustre his crown of glory, and piously resolves that as long as oceans shall beat against our Atlantic and Pacific shores, as long as the Alleghenies and the Rocky Mountains shall lift their heads into the blue empyrean, as long as proud Old Glory shall wave from highest North to furthest South, so long shall the name of Abraham Lincoln live in the loyal American heart as the savior of his country, as the Chosen of God. [46]

6. LINCOLN THE TSADDIK

Arthur A. Dembitz (1875–1940) was one of Lewis Naphtali Dembitz's children. Lewis Dembitz was one of Lincoln's earliest supporters, and he helped to nominate Lincoln at the Republican National Convention in 1860. According to a news article in the Jewish Exponent, *Arthur Dembitz, an instructor of Jewish history at Philadelphia's Gratz College and an active member of Philadelphia's "Free Synagogue," delivered a homily on Lincoln. Employing a familiar Hebrew compliment, Dembitz told his fellow congregants that Abraham Lincoln was a* tsaddik *—an expression commonly used to describe a person who is the embodiment of Judaism's highest moral teachings.*[47]

Mr. Dembitz Praises Lincoln

At the Free Synagogue services…last Saturday, Mr. Dembitz, after dwelling for a few minutes on the New Year of Trees, which was to begin Sunday night, made some comments on the sweetened waters of Marah.[48] The Sedra [Torah portion] contained the expression "And the Lord showed him a tree," which, when it was thrown into the water, the water became sweet. In relation to the water of life being sweetened, the Midrash [rabbinical exposition] gives us a hint elsewhere as to the meaning of the word "tree." In his exhortation to the spies, Moses says, investigate (among other things) "whether there be a tree in it or no,"—by "tree" here is meant a righteous man, under whose shadow and protecting aegis the inhabitants feel secure. Such a *Tsaddik*, said the speaker, has been shown by the Almighty to America; Abraham Lincoln, whose birthday this year immediately precedes the New Year of Trees, was indeed such a "tree," the contemplation of which causes one to say, "Life is not vain; life is not bitterness; there is a sweetness in life that renders it worth living."

May it never be said of America, "their shadow has departed from them." Rather

be it said that they delight in the shadow of such men as Washington and Lincoln, whose teachings and noble examples will form abiding elements of the national character, private and public—insuring perpetuity.[49]

7. LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF LINCOLN

Nathan Krass, rabbi of Temple Emanu-El in New York from 1923 until his retirement in 1933, delivered the sermon from which this excerpt is taken at the Buffalo Ad Club in Buffalo, New York, on February 12, 1914, on the occasion of Lincoln's 105th birthday. Rabbi Krass described Lincoln as the epitome of the true universal religious spirit in that he served as a model for all those who sought to serve God regardless of creed. He was a man who possessed "an intensely religious soul" wherein "there burned the divine essentials that make all religions glow." Lincoln was a man who believed that humans could indeed make their world a better place, and Krass urged his listeners to emulate his idealism.

Abraham Lincoln

I was asked to draw some lessons from the life of Lincoln for our generation. Well, one such lesson is this. It is not an essential of greatness to hold one's self aloof from one's fellowmen. Such is the method of near-greatness. The greater the man, the more will he love and labor for and live with his fellowmen. The old biblical verses are still true—the first in the old, the second in the new testaments. "And the oldest shall serve the youngest, the more powerful the weaker." "The greatest among you shall serve the least."[50] This lesson was supremely illustrated in the personality of Lincoln and that is one of many legacies he has left us in our great democracy. He left one more, which I shall mention. It was said that Lincoln was not a churchman. Well, what of it? I can name some others that were not in the technical sense churchmen. And I do this not by way of criticism of the church, but reverently. For there have been great exceptions in the religious world who stood outside the organized church not because they were irreligious, but because they were temperamentally more comfortable outside of the church. Moses was no churchman. Yet, he was profoundly religious. The prophets were not churchmen. Yet, they are the greatest group of religious souls the world has ever seen or heard. Jesus was no churchman. Yet, in the hearts of all these characters, there was that deep, that powerful, that vitalizing sense of spirituality, that absolute feeling of direct communion with God that transcends all externalities. In this sense, Abraham Lincoln was an intensely religious soul. He believed, and that is his other legacy to us, that real religion is spirituality in action, that divine service is service to humanity, and we are learning that lesson as we never learned it before. You are familiar with Churchill's novel, *The Inside of the Cup.* And you recall the description of the church pillars. In Buffalo, as in New York, you will find many church pillars. Pillars are made of stone, and often the human pillars of churches are stony-hearted who lend grace and social status, but no soul and service. They are not religious men. They are not like Lincoln, whose creed was not an oppressive chain around his neck, a contracting gyve around his heart, but whose religion was an open sesame to humanity. And how he loved humanity. "God surely loved the common people, he made so many of them" was one of his familiar sayings. And the religion of democracy, learning its lesson and gaining its inspiration from Lincoln, is none other than the religion without hate and prejudice, that will not cause a tear to flow, but will brush it off the cheek of sorrow and

suffering and pain. You may call this religion Judaism. You may name it Christianity. It matters not. Lincoln was so big that every creed claims him. In his soul, there burned the divine essentials that make all religions glow. We would honor Lincoln's memory? Let us emulate him in his idealism. It warmed the souls of millions. We would twine a literary laurel wreath about his name? Remember that in his heart there blossomed the finest flowers that diffused their sweet aroma across a continent and caused stifling, stumbling humanity to inhale a whiff of that which strengthens and uplifts.

With a single verbal alteration, let my final word be a paragraph from Lincoln's eulogy of Washington. “On that name no eulogy is expected. It cannot be. To add brightness to the sun, or glory to the name of Lincoln is alike impossible. Let none attempt it. In solemn awe pronounce the name and in its naked, deathless splendor leave it shining on!”[51]

8. LINCOLN'S RELIGION IS MY RELIGION

Ferdinand M. Isserman (1898–1972), born in Antwerp, Belgium, was ordained at the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati in 1922. His first served as assistant rabbi at Rodeph Shalom Congregation in Philadelphia. In 1925, Isserman became the senior rabbi of Toronto's Holy Blossom Temple, and in 1929 he assumed the pulpit of Temple Israel in St. Louis, where he remained for the rest of his career.

Isserman earned a national reputation for his many Jewish, civic, and political activities. He was a highly regarded orator, and his weekly radio program in St. Louis made him a prominent regional voice throughout the Midwest for more than thirty years.

In this sermon, delivered on February 9, 1940, Rabbi Isserman told his listeners that “Lincoln's religion” was actually their *religion. He asserted his belief that Lincoln's spiritual values were actually one and the same with what he regarded as the essential core of Judaism's message: universalism. Isserman was deeply committed to Reform Judaism's emphasis on a “prophetic Judaism,” which stressed the values to which all moral people subscribe—and which was none other than Abraham Lincoln's religion.*

Isserman concluded his oration by calling on his listeners to preserve Lincoln's religion, namely, Judaism, “not merely for ourselves but for the Lincolns of the future who will bring to mankind the emancipation that it needs.”

The Religion of Lincoln and the Religion of the Synagogue

Abraham Lincoln was not opposed to organized religion nor was he even opposed to denominationalism. He merely could find no organized church, no denomination which would admit him to its fold without any mental reservations. This he made quite clear in a historic utterance [:] “When any church,” he said, “will inscribe over its altar as its sole qualification for membership ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and all thy might, and love thy neighbor as thyself’ that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul.” This statement of Lincoln's is based directly on a passage in the New Testament in the Gospel of Matthew (chapter 22, vs. 36[–37])….

Similarly the verse “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself” is found in that great section on holiness in the 19th chapter of the Book of Leviticus which opened with the magnificent words, “Ye shall be holy, for the Lord your God is holy.” It then proceeds to define holiness, for in ancient as in modern days, men who sought the religious way of life, to whom immediate revelation with God was denied, were anxious to know

what the most sensitive men, the great religious teachers, believed man must do to be holy to approach God. The 19th chapter of Leviticus gives the answer. The holy man must leave the corner of the field for the poor. To be holy men must not curse the deaf nor put a stumbling block in the path of the blind. To be holy every man must revere his parents nor must he steal, nor swear falsely nor oppress his neighbor nor be a tale bearer nor must he hate his brother or cherish vengeance or bear any grudge but he must love his neighbor as himself. This is the heart of the golden rule, "Love thy neighbor as thyself."…

Huxley the great scientist said that the religion to which he could subscribe was the religion of the prophets of Israel. Abraham Lincoln, American's great prophet, said that his religion could be summed up in the verses Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and all thy soul and thy neighbor as thyself.[52] These men [were] stalwarts of the 19th century, leaders of the caravan of mankind, blazers of new trails, who yearned for religion[.] [T]hey yearned for the religion of the synagogue, its monotheism, its conception of God, its emphasis on ethical relationships. That is our religion. It is true that at times ritual and ceremony[—] devised to perpetuate that religion[—]have obscured it, but invariably there have risen within the synagogue new spirits who have brushed away the cobwebs of institutionalism and have revealed the pristine beauty of Israel's faith. Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul and love thy neighbor as thyself. That is the religion our fathers have proclaimed throughout the ages. That is the religion for which they lived and for which they died. That is the religion for which they bore persecution. That is the religion which inspired Abraham Lincoln to free four million men and gave him the spirit of sacrifice, the heroic temper, the love for mercy which made human immortal spirit. That religion is your religion. It is my religion…that we must preserve not merely for ourselves but for the Lincolns of the future who will bring to mankind the emancipation that it needs.[53]

9. CITYWIDE CEREMONY MARKING THE LINCOLN CENTENNIAL HELD AT TEMPLE

Many of the ceremonies marking the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's birth reflected a universal spirit as if to honor Lincoln's own commitment to equality. In many cities, the general community filed into Jewish institutions to participate in Lincoln centennial programs. Such was the case in Pittsburgh, where an elaborate commemoration of Lincoln's centennial was held at Temple Rodeph Shalom in February 1909.

Pittsburgh's Jewish newspaper, the Jewish Criterion, *described the event and reproduced the order of the evening's program. Of all the speakers, the* Criterion *gave highest praise to the Episcopal priest, Dr. J. Everist Cathell (d. 1913), who delivered a "hypnotizing" lecture on Lincoln's life.*

Lincoln Services at the Temple

TUESDAY EVENING—DR. CATHELL'S LECTURE

We feel sorry for those subscribers to the Temple Course who failed to attend the lecture of Dr. J. Everist Cathell on "Abraham Lincoln," on Tuesday evening. There have been men of fame on that platform but it is safe to say that no man ever

commanded his audience as completely as did Dr. Cathell. [Henry] Watterson and [Jonathan P.] Dolliver and Ward and Mrs. [Agnes] Booth and Gov. [Robert B.] Glenn and all the other eminent public speakers have interested and thrilled our audiences, but it was left to J. Everist Cathell to hypnotize them by his remarkably dramatic and soul-stirring story of Abraham Lincoln. Representatives of the various lecture bureaus located in different parts of the country were of one opinion that the story of Lincoln had never been so graphically or so sympathetically interpreted. It was a revelation to the audience. This man, whose name was not even known to the majority present, who had not been heralded in flambouyant [*sic*] style, came quietly and unassumingly and completely captured one of the most critical audiences after he had been speaking five minutes. For two hours and five minutes Lincoln the boy, the man, the lawyer, the debator, the slave fighter, the President, the emancipator, the ruling genius of the American people were presented to us in a manner that invited laughter and tears.

Dr. Cathell has the dramatic instinct highly developed and he has the mechanics of public speaking developed to a high degree, and these qualifications, coupled with a beautiful speaking voice, made him master of the audience.

He threw many sidelights on incidents in connection with Lincoln's public life heretofore unknown. And the most interesting and dramatic feature of the entire lecture was the story of his first visit to Mr. Lincoln at the White House. When he had finished everyone was visibly affected by the new light that had been thrown upon the character of the great and good man.

It would be useless to attempt to give even an outline of the lecture.

Only Dr. Cathell's personality and eloquence could lend it the proper charm and interest.

We are happy to have heard this man and count it a rare privilege. In his statement we know that every one who heard the matchless address on Tuesday evening will heartily concur.

Dr. J. Everist Cathell has the right to take the foremost rank on the American platform.

THURSDAY AFTERNOON–SISTERHOOD GIVES EXCELLENT PROGRAM

The Sisterhood of Rodeph Shalom gave one of the most interesting Lincoln programs of the week. Invitations had been extended to all the women of the city and a great throng was present. The rooms were appropriately decorated. Mrs. Josiah Cohen,[54] the president, presided and opened the meeting with a few well chosen remarks, speaking of the great occasion which provoked such inspiring gathering. She was delighted to note the representative character of the assemblage which had gathered to pay homage to the memory of the immortal American. She added that this celebration was in part given over to the hundredth anniversary of the birth of the great Mendelssohn and that the musical program had been arranged with that in view.

The playing of Mr. Edward Tak,[55] the famous Concert-meister of the Pittsburg[h] Orchestra sustained the unusually high reputation enjoyed by this wizard of the violin. The large audience was wildly enthusiastic over his marvelous playing and again and again he was compelled to bow to the plaudits of his hearers. The accompanist, Mr. Carl Bernthaler,[56] needs no encomiums at our hand; his pos[i]tion as a musical artist of the first degree is too well established. The oration on Lincoln by the Rev. Dr. Alfred

C. Dieffenbach[57] was a masterly one. Dr. Dieffenbach has all the requirements of the orator, mind, voice and presence, and from start to finish he held completely the attention of the audience as he sympathetically depicted the wonderful character and work of Lincoln. He shed new light on many phases of Lincoln's life and when he had concluded his hearers felt that they knew Lincoln better than ever before.[58]

10. HE PLEADED THE LAW OF JUSTICE AND THE GOSPEL OF LIBERTY

On February 7, 1909, Rabbi J. Leonard Levy (1865–1917) of Congregation Rodeph Shalom in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, delivered a centennial birthday sermon titled "Abraham Lincoln's Religion." According to Levy, Abraham Lincoln was a religious man, though he was neither a believing nor a professing Christian. The following excerpts express Levy's assertion that Lincoln was too "broad" or "universal" a soul to have been limited by any one particular religious creed. Remarkably, the rabbi compared Lincoln to Jesus; both men were great souls and chosen of God, both were misunderstood and undervalued during their lifetimes, and both, after meeting their ends, "arose again" to life immortal.

Abraham Lincoln's Religion

He kept the Ten Commandments and realized the Nine Beatitudes. He was great in his goodness.

There is none perfect but God, and Lincoln was not God. He was supremely human, but intensely noble. His was a deeply religious soul. Weighed by human creeds he may be found wanting, but tested by the qualities dear to God, he was one of His chosen. Rejected by sectarian dogmatists, he was, nevertheless, acceptable to the Father of all. Doomed by Articles of Faith, he was saved by the possession of the "clean hands and the pure heart," which entitle their owner to "abide in the hill of the Lord and to dwell in His tabernacle."[59] The opinions of a bitter and bigoted past, which he could not accept, would cast him out from the eternal justice of God, but he felt secure in the Divine Love. He knew that the Divine will is righteousness and that God accepts all who seek Him with all their heart and soul.

If I hold that Lincoln was religious in the best sense of the term, it is because we must differentiate between theology, creed, dogma and religion. For, what is religion? It is the consciousness of God's overruling Presence, and the performance of duty as done unto Him in His sight. There are many who overburden, who overload religion with ritual and ceremony, as there are many who would have us believe that religion is to be gauged by creeds and Confessions of Faith. Religion bears reference to what a man is, rather than to what a man says he believes. It is the recognition of the immediate, and personal accountability of man to his Maker. Of this the test cannot be the creed, but the life. Religion is a sentiment, deep, holy, all-encompassing, but a sentiment nevertheless; and like every other sentiment it can only be estimated by the life it inspires, by the personality it produces. Let a man be possessed of never so finely-woven a chain of creedal statements; let him hold the most deftly constructed Confession; let him cry aloud with never so earnest a voice, Credo, Credo, "I believe, I believe"; I, nevertheless, hold that conduct and not creed is the measure of religion.

The following lines express my own view, and I think, yours also:

'Tis not by prayers loud and long,

By contrite beating of the breast,
By psalm, by hymn, by sacred song,
God's name most truthfully is blest.

'Tis not by ceremonies vain,
By antique creed, by ancient rite,
By customs, which your souls disdain,
You worship God, the Lord of Right.

But when you aid the righteous meek,
Bring light unto the darkened mind,
Support the falling, help the weak,
You praise the Lord of all mankind.

Love mercy, practice justice true!
Strive e'er to make injustice fall!
Assist thy fellow-man, and you
Will worship God, the Lord of all.[60]

If in these words we find an interpretation, however weak, of the spirit of Israel's Prophets; if they represent, however feebly, the point of view of Isaiah and Micah, and later worthies of the House of Israel; who shall say that Lincoln was not religious? His, too, was a religion of simplicity. "Whenever a church will write over its doors, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and soul and mind and might,' and 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,' and impose no other qualifications for membership, that church will I join." In words, such as these, Lincoln asserted the faith that was in him. One whose words bear authority to hundreds of millions of men said that these are the two greatest commandments, as they were always recognized to be in Israel whose prophet wrote them.

But Lincoln, though religious, was not a believing and confessing Christian. He was not a member of a church. Many say that, on this account, he was not religious, and that he is not among "the saved." Some of the noblest souls who ever lived were too broad for the narrow limits of many a church. Some of the crudest, and most unscrupulous of men have been church-members, founders or endowers of churches. I, for one, will take my chances in the after-life with Abraham Lincoln, rather than with Charles IX of France, or Charles I of England, or Tomas Torquemada of Spain. The God who will accept these and cast him out of eternal life is one for whom I have naught but contempt. I shall trust myself to the God Lincoln loved, with much more confidence than the god of recreant kings and persecuting ecclesiastics.

…Lincoln's religion was devoid of formalism and ritualism; it was free from soul-cramping dogmatism; it was untainted by bigotry. It was a high expression of those fundamental virtues, those basic qualities that mark the highest manhood. It was expressed by honesty, sincerity, patriotism, malice toward none and charity for all. It was a universal creed, the noble expression of his universal goodness.

…Like a Moses, Lincoln cried, "Send away the people that they may be free," for upon his ear there fell the sound of the taskmaster's lash and the hissing of the whip. He led the turbulent people to the foot of a Sinai of duty, and he read to them the law of

right and truth. He wandered with them through a wilderness of trial; before him went the pillar of cloud, difficulty, and the pillar of light, faith. He provided his people with manna, the heavenly manna of service. He drank the waters of Marah, and from the flinty rocks of callous hearts and out of the selfishness of brutalized masses, he made the waters of sympathy to flow. He spoke face to face with God. He reached his Nebo. For a few days, he looked over into the Promised Land, and then God gave His beloved sleep.

Like a Jesus, he was born in a manger. There were no angels, however, to announce his birth, but with his coming, there was the assurance of peace on earth and good-will toward men, as well as glory to God in the highest. He was born in poverty, and of him the doubting Nathaniels said, "Can there any good thing come out of Kentucky?" He saw the cause of the downtrodden and the oppressed, and he lived to make men noble, and died to make them free. He pleaded for the law of justice and the gospel of liberty. God called him to be a witness to the truth. The plain people loved him. They heard him gladly. They cried before him, "Master." They accepted him as leader. They, however, placed upon his head the crown of thorns and surrounded him with the halo of martyrdom, because he drove the traffickers in human flesh out of the Temple of the Lord, and scourged with his bitter indignation the money-changers who dealt in human souls. He passed through the Gethsemane of trial. He prayed, "O that this bitter cup might pass away, but if it be Thy will, O Father, Thy will, not mine be done."[61] He met his end on a Calvary, crucified as the truly great have so often been.

Buried, he arose again, and he has since become a spirit immortal.[62]

11. THE PERSONIFICATION OF THE AMERICAN NATION

Edward A. Fischkin (1871–1951), a physician, essayist, and Jewish educator, delivered the main address at the Lincoln Centennial Celebration of the Chicago Hebrew Institute on February 11, 1909. He told his listeners that American Jews identify with the "glorious character of Lincoln." In the excerpts that follow, Fischkin declares that Lincoln's love of liberty and his commitment to social equality enabled Jews to "glory in…this nation for its personification of Jewish ideals." It was in America, Fischkin asserts, that Jewish people could earnestly dedicate themselves both *to the welfare of their country* and *to their religion. The love of freedom and the respect for the power of the mind were values that Lincoln and the Jews had in common. Fischkin concluded his oration by yoking these two ideals together in an almost paroxysmal paean to Reason.*

Lincoln and the Jewish Spirit

What I intend this evening is to determine our own relation to this national celebration, to ascertain our place at this festival of the American nation. We are part and parcel of this great nation. The joy of this country is our joy, the pride of the nation is our pride. But we are assembled here this evening not only as Americans, but as American Jews. Not only as patriots, but as patriotic units in this great family of races and nationalities. What is our relation to the glorious character of Lincoln, what is our claim to his fame, what our influence on the formation of his great personality?

…For if there is any congeniality between the soul of a people and the character of a person, it is the striking similarity between the ideals and aspirations of the Jewish people and those of Abraham Lincoln, it is the feelings, thoughts, and instincts of our people embodied in the personality of this American hero. It is the intellectual affinity

of the soul, the "Wahlverwandtschaft der Seelen," which makes the memory of Lincoln adorable and sacred to us as Jews….

What are Jewish ideals? What is the essence of our national soul? What the moving principle of our long historic life? History gives but one answer to these questions: our religion, and it gives but one interpretation to our religion: liberty—liberty and human dignity. Liberty and human dignity are the only ideals which have filled our soul, the only traits which have marked our character, the only motives which have made our history, the only features which have characterized our religion. Judaism and liberty are synonymous. Mosaism and human dignity are equivalent. The Decalogue is the basis of every declaration of the rights of men that has ever been made, and the preface to the Ten Commandments explicitly states that the reason why Israel shall obey them is that it made them free. "You shall not be slaves" is the refrain to every commandment and to every precept given in the Bible. Anti-slavery is the living ideal, the moving spirit, the essence of the Thora; it is a principle, an instinct, a primal energy which has given cause and meaning to every prescription of the Old Testament: be it the rest of the Sabbath, the joy of festivals, the care of the needy or the love for the stranger….

Without liberty, and equality and the pursuit of happiness for all men, America had no attraction for him. "When the know-nothings get control," wrote he in a letter, "it will read, 'All men are created equal, except negroes and foreigners and Catholics.'… When it comes to this I shall prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty—Russia for instance, where despotism can be taken pure and without the base alloy of hypocrisy."…

His ideal of political equality incorporated also the Jewish ideal of social equality. Social justice was for him the basis of a society of equals. "That is the real issue," was his expression, debating with Douglas at Alton, Illinois, in 1858. "It is the eternal struggle between these two principles—right and wrong—throughout the world."…

This, ladies and gentlemen, are the traits in Lincoln's character, which make his memory venerable and sacred to us, not only as Americans, but as Jews…. In today's celebration, we not only pay tribute to Lincoln as the personification of the American nation, but we glory in our belonging to this nation for its personification of Jewish ideals. This celebration is not only the expression of our American patriotism, but is also the reverberation of accumulated impulses of our Jewish soul. For this is the nation that has built its institutions on the principles of the Old Testament. For this is the land where the lofty sacred Jewish ideals of liberty became the heritage of the people. We celebrate the glorious work of a great American patriot, who sealed his faith in free institutions in his blood and who left us the sacred heritage of liberty and of the free and undisturbed pursuit of our own happiness, but we pay here tribute also to our own glorious past, to the spirit of Israel which revived in this land of liberty….

Let our adherence to our glorious past be combined with the adhesion to our American future. Let the love of American institutions be nourished by the love of Jewish ideals. Let us devote ourselves to the sacred task of keeping alive the identity of these two ideals, that the vision of the greatest visionary shall become realized, that the emancipator's dream of political freedom shall become an actuality, which he expressed in the inimitable, beautiful words: "And what a noble ally this to the cause of political freedom; with such an aid its march cannot fail to be on and on, till every son of earth shall drink in rich fruition the sorrow-quenching draughts of perfect liberty. Happy day

when—all appetites controlled, all poisons subdued, all matter subjected—mind, all conquering mind, shall live and move, the monarch of the world. Glorious Consummation! Hail, fall of fury! Reign of reason, all hail!”[63]

12. THE PERSONIFICATION OF JEWISH VALUES

The towering rabbinic scholar Solomon Schechter (1847–1915) adulated Lincoln even before he immigrated to America. On February 12, 1909, Dr. Schechter delivered an address in commemoration of the centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth to an audience at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York. Schechter informed his listeners that during his childhood, President Lincoln seemed to him to be the modern-day embodiment of the great Jewish sage and scholar Hillel. While other children studied Lincoln as an American statesman, Schechter “was always studying [Lincoln] from the viewpoint of the student of Jewish literature.” In doing so, this distinguished president of a rabbinical seminary delivered a learned discourse that insisted that for the throngs of Jewish immigrants, “Lincoln, his life, his history, his character, his entire personality, with all its wondrous charm and grace, its sobriety, patience, and self-abnegation and sweetness, has come to be the very prototype of a rising humanity.”[64]

Abraham Lincoln

It may perhaps not be entirely uninteresting to listen to one whose first acquaintance with Lincoln was made in far-distant Roumania through the medium of Hebrew newspapers some forty-five years ago. There Lincoln was described as originally a wood-chopper (prose for “rail-splitter”), which fired the imagination of the boy to recognize in the President of the United States, a new Hillel, for legend described the latter as having been engaged in the same occupation before he was called by the people to the dignity of Patriarch, or President of the Sanhedrin. Years have come and years have gone, and the imagination of the boy was in many respects corrected by the reading of serious books bearing on the history of the United States, and particularly on that of the Civil War. But this in no way diminished his admiration for his hero, Abraham Lincoln, whom he was always studying, from the viewpoint of the student of Jewish literature; a literature which, in spite of its eastern origin, affords so much in the way of parallel and simile to the elucidation of many a feature in the story of the great Westerner of Westerners.

…The greatest human and at the same time religious document, however, left us by Lincoln, for which history hardly affords any model, except perhaps that of the Scriptures is, as is well known, his Second Inaugural: “‘The Almighty has His own purpose. Woe unto the world because of offenses; for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh.’[65] If we shall suppose that American slavery is one of those offenses which, in the providence of God must needs come, but which, having continued through his appointed time, he now wills to remove, and that he gives to both North and South this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came, shall we discern therein any departure from the divine attributes which the believers in a living God always ascribe to him? Fondly do we hope—fervently do we pray—that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away. Yet, if God wills that it continue until all the wealth piled by the bondsman's two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall be sunk, and until every drop of blood drawn with the lash shall be paid by another drawn with the sword, as was said three

thousand years ago, so still it must be said: 'The Judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.'"[66]

When reading the lines just given, one can hardly believe that they formed a part of a message addressed in the nineteenth century to an assembly composed largely of men of affairs and representatives of a special political party, surrounded by all the pomp and paraphernalia of one of the greatest legislative bodies the world had ever seen. One rather imagines himself transported into a camp of contrite sinners determined to leave the world and its vanities behind them, possessed of no other thought but that of reconciliation with their God, and addressed by their leader when about to set out on a course of penance. Indeed, how little the religious sentiments manifest in this document echoed those of either party is evident from a letter of Lincoln to Thurlow Weed, with reference to the Second Inaugural: "…I believe it is not immediately popular. Men are not flattered by being shown that there has been a difference of purpose between the Almighty and them. To deny it, however, in this case, is to deny that there is a God governing the world. It is a truth which I thought needed to be told, and, as whatever of humiliation there is in it falls most directly on myself, I thought others might afford for me to tell it." To take upon one's self the burden of humiliation in which a whole nation should share, is another feature of religious mysticism which realizes in the sphere of morality the unity of humanity and in the realm of history the union of the nation, so that it does not hesitate to suffer and to atone for the sins of the generation.

Nothing is more congenial to the student of Jewish literature than these ingredients in Lincoln's mental make-up which found their expression in his stories, his repartee, his wit and sarcasm, in all of which he was such a consummate master. In this literature, the "mashal" (comparison) or "maaseh" (story) are the most prominent. They were mostly used by way of illustration. The use of the "mashal" (or comparison) in particular, is illustrated by the Rabbis by another "mashal," comparing it to the handle which enables people to take hold of a thing or subject. Occasionally, it forms the introduction to the most solemn discourse. Thus it is recorded of a famous Rabbi that before he commenced his lectures on points of law before his disciples, he would first tell them something humorous to make them laugh, and then, resuming his natural self, commenced in solemn frame of mind his discourse. I need hardly remind you here of the well-known tradition in connection with the President's first reading of the Emancipation Proclamation to the members of his cabinet (September 22, 1862). They met in his office at the White House, and then took their seats in the usual order. Lincoln then took Artemus Ward's book, and read from it the chapter, "High-Handed Outrage at Utica," which he thought very funny, and enjoyed the reading of it greatly, while the members of the cabinet, except Stanton, laughed with him. Then he fell into a grave tone and began the discussion preceding the perusal of this great historical and momentous document.

To give another example: When the Rabbi wanted to impress his audience with the evil consequences of intemperance, he would say, "Story: Once upon a time there was a pious man whose father was addicted to strong drink, which brought great shame upon him. On one occasion, the pious man walked in the street in a pouring rain, when he perceived a drunken man lying in the gutter and exposed to the abuse of the street urchins, who made sport of him. He thereupon thought in his heart, 'I will induce father to come here to show him the humiliation he brings upon himself by his dissipation.'

The father came, but the first thing he did was to ask the drunken man for the address of the inn where such good wine was sold."[67]

13. THE REALIZATION OF THE TRUE SPIRIT OF JUDAISM

On February 11, 1909, the New York Times *proudly declared: "The Whole City to Join in Honoring Lincoln." Indeed, in the New York metropolitan area, more than 600 meetings and events had been planned for the upcoming twenty-four hour period.*[68] *At one of these events, the future president of Yeshiva University, Rabbi Bernard Revel (1885–1940), delivered a centennial oration. Revel, who was in the process of completing his doctoral studies at New York University and Dropsie College, lavishly extolled Lincoln as a modern-day prophet who possessed the embodiment of the Jewish spirit. For most Americans, Lincoln was "the first typical American," but for Revel, Lincoln should "more justly be said to represent the summation of all the noblest qualities of Judaism."*

Lincoln and the Jewish Spirit

Imbued with deep religious feeling and belief in the strength of truth and justice, armed with the Bible, "the Great Book," as he believed, that "God has given to man where all the truth of the saviour of the world is communicated," and having for his motto, "Let us have faith that right makes might, and in that faith as to the end dare to do our duty," he relied upon the assistance of Divine Providence, and during all his life the Lord, our God, was with him as he was with Washington, the Moses of the Union. Through him God emancipated, not only the millions of slaves, but freed the nation as well. Like Joshua, Lincoln lived to see the cause of the nation triumph, to behold the Union victorious and peace and tranquility prevailing in the land. With pride he carried the flag of the people, whom he emancipated and the Union which he saved, until his day of martyrdom.

In the war which Lincoln proclaimed for "Union and Freedom" the Jews were in the front ranks. For they, more than any other nation, had felt the scourge of the task-master and knew the heart of the oppressed. The history of the Jews is one long tragedy of personal sacrifice and heroism, and it is no wonder, therefore, that they were the first to re-echo the cry of abolition and respond to Lincoln's call. During that dark and trying time they took an active part in arousing the sentiments of the people, and throughout the country, North and South, the earnestness of the Jewish character found expression in their devotion to the Union cause. The first official call to organize the abolition movement was signed by four Jews and one gentile, and Jewish editors, writers, rabbis, preachers and men of affairs united in sowing the seeds of liberty. With their blood also the Jews of this country rushed to support the cause of the Union. At the outbreak of the Civil War the number of Jews in this country was less than 150,000. Out of these New York alone furnished 1,996 Jewish soldiers, among them being five brothers from a single family, as well as Col. S. Levy and his three sons. Pennsylvania furnished 527 soldiers, and among their number were the three brothers Emanuel. Moreover, in Lincoln himself were fused all the essential elements of Judaism. If he can justly be called the first typical American he can more justly be said to represent the summation of all the noblest qualities of Judaism.

…Lincoln combined the gentlest feeling of the heart with a rigid sense of duty and the perseverance necessary to fulfill that duty. He possessed spiritual insight, moral

conviction, solid resolution, undying courage and faith and hope unfailing. He lived in the spirit. God was to him an ever-present, ever-poignant influence. He sympathized with men in the plane of humanity and regarded them in the spirit of philosophy. His fundamental democracy, which was to him a matter more of instinct than of reason, his belief in man's dignity, worth and moral nature gave him faith that on the whole and in the long run man will choose the good and reject the evil. He was convinced that every man should be his own master, should have the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. An ideal son of the author of the Declaration of Independence and the makers of the Constitution, he was imbued with a spirit of justice, without which freedom is of no avail and is destined to perish. Justice was indeed the breath of his life. Of all the American people, the most humane of any people on earth, Lincoln was the most humane. His great heart throbbed with sympathy for all the unfortunate and shared the pain of every suffering being.

These qualities, which are the brightest gems in the diadem of the greatest American, are they not of Jewish origin? If much of the best that is in the thought and tendencies of progressive life is due to Jewish inspiration, and if all the great social reformers of history have drawn their inspiration from the Jewish prophets, if the Bible is the vade mecum of the Pilgrim fathers from which they received their strength, their hopes and their sustenance, Lincoln was the realization of the true spirit of Judaism. Israel was the first democracy, its religion the first proclamation of freedom. In the very threshold of the Bible, the fatherhood of God, which results in the brotherhood of man, is proclaimed. The dignity of man is the basic conception of Israel's religion. Freedom is to Israel the most sacramental word. It embodied freedom and justice in its commonwealth. Freedom is the underlying motive of Israel's prophecies, hopes, festivals and prayers. Throughout the ages Israel's message to the world was that of freedom and righteousness. It was Judaism that first proclaimed human brotherhood. “Love ye the stranger.” It was the Jewish prophet, who, in all the stirring grandeur of indignant rage, cried out, “Have we not all one father? Has not one God created us all?”[69] These were the principles for which Lincoln lived and died. And when the day will come and the American nation following its great prophet, Lincoln will become a model of justice, and through justice a pattern of peace to the world; when the American nation, led by the spirit of its great saviour and preserver, will add its share to the realization of the day which the Jewish prophet's inward vision foresaw thousands of years ago; when there will be universal peace growing out of universal justice and the American nation will show itself worthy of this, its greatest son, then the birthday of Lincoln will be the greatest holiday of a happy, progressive humanity and will represent a milestone in a new era of mankind's history.[70]

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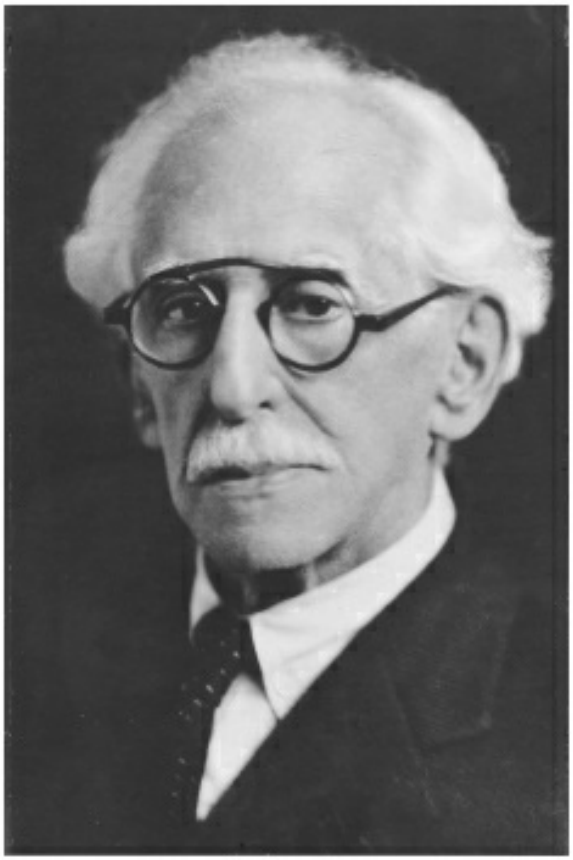
“His Name Will Ever Be Green in Your Hearts”: Jews and the Cultural Preservation of Lincoln's Legacy

As we have seen, rabbis and Jewish leaders joined with their fellow citizens in eulogizing Lincoln after his assassination. Similarly, American Jews played an active role in the renaissance of interest in Lincoln's life, which would ultimately lead to his virtual apotheosis toward the end of the nineteenth century and into the first decades of the twentieth century. During this time, American Jews not only celebrated Lincoln and his Jewish qualities through a wide range of oratorical and literary presentations but also produced a diverse array of fine arts that contributed to the overall national trend of memorializing and exalting Lincoln. Jews lauded Lincoln on canvas, in bronze, in music, in decorative arts, and in belles lettres. American Jews also actively participated in the growing interest in collecting, preserving, and studying Lincolniana, historical material relating to his life and legacy.

Jewish Scholars of Lincoln

In 1894, the publisher Samuel S. McClure (1857–1949) hired a talented reporter named Ida Tarbell (1857–1944) and directed her to find new material on Lincoln, who, in McClure's opinion, was “the most vital factor in [American] life since the Civil War.”[1] Tarbell delivered what McClure ordered, and the American public gobbled up her interesting articles on Lincoln that appeared serially in *McClure's Magazine* beginning in 1895. Tarbell's initial research convinced her that McClure had led her to an excellent topic. She realized that there existed a large field of unharvested primary source material on Lincoln, and she decided to begin work on a new Lincoln biography. Tarbell depended on the help of research assistants and also the reading public, who enjoyed her serialized articles on Lincoln and volunteered to assist her. She collected a remarkable array of new data on Lincoln and published a fresh two-volume biography titled *The Life of Abraham Lincoln: Drawn from Original Sources and Containing Many Speeches, Letters and Telegrams Hitherto Unpublished.*

An unassuming and somewhat phlegmatic Jewish newspaper editor named Isaac Markens became one of those who eagerly contributed to Tarbell's research on Lincoln. Markens, a modest businessman and journalist, was a pioneering Lincoln enthusiast and the first Jewish researcher to study Lincoln's relationship with American Jewry. As a young man, Markens earned his living by working as a secretary and administrative assistant. He eventually became an editor for a number of newspapers in New York, including the *New York Commercial Advertiser*, the *Mail and Express*, and the *New York Star.* For many years, Markens was also a member of the New York Cotton Exchange.[2]



Isaac Markens, newspaper correspondent and prodigious researcher, was the first to write about Lincoln and American Jewry.
Photographic print ICHi-59748; Chicago History Museum.

During the early 1880s, while working as an editor for the *Mail and Express*, Markens prepared a series of essays titled “Hebrews in America.” The positive response of the paper's readers spurred Markens's interest in writing about the history of Jewish life in America. By 1888, he had expanded his newspaper series into a significant publication that became a pioneering comprehensive effort to chronicle the history of American Jewry: *Hebrews in America: A Series of Historical and Biographical Sketches.* Although Markens was not a scientifically trained historian, he, like Ida Tarbell, approached his research with the zeal of an investigative reporter. He delved deeply into published volumes, state records, and historical societies in order to find his data. To his credit, Markens also solicited numerous oral histories from prominent contemporaries. Not surprisingly, the oral memoirs he procured from men like Isaac M. Wise, Bernhard Felsenthal (1822–1908), Isaac P. Mendes (1854–1904), Benjamin F. Peixotto, Jacob Ezekiel (1812–99), and many others often include interesting and valuable historical information that would have been lost had it not been for Markens and his various publications. At this same time, a small but noteworthy number of university-trained scholars such as Cyrus Adler (1863–1940) and Jacob H. Hollander (1871–1940) joined together with independent researchers such as Leon Hühner (1871–1957) and Max J. Kohler (1871–1934) to collect and preserve documentary evidence relating to the history of Jewish life in America as well. In 1892, a group of these scholars established the American Jewish Historical Society, and Markens participated in the work of the society from its earliest days.[3]

As Markens collected biographical material for his work on the history of American Jewry, he discovered that a number of Jews claimed to have had a personal relationship with Abraham Lincoln, including Dr. Abraham B. Arnold (1820–1904), Leopold J. Blumenberg, Abram J.

Dittenhoefer, Henry Greenebaum, Marcus Otterbourg, and Simon Wolf. According to Markens's contemporaries, the information he uncovered while researching his volume on American Jewish history stimulated his interest in gathering material for a full-scale monograph on Lincoln and the Jews. It is likely, in fact, that Markens shared many of his discoveries with Ida Tarbell, as the two investigative reporters were conducting research on Lincoln at the very same time. By the dawn of the twentieth century, Markens had amassed an impressive collection of primary source material relating to Lincoln and the Jews.[4]

As was his investigative custom, Markens corresponded with a wide variety of individuals who seemed likely to possess valuable source material on Lincoln's life, including Robert Todd Lincoln (1843–1926), John Hay, and Helen Nicolay (the daughter of Lincoln's personal secretary, John Nicolay). Although Robert Lincoln's early communications with Markens offered the researcher little hope for meaningful cooperation, the persistent Markens managed to win the reclusive Robert's confidence. The two men developed a remarkable correspondence that lasted more than two decades.[5]

The Markens/Lincoln correspondence sheds a great deal of light on the notoriously private Robert, who overcame his usual reticence, responded patiently to Markens's numerous queries, and helped him with his research. Scholars have relied on the Markens-Lincoln correspondence to unravel some interesting archival mysteries regarding a few famous Lincoln documents. In 1915, for example, Markens informed Lincoln that he had located the missing “original manuscript” of the Gettysburg Address. Eventually, Markens's ongoing communication with Lincoln resulted in bringing that valuable document into the holdings of the Library of Congress. In 1917, Markens posed a number of questions to Robert concerning a letter that Abraham Lincoln had written to a widow named Bixby in 1864. Mrs. Bixby had lost her five sons during the Civil War—all of them killed while fighting for the Union. Many had wondered whether the moving letter of consolation was written by Lincoln or by one of his secretaries. Robert's response to Markens's inquiry has frequently been used by scholars to confirm the authenticity of the Bixby letter.[6]

Markens's historical sleuthing seems to have impressed the only surviving son of the sixteenth president. In 1913, Robert wrote that he had read Markens's volume on the Gettysburg Address titled *Lincoln's Masterpiece* “with great pleasure,” and he praised the author for the “labor and zeal” that was evident in the final product. Emboldened by these compliments, Markens sent Lincoln his two earlier publications, which he again claimed to “read with interest.” As Markens began collecting material for what he hoped would be a major biography on Lincoln, he intensified his correspondence with Robert Lincoln.[7]

Markens's interest in American Jewish history and Lincoln naturally coalesced as the nation approached the centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth, February 12, 1909. As early as 1907, the Illinois State Assembly resolved to organize a massive commemoration of the Lincoln Centennial, and similar celebrations took place throughout the country. As a contribution to the centennial commemorations, Markens wrote a lengthy monograph titled *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, which he published in 1909 and, again, in a 1910 edition of the *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*. This monograph constituted the first attempt to reconstruct the nature of Lincoln's relationship with American Jewry.

In contrast to other Lincoln scholars who confessed their unending and adoring admiration for Lincoln's humanity and his numerous accomplishments, Markens remained mostly detached in his study of Lincoln. He simply observed that despite the “vast amount of interesting material bearing upon [Lincoln's] relations to the Jews,” no one had yet attempted to reconstruct the

details of this history. Modestly describing himself as a "student of the great war President," Markens suggested that the upcoming centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth provided him with a fitting occasion to provide readers with a history of American Jewry's relationship with "the first of our countrymen to reach the lonely heights of immortal fame."[8]

Those who admired his work insisted that Markens was a true lover of the Great Emancipator: "[Lincoln] was his passion, he was his hobby, he was his cloud by day and pillar of fire by night." Trained as a newspaper correspondent, Markens sought out "old magazines, newspapers, conversations, interviews, and documents, all of which, together with the still surviving actors of the time, were quickly disappearing." Markens was a tireless researcher who relished looking for the proverbial needle in the haystack. Because many of the letters that Markens solicited from those who knew Lincoln seem now to be lost, Markens's *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* contains source materials that make the work an enduring and especially valuable printed resource filled with primary data.[9]

After *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* appeared, Markens published three additional studies on Lincoln: *Why Lincoln Spared Three Lives* (1911), *President Lincoln and the Case of John Y. Beall* (1911), and, to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the Gettysburg Address, *Lincoln's Masterpiece: A Review of the Gettysburg Address, New in Treatment and Matter* (1913). Markens then began to work on what he hoped would be a major biographical study of Lincoln's life.[10]

Markens's historical contributions to the study of Lincoln have been largely overlooked by scholars. The importance of his efforts, however, did not escape the attention of a New York lawyer named Emanuel Hertz (1870–1940), who succeeded Markens in becoming one of the nation's leading experts on Lincoln in the 1920s and 1930s. Like Markens, Hertz's interest in Lincoln began with a scholarly exploration of Lincoln's relationship with Jews but subsequently led him to become a major collector of Lincolniana and a highly regarded authority on Lincoln's life and career.[11]

Hertz, the older brother of Rabbi Joseph H. Hertz (1872–1946), chief rabbi of Great Britain, immigrated to New York City from Austria in 1884. Like his brother, Hertz initially studied at the Jewish Theological Seminary. After completing his undergraduate studies at City College of New York in 1892, he earned a master's degree from Columbia University in 1894 and, the following year, upon completing a law degree at Columbia, became an attorney. Toward the end of 1923, Hertz's synagogue, Washington Heights Congregation, invited him to deliver a speech the following February in commemoration of Lincoln's birthday.[12] He went to the public library to research his topic, and according to his own testimony, "from then on he gave all of his spare time to the accumulation of original material [on Lincoln]."[13]

Emanuel Hertz, a lawyer by profession, became one of the nation's leading experts on Lincoln in the 1920s and 1930s. Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 516.

In preparing to speak about Lincoln to the members of his synagogue, Hertz undoubtedly examined a copy of Isaac Markens's *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*. The title itself certainly would have interested him. He was deeply involved in Jewish life, having served as the president of his synagogue, and, of course, the speech he was preparing would be given to a Jewish audience. The address Hertz produced suggested that one particular section of Markens's monograph especially captured his imagination: "Demonstrations Following the Assassination." Markens had chronicled the expressions of shock and grief that emanated from the Jewish community immediately following Lincoln's tragic death. Although Markens's examination of the sermons was far from exhaustive, Hertz made special mention in his address of the eulogies and synagogal memorial resolutions that Markens cited.

It seems that Hertz's inspiration for his first talk on Lincoln came from the memorial resolution that Philadelphia's Mickve Israel adopted in the wake of Lincoln's murder, in which they declared him "one of the best and purest presidents, who like the law-giver Moses, brought a nation to the verge of the haven of peace, and like him was not allowed to participate in its consummation." The theme that Hertz selected for his first address was "Lincoln the Seer," emphasizing that just as Moses led the children of Israel, so too did Lincoln lead the American nation. Moses and Lincoln, Hertz concluded, were both prophetic figures chosen by God to fulfill a divine mission.[14]

Hertz was inspired by Markens's discoveries and admired his scholarly achievements. When Markens died in 1928, Hertz lavishly praised the unassuming writer's conscientiousness: "[Markens] read more newspapers in his search for Lincoln material than any other man I ever met or heard of." In particular, Hertz lauded Markens's monograph on Lincoln and the Jews:

> Had it not been for his valuable brochure on "Lincoln and the Jews" in which he enumerates Lincoln's Jewish friends some of the most valuable leads in that most neglected phase of Lincoln's life would have been forever lost…. [N]o one spoke a

> word until Markens took up the task and demonstrated that we, the Jewish people, too, stood by the Union…. Markens compiled some of the more important events, when the Jewish soldier or private citizen came in contact with Lincoln—and demonstrated once again that Lincoln knew no distinction between creeds or classes—he was indeed Father Abraham to all who made up the great country whose destinies were in his strong but weary hands.[15]

In contrast to Markens, who left scant explanation for his interest in Lincoln and who maintained something of a scientific detachment regarding his Lincoln studies, Hertz literally deified the sixteenth president: "His greatest contemporaries shrink by comparison—and it was really an era of great men. He was, by universal consent, the first American, and was responsible for more epoch-making accomplishments in these four years than had ever been accomplished by another in any other preceding four years…. [His soul resides in] the celestial councils where were his kindred spirits of the ages: Hammurabi and Moses, Socrates and Solomon, Plato and Aristotle, Columbus, Galileo and Luther…. He stood before the celestial throne of his Maker!"[16]

The study of Lincoln intoxicated Hertz, and he zealously collected thousands of papers, letters, and documents relating to Lincoln's life and career. "Lincoln is a mighty tree," Hertz wrote, and "the shade he cast will endure as long as there is an American history." In a few short years, Hertz had assembled one of the nation's largest private collections of Lincolniana, and in 1931, he began publishing a series of newspaper articles, under the heading "New Light on Lincoln," which were based on a massive number of previously unpublished letters and documents from state archives that he had uncovered and preserved. Hertz's Lincoln collection became so large that he was able to donate 15,000 of his duplicate books to the Lincoln Memorial University near Knoxville, Tennessee, and subsequently, in 1927, he sold a portion of his collection at auction for $43,000. Hertz was widely acknowledged as one of the nation's leading scholars on Lincoln, and in 1936, the Society of Lincoln Authors and Collectors elected him president and Ida Tarbell honorary president.[17]

Although the primary focus of Hertz's work was to reconstruct Lincoln's entire career and personality on the basis of newly discovered documents, he never abandoned the intriguing discovery he made when he had first read Markens's essay on Lincoln and the Jews. Hertz resolved to conduct a thoroughgoing search for Jewish eulogies on Lincoln, thereby enabling him to complete the task that Markens had begun decades earlier. Once Hertz discovered that collections of Lincoln eulogies delivered by Christian preachers had already been published, he decided to do the same for the Lincoln eulogies and addresses that American Jews produced from 1865 forward.[18]

Using Markens's list as a starting point, Hertz set out to find the texts of these eulogies and publish them in a documentary volume that would show that "rabbis and [Jewish] laymen contributed their share in the threnody of lament at [Lincoln's] untimely taking off." Hertz obsessively scoured local newspapers, private libraries, bookstores, and auction houses in search of Jewish eulogies on Lincoln. He also included in his publication about a dozen Lincoln sermons that were delivered on the centennial of Lincoln's birth as well as those that were written up to the point when the book was being prepared. The result of this effort, *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue*, constitutes the largest documentary collection of American Jewish eulogies and addresses on Lincoln ever published.[19]

It was during these same tumultuous decades that separated the two world wars—when Lincoln's prestige and reputation reached its zenith in America memory—that a remarkable

number of American Jews took an active role in the effort to preserve and promulgate Lincolniana and Lincolnology. The story of Chicago's Abraham Lincoln Book Store and the concomitant proliferation of Civil War Round Table Societies illustrate this trend.

In 1938, Ralph G. Newman (1911–98) established Chicago's highly regarded Abraham Lincoln Book Store, which has become a prominent resource center for those seeking information on Lincoln and the Civil War era. Newman's well-known establishment, at that time located in the building that housed the offices of the *Chicago Daily News* on LaSalle Street, began as a used bookstore in the early 1930s. At the time, two employees of the *Chicago Daily News* were writing books on Lincoln, Carl Sandburg (1878–1967) and Lloyd Lewis (1891–1949). Impressed by Newman's remarkable ability to locate volumes they needed, Sandburg and Lewis urged Newman to abandon his general line of books and concentrate solely on books that dealt with Lincoln and the Civil War. By the early 1940s, the Abraham Lincoln Book Store in Chicago had attracted a loyal following of Lincoln experts and Civil War aficionados. Subsequently, these enthusiasts began organizing Civil War Round Table Societies wherein researchers, scholars, and amateur historians gathered to learn from one another. These societies multiplied, and today there are hundreds of branches throughout the nation.[20]

In addition to Newman, a noteworthy number of Jewish researchers patronized the Abraham Lincoln Book Store and played a founding role in the Civil War Round Table Societies, including the lawyer and well-known civil rights activist Elmer Gertz (1906–2000) and the prominent industrial executive and chemist Otto Eisenschiml (1880–1963). Although they never consciously linked their interest in Lincoln and the Civil War to their Jewish roots, Newman, Gertz, and Eisenschiml—like so many others who were immigrants or children of immigrants—found Lincoln's life and career an inspiration.[21] The phenomenon of American Jewish interest in Lincolniana and Lincolnology continued in the last decades of the twentieth century with the scholarly contributions of Harold Holzer (b. 1949) and the Shapell Manuscript Foundation in Los Angeles, an independent educational organization dedicated to collecting and researching original manuscripts and historical documents.[22]

In 1936, James G. Randall (1881–1953)—a professor of history at the University of Illinois in Champaign—published a paper he had delivered on Lincoln a few years earlier. Today, this essay is viewed as a watershed event in the historiography of Lincoln studies. In his paper, Randall insisted that although hundreds of books, articles, and essays on Lincoln had been written over the years, it would be a growing cadre of professionally trained historians that would be able to shed new light on Lincoln's life and career.[23]

Bertram Wallace Korn (1918–79) was one of the profusion of scholars and professional historians who responded to Randall's appeal. Korn, a pioneering American Jewish historian and a rabbi, was the leading disciple of the prodigious American Jewish historian Jacob Rader Marcus (1896–1995). Marcus was among the first American-born Jewish historians to use modern critical methodology in studying the history of American Jewry. Korn studied with Marcus, and his research focused primarily on Jewish life in the South during the antebellum and Civil War periods. His first volume, *American Jewry and the Civil War*, based on his doctoral dissertation, included several meticulously documented chapters that uncovered new information on Lincoln's relationship with American Jewry during that time. Korn's painstaking research and his broad familiarity with secondary literature on Lincoln resulted in the first major interpretive analysis of Lincoln's relationship with American Jewry.[24]

After identifying Lincoln's numerous Jewish associates and detailing the crucial role Lincoln played in resolving both the chaplaincy controversy and the calamity provoked by Grant's

General Orders No. 11, Korn summarized his findings by asserting that “Lincoln had friendship in his heart for all men—foreign-born and native, Negro and White, Jew and Catholic and Protestant.” Korn's carefully documented research proved that Lincoln happily associated with many Jewish citizens and called a few of those individuals his friends. “A man with Lincoln's broad understanding of human beings,” Korn concluded, “could not have been prejudiced against Jews at the first; meeting so many Jews only served to broaden his experience with them.”[25]

Bertram Wallace Korn, rabbi and historian, conducted meticulous research on Lincoln and the Jews for his volume *American Jewry and the Civil War* (1951). Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Brenner and the Lincoln Penny

Victor David Brenner (1871–1924), the man who designed the famous Lincoln penny in 1909, constitutes a remarkable example of how easily the east European Jewish immigrant identified with Lincoln and advanced the conviction that Lincoln was the American spirit incarnate. Brenner, a Lithuanian Jew who immigrated to the United States in 1890, was a talented numismatist whose father taught him to engrave while yet living in Europe. After several years of economic struggle, Brenner gained recognition for his skill and began to receive lucrative commissions to design jewelry for silversmiths as well as a variety of commemorative medals. Once he established himself, Brenner moved to Paris in 1898 and apprenticed with the renowned French medalist Louis Oscar Roty (1846–1911). In 1902, Brenner returned to the United States and began his career. His Amerigo Vespucci medal of 1903 won him broad critical acclaim. In 1908, President Theodore Roosevelt agreed to sit for Brenner so the artist could sketch his profile for a Panama medal. The timing of this sitting proved to be fortuitous for Brenner, because he would come into personal contact with the president at a very advantageous moment.[26]

Roosevelt's fascination with Lincoln has been well documented. His father had been an acquaintance of Lincoln's, and Roosevelt repeatedly recollected how he stood with his father in

the streets of New York and watched as Lincoln's funeral cortege passed by. Roosevelt kept a bust of Lincoln on his desk, and an engraving of Lincoln hung next to a portrait of his own father. Lincoln was Roosevelt's beau ideal, and the fact that he nominated John Hay, Lincoln's erstwhile private secretary, to serve as secretary of state in his administration underscored the Lincoln-Roosevelt association. In fact, the day before Roosevelt's inauguration in 1905, Hay gave Roosevelt a Lincoln "mourning ring" which contained a lock of Lincoln's hair. The gift thrilled Roosevelt, who wrote: "Surely no other president, on the eve of his inauguration, has received such a gift…. I shall think of it and you as I take the oath tomorrow." As the centennial of Lincoln's birth approached, Roosevelt and Hay took particular interest in the occasion.[27]

The idea of marking the centennial of Lincoln's birth by placing his image on U.S. currency seems to have been an outgrowth of Roosevelt's interest in beautifying American coinage in general. In 1905, Roosevelt contacted the famous American sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens (1848–1907) to discuss the idea of entirely redesigning American currency. At the time, Saint-Gaudens was one of the most respected artists in the country, having earned widespread critical acclaim for his sculptures of Civil War heroes such as Admiral David Farragut, Generals William Tecumseh Sherman and John Logan, and Abraham Lincoln himself. Roosevelt gave Saint-Gaudens a commission to redesign American currency, but the only part of the project he completed prior to his death was his beautiful "double-eagle" design for the twenty-dollar gold piece. Saint-Gaudens's death in 1907 compelled Roosevelt to turn to other artists, and good fortune had placed Brenner in the president's company at this very time.[28]

As Brenner sketched Roosevelt for the Panama medal, he had an opportunity to speak about a subject that was important to both men: Abraham Lincoln. Brenner, like many other immigrants, venerated Lincoln and viewed him as a source of hope and inspiration for American newcomers struggling to make this land their home. In 1907, Brenner had created a medallion and an electrotyped plaque of Lincoln based on Mathew Brady's (1822–96) daguerreotype of Lincoln. Showing his work to Roosevelt, Brenner suggested that the penny would be an appropriate coin for honoring Lincoln. The penny, he noted, underscored Lincoln's bond with the everyday citizen: "The smaller the value [of the coin]," he said, "the more people would handle it and come to know him."[29]

Roosevelt had already considered minting a commemorative coin for Lincoln and assumed this project would be developed as part of the commission he had given to Saint-Gaudens. Evidently, Roosevelt immediately embraced both Brenner's design and the concept that inspired it. On January 30, 1909, a note was sent from the Treasury Department to the editor of the *Numismatist*: "President Roosevelt has given his consent to the placing of the head of Lincoln on one of the popular coins. He conferred today with Director Leach, of the mint, and details are now under advisement. Victor D. Brenner, the New York sculptor, has submitted to the director some models of Lincoln busts, and these have been shown to the president. The head of Lincoln will adorn one side of the coin and the customary coat of arms the other."[30] On August 2, 1909, the first Lincoln cents were released into circulation with Brenner's initials, "V.D.B.," appearing at the bottom of the coin's reverse side, in keeping with longstanding numismatic tradition. Interestingly, a firestorm immediately arose concerning the appearance of Brenner's initials on the coin. Letters were sent to the Department of Treasury with a variety of complaints. Some groused that the recognition was unnecessary because Brenner had been paid for his design, others asserted that Brenner was a craftsman and not an artist, and still others insisted that recognition such as this was excessive and inappropriate. The initials were dropped for the second minting. Brenner was wounded by the decision, but he remained a devout patriot and

continued to produce medals and engravings that presented his own vision of “the American type, mixture of all races, conqueror and child of a new continent and a new political order.”[31]

Brenner conceived of Lincoln as the embodiment of the American spirit, yet as a Jewish immigrant he also understood how newcomers to these shores looked at Lincoln. For Brenner, Lincoln was the paradigmatic common man who embodied the best of the American spirit. Only Lincoln's image, he observed, could “touch a hardened heart.” Brenner would have been pleased to have heard that Carl Sandburg appreciated the essence of his numismatic concept: “The common, homely face of Honest Abe will look good on the penny,” Sandburg wrote, “the coin of the common folk from whom he came and to whom he belongs.”[32]

Lincoln, Jews, and American Culture

Reflecting on the influence that Abraham Lincoln has had on the development of American culture since his death in 1865, the website of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission took care to emphasize the fact that the sixteenth president's “iconic image” has long served as grist for the artist's creative mill. Lincoln's countenance “has inspired professional and amateur artists alike to paint, draw and sculpt for well over a hundred years.” Similarly, Lincoln has been the muse for countless musicians who have made him the theme of their songs and symphonies. Poets, too, began paying homage to Lincoln as early as 1865, and as the centennial of his birth approached, a number of poetic anthologies celebrating Lincoln's life and achievements began to appear. Lincoln also become a ubiquitous theme in the realm of American material culture, and innumerable frequently overlooked objects, including decorative arts, toys, and odds and ends, were adorned with Lincoln's image.[33]

As Jews increasingly entered the mainstream of American life during the course of the twentieth century, a growing number made their mark in the world of fine arts and culture. The Jews who contributed to the world of the arts were unquestionably influenced by American culture. Yet, in many instances, it is clear that traditionally Jewish motifs and themes contributed to the development of American culture itself and, in some instances, transformed it. Jews participated in the creation of both high and pop culture in America, and it is often possible to discern their distinctly parochial or particular point of view. As one historian of American Jewish culture noted, “The creativity of American Jewry has also affected and altered [American] culture. Exchanging ideas and images with the larger culture in a network of reciprocity, Jews have borrowed freely but have also expanded the contours of that larger culture—which has itself been protean and fluid.” Such a phenomenon reveals itself as we examine the way in which American Jews have memorialized Lincoln in art, song, and in belles lettres.[34]

By creating works of art, poetry, and music as well as artifacts of all sorts that venerated and memorialized Lincoln, American Jews were participating fully in the life of the nation. Loving Lincoln had become a sign of allegiance. Yet, as they participated in this ongoing endeavor, American Jews frequently infused Lincolniana with their own distinctly Jewish culture. As the French-born litterateur Anaïs Nin once observed: “We don't see things as they are, we see things as *we* are.”[35]

DOCUMENTS

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

1. Lincoln Possessed the Noblest Attributes of Human Nature

2. When You Retire, I Will Be the Ugliest Man in the Government: Adolphus S. Solomons's Reminiscences of Lincoln

LINCOLN, JEWS, AND THE FINE ARTS

3. Solomon Nuñes Carvalho's Portrait of Lincoln

4. Victor David Brenner and the Lincoln Penny

5. A Southern Jew Memorializes Lincoln: Moses Jacob Ezekiel

6. Lincoln at Gettysburg in the Eyes of an East European Jewish Immigrant

7. An American Jewish Biographer in Bronze

MUSICAL TRIBUTES TO LINCOLN

8. "Washington, Lincoln, and Moishe Rabeiny" by Joseph Rumshinsky

9. The Gettysburg Address in Yiddish

10. "Abraham" by Irving Berlin

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ARCHIVISTS, COLLECTORS, AND HISTORIANS

12. The Pioneering Researcher: Isaac Markens

13. Collector of Lincolniana: Emanuel Hertz

14. The Meticulous Scholar: Bertram W. Korn

15. The Contemporary Authority: Harold Holzer

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES

1. LINCOLN POSSESSED THE NOBLEST ATTRIBUTES OF HUMAN NATURE

On February 13, 1901, the New York Daily Tribune *published the reminiscences of a former Confederate soldier named Goodman L. Mordecai (1829?–1922).*[36] *The Mordecai family of Charleston, South Carolina, was passionately committed to the Confederate cause. Benjamin Mordecai, Goodman's father, donated the handsome sum of $10,000 to the state of South Carolina to facilitate secession.*[37] *Goodman spent four years in the Confederate army and, although he had received an honorable discharge, was apprehended by federal officers in Washington while running a blockade in order to visit Nassau on behalf of southern stockholders who had interests in the island. He spent the winter of 1864 in the Old Capitol Prison in Washington, D.C.*[38] *Friends of the Mordecai family eventually interceded with President Lincoln on Goodman's behalf in order to secure the young man's release. Despite Mordecai's Confederate pedigree, Lincoln approved his release.*

According to Goodman's own reminiscences, his benefactors insisted that the freshly paroled southerner go to the Executive Mansion and convey his personal appreciation to Lincoln for his sympathetic decision. In his published recollection of this meeting written many years later, Goodman Mordecai recalled that Lincoln extended him his hand and, with tongue in cheek,

declared, "I am happy to know I am able to serve an enemy." By 1901, Mordecai—the former Confederate soldier and partisan—had become a Lincoln enthusiast who insisted that Abraham Lincoln was "one of the greatest grandest characters in American history."

An Ex-Confederate's Tribute to Lincoln

The Great Emancipator Was Happy to Be Able to Serve an Enemy

To the Editor of The Tribune.

Sir: In the memorable winter of 1864, during the Civil War, one of the most eventful periods in our National history, occurred an incident of more than ordinary interest to every admirer of the martyred and immortal Lincoln. After receiving an honorable discharge from the Confederate army the writer, who had been an occasional contributor to the Southern press, was authorized by an officer of the most prominent blockade company in South Carolina to visit Nassau in behalf of the stockholders, who had large and valuable interests in that island. Immense cargoes of goods shipped from England to this point remained there awaiting a favorable opportunity to run the blockade at Charleston. To facilitate this without further unnecessary delay I left the latter city for Richmond with letters of introduction to the Hon. Judah P. Benjamin, the Secretary of State for the Southern Confederacy. After presenting my credentials and receiving a passport to leave the South I started immediately for Wilmington, N.C., there to embark on a blockade vessel for Nassau. On arrival, to my great amazement and discomfort, I was officially informed by General Whiting, in command of the department, that a conscription order had been issued by the Secretary of War since my departure from Richmond calling on all able-bodied men for active service and a revocation of previous passports to leave the Confederacy. Determined not to be baffled by this unforeseen and unexpected contingency, I returned to Richmond preparatory to running the gauntlet through the confederate and Federal lines. With this in view, I accidentally made the acquaintance of a gentleman whose past experience as an indefatigable blockade runner had been extraordinarily successful. In fact, I was only a novice, while this, his third trip through the lines from Richmond to Washington, had made him strictly a professional. Fortified with two passports, one from the Secretary of State and another from the city authorities, accompanied by my companion, I left Richmond, defiant, but doubtful as to the final result.

Like any young man whose first adventure had made him somewhat egotistical, I felt like proclaiming, "Here the conquering hero comes," but, remembering that absolute reticence and strict secrecy were essential to success, I reluctantly and with great difficulty suppressed my boyish emotions and proceeded on the journey. No soldier ever entered battle with greater emotion than these two weary travellers through the mountains of Virginia. Up hill and down dale, tramping and driving long and short distances, here and there, on the ragged and rugged edge of consternation and danger, these two forlorn wanderers, completely prostrated by fatigue, for a while lost their bearings, not knowing what they were doing nor where they were going. But in time of great doubt and uncertainty, when everything seems lost, there is no safer pilot than determination, pluck and strong presence of mind.

After a long and very monotonous journey we crossed the Potomac at night in the midst of a volley of musketry sharpshooting from sentinels stationed on the banks of the river, and arrived on the outskirts of Port Tobacco, Md., just before the dawn of

another day. Completely exhausted, we vainly endeavored to procure accommodations at the only hotel in the town, but were immediately informed that this was no resting place for the suspected rebels, whose presence would surely impugn the loyalty of the proprietor and thus endanger his position and interests in the community. After this rebuff we wandered to the outskirts of the town and there hailed a stage en route from Port Tobacco to Washington. Among the several passengers were furloughed Federal officers and soldiers on their way home. By these we were scrutinized with a peculiar suspicion during the trip, until our arrival at the Potomac Bridge entering Washington. Much to our amazement we were then there arrested and marched by a provost marshal's guard to headquarters for a preliminary examination preparatory to a very long confinement in the Old Capitol Prison.

Picture two forlorn, dejected, dilapidated individuals after such a struggle, on the eve of a most triumphant success, with victory near at hand, to be crushed and crestfallen, and you will thus realize defeat in all its significance. Prompted by conscientious motive we declined to take the oath of allegiance tendered us by the authorities, and as a result were remanded to the Old Capitol Prison for an indefinite period. After an incarceration of several months, while my case was being investigated by General [John H.] Martindale, then acting Secretary of War, interested friends in New-York interceded with President Lincoln in my behalf, among them an influential friend of the President, who visited Washington for the purpose of procuring my release. His call at the White House successfully accomplished this result, and in return for this act of kindness we called at the Executive Chamber to thank President Lincoln for his consideration and magnanimity.

At that time during our Civil War, when the clash of arms resounded throughout the land amid the wails of the wounded and the lamentations of the afflicted, was performed an act of philanthropy characteristic of the true philanthropist. My friend unconsciously informed the President that I had fought against the Government and that my father at that time was prominent in the Confederacy and a liberal contributor to the Southern cause. He grasped my hand, and in response answered: “I am happy to know I am able to serve an enemy.”

What a noble contrast to the prevailing bitterness and animosity of that eventful period, a gentle reminder that had he lived the North and South would have been reunited in true brotherly love at a much earlier period, as he desired it, “with charity toward all and malice toward none.” Such an act was worthy of example, and reveals a character combining the noblest attributes of human nature.

In the winter of 1865, while at the St. Lawrence Hotel, Montreal, the writer had a conversation with Wilkes Booth, who then claimed he was on his way South to run the blockade for the purpose of entering the Confederate army. A few weeks thereafter this man was an assassin, and Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. On that memorable day I was at the Queen's Hotel, Toronto, when an ex-chaplain of the Confederate army disgraced his clerical robes by exclaiming in the corridor of the hotel that the death of Lincoln was the greatest Southern victory of the war. I then narrated to him Lincoln's kindness to me and recalled to his mind the magnanimity of the illustrious statesman. He immediately acknowledged his error, bowed in submissive silence, and earnestly apologized for the words unconsciously spoken in a moment of great excitement. One of the greatest grandest characters in history was Abraham Lincoln.

I contribute this article as a tribute to his memory on this, the anniversary of his birthday, in honor of that philanthropy and magnanimity which were shining traits in the character of the Nation's martyr and benefactor.

G. L. Mordecai
New-York, Feb. 12, 1901[39]

2. WHEN YOU RETIRE, I WILL BE THE UGLIEST MAN IN THE GOVERNMENT: ADOLPHUS S. SOLOMONS'S REMINISCENCES OF LINCOLN

Adolphus S. Solomons's centennial remembrances of his encounters with Lincoln, which first appeared in the American Hebrew *on February 12, 1909, provided readers with a wonderful bouquet of anecdotes. Solomons, who owned a publishing house and a photography studio during Lincoln's years in Washington, went on to distinguish himself as an activist in both the general and Jewish communities. In 1871, Solomons was elected to Washington's House of Delegates and served as chairman of its Committee on Ways and Means. Perhaps his greatest communal achievement was the role he played in helping Clara Barton to found the American Red Cross. He also contributed to a wide range of Jewish communal causes, including his roles as a founder of Mt. Sinai Hospital in New York City, a supporter of the Jewish Theological Seminary, and a contributor to numerous welfare associations dedicated to assisting in the settlement of the east European Jewish immigrants.*[40]

In the following excerpts, Solomons eschews comment on Lincoln's political, personal, or religious virtues (beyond a closing observation that Lincoln was "one of the most beloved men God ever created"). Instead, he memorializes Lincoln with a series of humorous personal reminiscences, which provide a delightful counterpoint to the many solemn reflections that typified Lincoln encomia on the hundredth anniversary of his birth.

To know where to begin and where to end in sorting my recollections of our beloved President Lincoln is a somewhat difficult task. His memory both in gladness and in sorrow lingers with us all so heartfully, I feel as though treading on holy ground, lest my words may appear disrespectful to his sacred memory.

Where so much has been collated and written of this great man, it occurs to me that some little incidents and anecdotes of which I was personally cognizant, might have a greater interest at this time than those facts which have become matters of history.

It is well known how keen was his sense of humor—a humor so gentle and kindly that it never wounded the feelings of the most sensitive.

One day while in the White House, awaiting to see the President, I found myself in line with perhaps fifty others awaiting my turn to come. Immediately in front of me was a rather tall and stupid appearing fellow, and I wondered what in the world his mission was. It was soon after these "contrabands" had begun bringing in information relating to the enemy, and I was not surprised to hear him say to Mr. Lincoln in answer to his question, "Well my friend, what can I do for you?" "I see you are rather busy today and I will come in some other time to tell you about what a 'contraband' told me," and here the President interrupted him by a slap on the shoulder, and with a steady gaze, beginning at his muddy boots with his trousers tucked into them and looking upward to his shaggy red hair exclaimed, "Sit right down here and tell me all you know," and winking at me over the stranger's shoulder, added: "and by telling all you know it certainly cannot take you very long." Evidently the man did not see the joke, and sitting

down told a short story and was soon out of the room.

On another occasion an army officer called upon the President to tender his resignation, whereupon the President said: “All right, I accept your resignation, but nothing can compensate me for the loss of you, for when you retire I will then be the ugliest man in the employment of the government”:—and yet Mr. Lincoln was not ugly, for his tall, stooping, ungainly figure was forgotten in the loving expressions coming from a God-given joy of heart, which became instantly contagious.

His love for fun served to hide many an inward pang. One day I accepted an invitation to be present at a review of the First Army Corps of the Potomac under the command of General [John F.] Reynolds, held near Washington, and the driver of the ambulance in which he rode, becoming angry at his wild team of six mules used some rather original cuss words. Smiling, Mr. Lincoln touched the man on his shoulder and said: “Excuse me, my friend, are you an Episcopalian?”

The man greatly startled looked sheepishly around and replied: “No, Mr. President, I am a Methodist.” “Well,” said Mr. Lincoln, “I thought you must be an Episcopalian, because you swear just like Governor Seward, who is a very strict church warden.”

When Mr. Lincoln returned from his famous trip to Richmond after its surrender I chanced to be in the neighborhood of the White House early one morning, when I saw a detachment on the “route step” with “arms at will.” Between their shouts they cheered most lustily. Their wheezy and unmusical band then added to the clamor by injecting snatches of national airs with added cries for “Lincoln, Lincoln.” Presently there appeared at the second story window the tall frame of the President, who wore a brown linen duster much wrinkled and spotted with mud. Immediately the band emphasized his presence by a blare of brass instruments, the screaming of fifes and the beating of drums, fearful to hear.

An orderly stepped up to Mr. Lincoln and said: “Mr. President, the band is playing Dixie, shall I order it to stop?” “No,” said the President, “let them play; when we captured the Southerners, we captured their tunes.” The crowd called, “Speech, speech, speech,” until they were speechless themselves, and after much more racket Mr. Lincoln waved his brawny arms for silence and began a speech, which, coming from his manly, good heart, breathed such a loving, kindly feeling toward the South, that had his words been put into cold type, would have incensed the Northern masses, who were still burning with such intense enmity against the South, that he would most surely have been blamed beyond measure for his hasty expressions of forgiveness for the hated enemy of but yesterday. But he was so overjoyed with the prospects of peace that he could not restrain himself and closed by saying, that Dixie, which was the song of the Confederacy, was as much the national air of the republic now as the “Star Spangled Banner” was before the war.

Fortunately the hour was too early for reporters to be present, and I was happy when I saw no mention of the event in the afternoon papers of the day nor in subsequent editions. I afterwards learned that the body of soldiery alluded to came on the same boat from Richmond with the President, who had dodged them after landing, but who were determined to see him once before disbanding to their homes.

On one occasion when business took me to the White House, I had the good fortune to find Mr. Lincoln in one of his most jocular and reminiscent moods. He told me the following story of “How the Reverend Mr. Shofle acquired riches”:

“When I first entered upon my duties as President,” said Mr. Lincoln, grasping my arm in his peculiar way with one of his long bony hands, while he ran his fingers through and brushed back his shaggy black hair, “I fully made up my mind to appoint to office those only whom I knew to be honest and who had suitable ability. In any event honesty should be the prerequisite, as the lack of a little ability might be easily made up by an honest man endeavoring to do his whole duty conscientiously. While this resolve was fresh upon me there came to visit me a very old friend, a Baptist minister, who had traveled so fast that he had not yet shaken the Illinois real estate off his capacious boots.

“‘Why, what brings you here, Mr. Shofle?’ (which was not his name, but it will do just as well.)

“‘Well,’ he replied. ‘I came down here firstly to see you and get an old fashioned shake of the hand, and secondly to say that the folks of my congregation are so poor that they can hardly afford me a decent living and I thought maybe you could give me some sort of an office that would pay me better.’

“‘Certainly,’ I answered, quickly, for I knew he was an honest man and I was looking for stock of that kind. ‘Have you in view any particular office?’

“‘No,’ said the Rev. Mr. Shofle complacently; ‘I would not know what to select if you were to hand me a list to choose from.’

“‘Nor I what to give you; but I will tell you who will help you out. You know Col. Chootsper of your county. He is now on duty in the Treasury Department. Go and see him; he is a man of resources, and will get you out of your difficulty. Come back to-morrow and report.’

“The next day, according to promise, Shofle put in an appearance, and said that the Colonel had recommended him to apply for a certain position in the Revenue Department.

“‘What is the salary?’ said I, while signing in a mechanical way a pile of commissions.

“‘Two thousand dollars a year.’

“‘Well, do you think that enough? I may be able to do better for you,’ for I knew he was an honest man and thought he might just as well as not get a place where he could earn more money.

“‘Oh, plenty, Uncle Abe, for that is more than double the amount I've been earning for years past.’

“Now I began to think,” said our martyr-President, “that I would have to force him in to a place paying a larger salary, and where the government would have a corresponding return for his valuable services, for I was more than ever—if that were possible—convinced that he was an honest man; but I finally concluded to give him his own way, and he was appointed accordingly. Off he went rejoicing but I felt rather mean at my one-horse gift to my good, honest, reverend friend.

“Three years elapsed and the anxieties attending war had completely driven from my mind, for the time being, the incident just related, when my messenger brought me a card bearing the familiar name, ‘Rev. Adam Shofle,’ and immediately there flashed across my mind all the circumstances attending my appointing him to office. I directed him to be shown in, and in walked, with creaky boots, one of the best and finest dressed men I had seen in many a day. I recognized his countenance at a glance, but it was his

marvelous clothes that troubled me. They sat easily enough upon his body, but somehow or other they did not sit so easily on my mind; but wherefore I could not for the life of me tell if I had tried which I didn't.

"'Good morning, Mr. President'—no longer Uncle Abe as before—said he, in a grandiloquent manner; 'I hope you are well and getting on nicely.'

"'Oh, yes,' said I; 'we poor folks eke out a living after a fashion'; intending to give him the bit in his mouth, for I knew what an honest man he was, and how much—I couldn't tell then exactly how much—for I had lost the run of him—we were indebted to him.

"'Mr. President, I have come to resign my office.'

"Feeling somewhat as though I had been struck by lightning I managed to exclaim, 'Indeed!'

"'Yes, I feel that there are many others deserving of the place, and that it is my duty to make way for them.'

"'Was there ever such an honest man as that?' said I to myself, chuckling over my own stupidity on the clothes surprise. 'But,' said I, aloud. 'I'm afraid you are not considering yourself, friend Shofle, and that when you go back to preaching you will be as hard up as when you came here three years ago. Hadn't you better hold on a little longer, say a year more and let us both go out of office together?'

"'No, thank you. I'm going to Europe during that time, but hope to see you here, as President, when I return,' and after a few more kind expressions, off went the Rev. Shofle.

"About a month after, one of the reverend gentleman's neighbors paid me a visit, and among other things remarked casually that I had 'done a pretty good thing for Shofle.' 'Yes,' I replied, 'I gave him a $2,000 a year position for three years.'

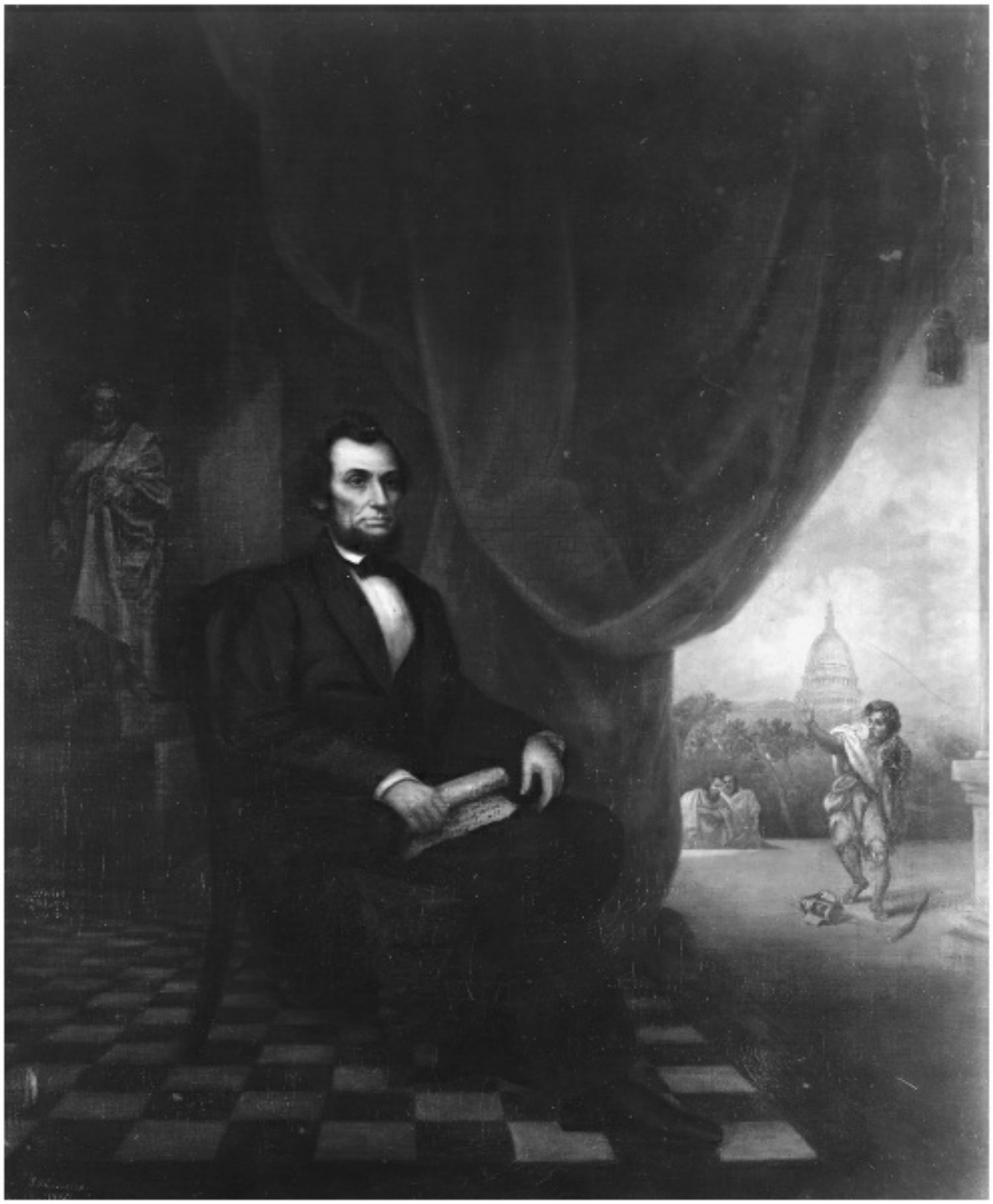
"'Besides the balance!' added my visitor. 'Why if he is worth a cent he is worth to-day $200,000, and I can prove it if necessary.'

"What could the idiot mean? To satisfy myself of the falsity of the charge I sent detectives to where he lived and they brought back word that he had made his $6,000 salary in the aggregate yield fully $200,000, but then I knew he was an honest man, and there must be a mistake somewhere!

"By the way," added Mr. Lincoln, with one of his knowing winks, "we have plenty of 'Shofles' left, but, the mischief of it is, it is hard finding them out, and they are not considerate enough to resign, as did our honest friend Shofle."[41]

A native of Charleston, South Carolina, Solomon Nuñes Carvalho was an artist, photographer, diarist, and adventurer. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Carvalho's painting *Lincoln and Diogenes* is the only portrait of Lincoln made by an American Jewish contemporary. Gift of John J. and Celia Mack, Maurice and Rose Turner, Justin G. and Gertrude Turner; courtesy The Rose Art Museum of Brandeis University.



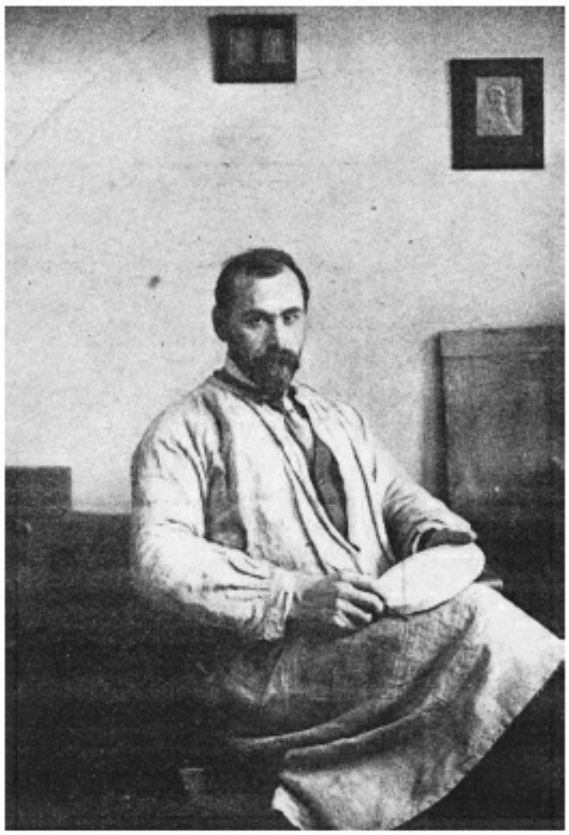
3. SOLOMON NUÑES CARVALHO'S PORTRAIT OF LINCOLN

Solomon Nuñes Carvalho's (1815–97) portrait of Lincoln is the only one painted by one of Lincoln's Jewish contemporaries. Carvalho, an artist, photographer, and adventurer, was born in Charleston, South Carolina, but he also lived in Philadelphia, Baltimore, and New York. He is perhaps best known as the diarist and official photographer of John C. Frémont's western expedition of 1853–54. One of the first Jews to travel across the nation to Southern California, Carvalho's published memoirs provide a fascinating account of Frémont's extraordinary exploration.

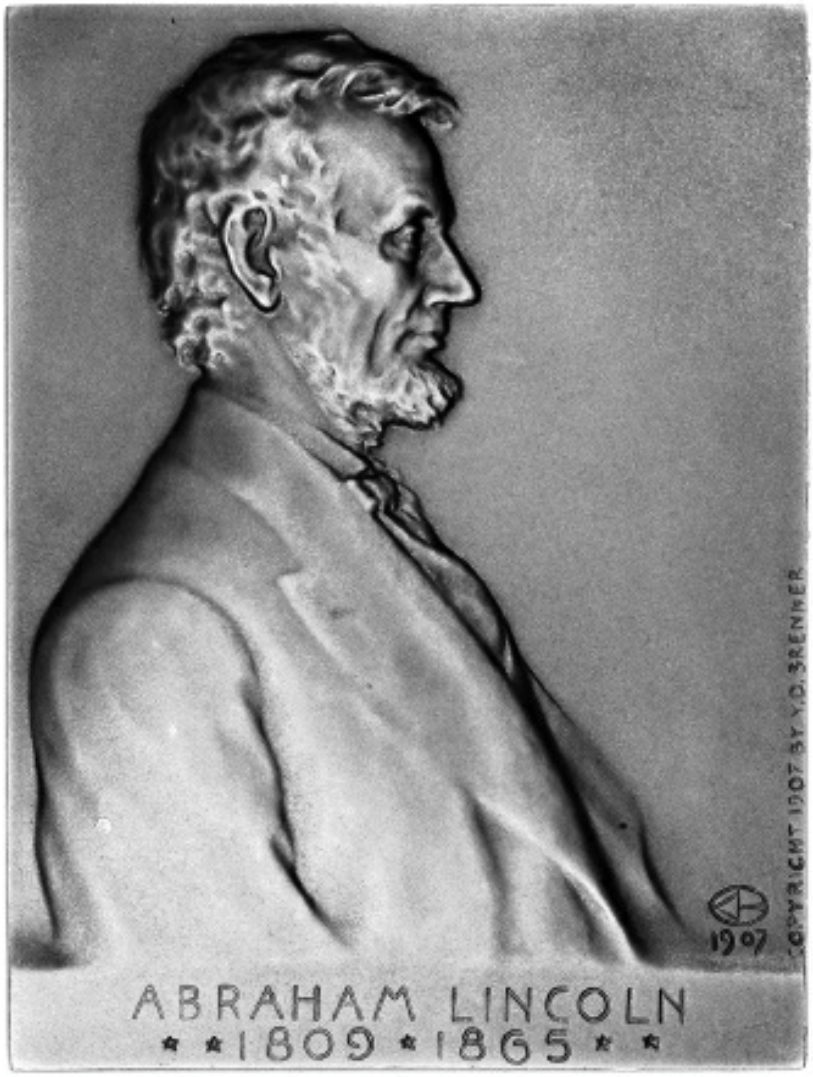
Carvalho's Lincoln portrait was signed and dated 1865. Since the words "With malice toward none, with charity for all" appear on the scroll in Lincoln's hand, we know that the portrait was painted to serve as a tribute marking Lincoln's second inauguration or, possibly, as a memorial marking his martyred death. Filled with symbolism and metaphor, the portrait conveys a number of powerful messages. Carvalho places Lincoln in front of a draped statue of George Washington, suggesting his loyalty to the ideals of the Father of the Nation. Although Lincoln is seated indoors, the U.S. Capitol Building—symbolizing the Union—appears on the distant horizon. In the foreground, just beyond Lincoln's curtain, the Greek philosopher Diogenes, who always carried a lighted lantern to search for an honest man, has spotted Lincoln. The broken lantern lying next to Diogenes confirms that the philosopher's search has finally come to a successful conclusion. In this Jewish artist's mind, Abraham Lincoln was honesty and patriotism incarnate.[42]

4. VICTOR DAVID BRENNER AND THE LINCOLN PENNY

A noteworthy number of American Jewish artists memorialized Lincoln in every conceivable mode of visual art. Arguably the most famous and widespread image of all is the cast of Lincoln's profile that began gracing one side of the penny in 1909. Victor David Brenner, the man who designed this most famous image of Lincoln, earned this honor by convincing President Roosevelt that he—an east European Jewish immigrant—was uniquely qualified to capture Lincoln's spirit on the face of the coin.



Victor David Brenner with a large plaster model of his design for the Lincoln cent, 1909.
Harper's Weekly, August 21, 1909, 24.



A reproduction of Brenner's Lincoln Medal of 1907.
Courtesy Stack's Bowers Galleries.

Brenner's initials appeared on a small number of Lincoln pennies when the coin first went into circulation in 1909. The controversial initials were quickly removed. Courtesy Hyde Park Coin, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Images of Brenner's designs appear here, along with a reproduction of a poem that Frank Dempster Sherman (1860–1916), a professor of graphics at Columbia University, composed to honor both Lincoln as well as Brenner's numismatic talent.

ON A BRONZE MEDAL OF LINCOLN BY VICTOR D. BRENNER

by Frank Dempster Sherman

This bronze our Lincoln's noble head doth bear.
Behold the strength and splendor of that face,
So homely-beautiful, with just a trace
Of humor lightening its look of care!
With bronze indeed his memory doth share,
This martyr who found freedom for a Race;
Both shall endure beyond the time and place
That knew them first, and brighter grow with wear.

Happy must be the genius here that wrought
These features of the great American

Whose fame lends so much glory to our past—
Happy to know the inspiration caught
From this most human and heroic man
Lives here to honor him while Art shall last.[43]

5. A SOUTHERN JEW MEMORIALIZES LINCOLN: MOSES JACOB EZEKIEL

A recipient of the coveted Prix de Rome in 1873 and an honorary patrician who was knighted at

the hands of the Grand Duke of Saxe-Meiningen in 1881, Sir Moses Jacob Ezekiel (1844–1917) was one of the most talented and highly regarded Jewish artists at the fin de siècle. Born in Richmond, Virginia, Ezekiel was a loyal partisan of the South, yet he was willing to overcome his "political scruples" when a New York lawyer offered him a handsome commission to make a bust of Lincoln. In his diary, Ezekiel noted that he wanted to obtain a mask of Lincoln to assist him in producing the likeness. "One day," he wrote, "near Gramercy Place an old grey-bearded man who was very garrulous told me he had known Lincoln, that he had a mask, and that if I would come the next day he would let me have a copy of it, which he did."[44]

The following are images of Ezekiel and his art studio in Rome, with the bust of Lincoln in full view, and an excerpt from Ezekiel's memoirs relating to the commission.

A decorated Confederate veteran who hailed from Richmond, Moses Jacob Ezekiel became one of the most distinguished American sculptors in the last half of the nineteenth century. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Ezekiel's studio with his bust of Abraham Lincoln clearly visible.
Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Excerpt from *Memoirs from the Baths of Diocletian*

I was invited one evening to a dinner party at the house of Madame Castiglione, Ernesto Nathan's sister. There I also met Alessandro Fortis, Ernesto and Virginia Nathan, and one or two other Roman republicans, myself being the only real republican

present. Fortis thought that he would pay me a compliment by drinking to the memory of Abraham Lincoln. I thanked him very much. I had fought against Lincoln and General Grant, I told him, but did not object to drinking to Lincoln's health, although I had not yet quite recovered from the shock of Southern subjugation. They all seemed horrified at the idea of my having fought for slavery and were very much surprised when I explained that we had never fought for slavery, but for states' rights and for free trade….

I went to see the lawyer Nat Myers and his bright, charming wife Josie, who embraced me heartily and made me remain to lunch. After lunch, Nat asked me whether I could overcome my political scruples and do a work for him which he wanted very much. I told him I thought I could and asked him what it was he wanted. To my great surprise, he said he wanted a bust in marble of Abraham Lincoln. I accepted the commission on the condition that I might make either a bust or a relief from the beautiful etching he handed me. So here my dream about Minerva seems to have been verified. How strangely my dream returned to my mind then! [Ezekiel is referring to a "patriotic" dream he had the night before he left Rome and returned to Philadelphia.] The red, white, and blue on the central planet were the American colors; the Minerva had been on the central planet; and here I was to make the War President of America![45]

6. LINCOLN AT GETTYSBURG IN THE EYES OF AN EAST EUROPEAN JEWISH IMMIGRANT

Sculptor Max Kalish (1893–1945) immigrated to the United States from Lithuania together with his family in the late 1800s and settled in Cleveland, Ohio. As a youth, Kalish attended Cleveland public schools and, simultaneously, received an Orthodox Jewish education. At age fifteen, Kalish enrolled at the Cleveland Institute of Art and began studying sculpture. Kalish continued to study sculpture in New York and later in Paris at the École des Beaux-Arts.

In 1923, Cleveland's schoolchildren began to collect small change in an effort to commission a statue of Lincoln for their city. Although he was not a renowned artist, Kalish was awarded the commission because he himself had been a student in the Cleveland public schools. In the course of researching the subject of his sculpture—Lincoln delivering the Gettysburg Address—Kalish interviewed Dr. Philip M. Bikle (1844–1934), who at age nineteen had actually been at Gettysburg and heard the president deliver his most famous oration. Bikle described Lincoln as standing erect with his feet apart, "holding the manuscript, sometimes changing it from one hand to the other as he made gestures. He faced the north, and the breeze hit him in the face. His voice was deliberate, and at 'of the people' his hand was working up and down from the shoulder."[46]

American sculptor Max Kalish, an immigrant from eastern Europe and a graduate of the Cleveland public schools, was awarded a commission from the Cleveland Board of Education to sculpt Lincoln. Courtesy Peter A. Juley and Son Collection, Smithsonian American Art Museum, Jo020817.

The following documents from the Cleveland newspapers relate to Kalish's Lincoln statue. First, a short article from the September 23, 1927, issue of the Cleveland Plain Dealer *describes Kalish's search for a tall, gangly man—who could "fill the attenuated coat of Abraham Lincoln"—to serve as a model for his sculpture of the president. Several years later, February 12, 1932, the* Cleveland Press *described the dedication ceremonies for Kalish's sculpture. On February 21, 1932, the* Cleveland Plain Dealer *published a photo of the recently unveiled statue in its place on the Mall on the day of the dedicatory festivities.*

As can be seen in the image below, Kalish's Lincoln is caught mid-sentence, pronouncing "of the people," with his hair blown by the wind. The statue stands twelve feet high, excluding its base, and stands outside the Cleveland Board of Education building—a fitting location for an artwork purchased by schoolchildren.

Lincoln's Double Wanted as Model

Sculptor Needs Man Who Can Fill Emancipator's Coat

Max Kalish, Cleveland's best known sculptor, is seeking a new model. He wants a bony, work-hardened man, six feet four inches tall, to fill the attenuated coat of Abraham Lincoln.

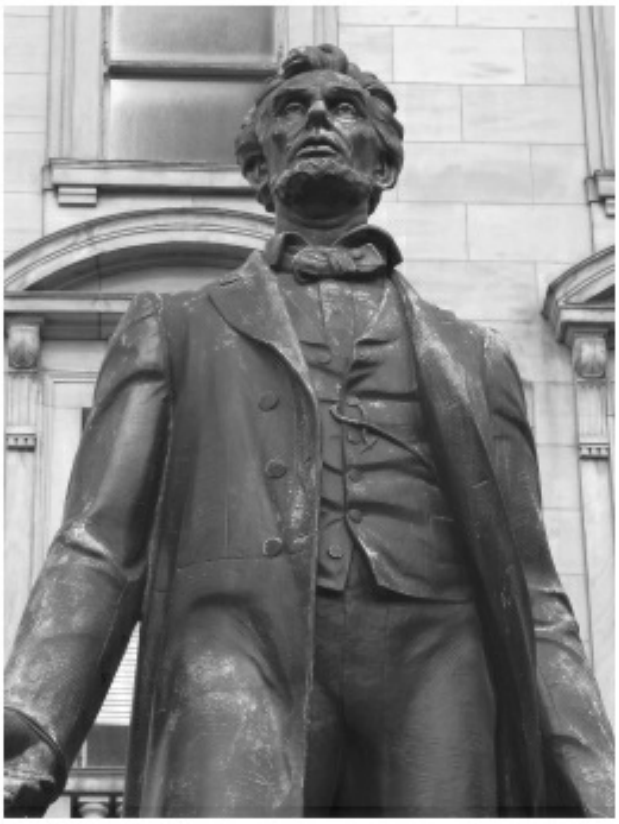
Kalish has an exact reproduction of the coat Lincoln wore when he delivered the Gettysburg speech. He had it made to order from the original, preserved in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington.

Kalish returned last week from a summer in Europe and is ready to begin his quarter-size model of the Lincoln memorial statue he is creating for erection in Playhouse square.

He is watching crowds and notifying employment agencies in the hope of finding his man with Lincoln's towering figure. He thinks his man will be one from farm stock, his shoulders developed, like Lincoln's, by early years of work with an ax or plow.

In three months Kalish expects to have completed the three-foot plaster cast of his Lincoln. It will be in nearly full detail. If it is entirely satisfactory to him and the committee in charge of erecting the memorial, he will go ahead on the full-size twelve-foot figure, to be in bronze. If not he will scrap the model and start all over. Time is no element of art.

The Lincoln figure Kalish has in mind shows the emancipator on widespread feet, his hands extended, with out-turned palms as in the final gesture of the Gettysburg speech.[47]



Kalish's statue of Lincoln at Gettysburg, financed by the pennies of Cleveland schoolchildren, was dedicated in 1932.
Courtesy Bill Nash, abesblogcabin.org.

In Memory of Lincoln

Nine years ago, a group of public-spirited citizens organized the Lincoln Memorial Commission and with the aid of the city's newspapers and school authorities, launched a drive to raise funds for a statue of Abraham Lincoln. No child was permitted to contribute more than 10 cents, no adult more than $1.

Today, upon Lincoln's birthday, the statue of Abraham Lincoln, the work of Max Kalish, a Cleveland sculptor, is dedicated.

Kalish's statue, a heroic figure 12 feet high, shows Lincoln in the act of delivering the Gettysburg address. In one hand, Lincoln holds the manuscript of the famous address. The wind is ruffling his hair and his clothing. The face is alive with the light

that must have shone upon Lincoln's face when he spoke his immortal words.

The late Dean Henry Turner Bailey, who was chairman of the commission, expressed the opinion that Kalish's Lincoln would take its rank with the great statues of the nation.

Today's dedicatory exercises, appropriately, are chiefly for school children. An audience of 2500 children, representing the schools of Greater Cleveland, will attend the ceremony at Public Music Hall.

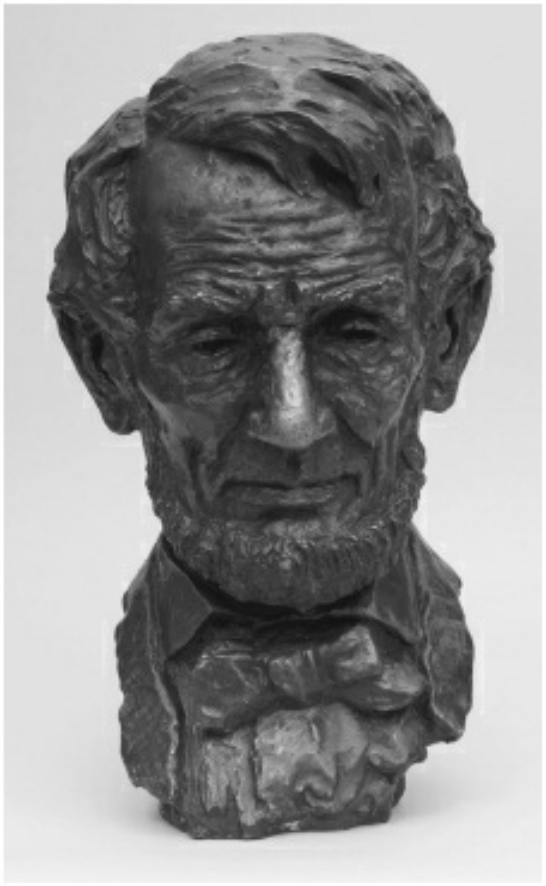
Max Kalish is to be congratulated upon his splendid work. The Lincoln Memorial Commission is to be praised for its years of faithful service and for its wisdom in choosing a Cleveland sculptor. Too often home talent has to go away from home before it is recognized.[48]

7. AN AMERICAN JEWISH BIOGRAPHER IN BRONZE

Jo Davidson (1883–1952), a well-known American artist who worked mostly in portraiture sculpture, was an immigrant of Russian-Jewish descent. Davidson apprenticed in the studio of the prominent American sculptor Hermon Atkins MacNeil (1866–1947) before moving to Paris to study sculpture at the École des Beaux-Arts in 1907. Best known for his numerous portrait busts of famous twentieth-century American personalities, Lincoln was one of the few nineteenth-century personalities to attract Davidson's interest. The bust of Lincoln was sculpted in 1947 and today is located in the Lincoln Home National Historic Site Visitor Center in Springfield, Illinois. In 2006, the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery installed a permanent exhibit featuring many of Davidson's busts. The exhibit labeled the artist "the biographer in bronze."

A photograph of the artist and his likeness of Lincoln, crafted by memory and without a Lincoln mask or model, are reproduced here.

Jo Davidson, an American sculptor of Russian-Jewish descent, was known for creating intensely realistic portrait busts. Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, Washington, D.C.



One of Davidson's portrait busts of Lincoln, cast in 1947, stands in the Lincoln Home National Historic Site Visitor Center, Springfield, Illinois. Courtesy Lincoln Home National Historic Site, National Park Service.

MUSICAL TRIBUTES TO LINCOLN

8. "WASHINGTON, LINCOLN, AND MOISHE RABEINY" BY JOSEPH RUMSHINSKY

Joseph Rumshinsky (1881–1956)[49] *was one of the leading American Jewish composers in the world of the Yiddish musical theater during the first decades of the twentieth century. A professionally trained musician who immigrated to the United States in 1904, Rumshinsky quickly embraced the American theatrical genre, and his compositions reflected this interest. Always aspiring for commercial success, Rumshinsky wrote music for light operetta on the Yiddish stage.*

One of his Yiddish shows, Yente Telebende *(1916), featured a popular song titled "Washington, Lincoln, and Moishe Rabeiny" (Washington, Lincoln, and Moses our teacher), with lyrics written by Louis Gilrod (1879–1930). The song was a duet with lyrics debating who was better, the white or the black man. These lyrics are unquestionably offensive by today's standards, but it is obvious that this piece came from the minstrel tradition of the stage show.*[50] *It aimed at bringing a laugh to the audience from the racial stereotyping that typified that era. Was there anyone, the black man asks, who can top Abraham Lincoln as the greatest of the great? Lincoln is great, the lyrics confess, but to the delight of the Yiddish-speaking audience, only Moses is a nobler man:*

Mir weise menshen steihen auben on mir

stolziren mit George Washington.
Der grester man fun alle groise leit is Abraham
Lincoln wus hot ins fin skalferei befreit.
Ch'leben ch'leben es is nit shlecht bist doch take oi seier gerecht oi
Sog mir schwarzer is den bei eich faran a
moishe rabeiny as a nobler man?
[We white people stand in a place of honor and
take pride in George Washington.
The greatest man among all great men is Abraham
Lincoln, who freed us from slavery.
Believe me, believe me it's not bad—you're right indeed…
But tell me black man, is there among you one like
Moses our teacher—such a noble man?][51]

Cover sheet for *Yente Telebende* with music by J. M. Rumshinsky (New York: The Hebrew Publishing Co., 1916). Rumshinsky's name has been misspelled on the cover. The music for the Yiddish song "Washington, Lincoln, and Moishe Rabeiny" (Washington, Lincoln, and Moses our teacher) was composed by Rumshinsky.
Courtesy John Hay Library, Brown University Library.

9. THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS IN YIDDISH

Even prior to his arrival in America in 1926, Jacob Weinberg (1879–1956) had already established his credentials as a distinguished composer of both liturgical and secular Jewish works.[52] *In the United States, Weinberg taught for many years at the New York College of Music and at Hunter College, but he continued to compose music aimed primarily at Jewish audiences. In the early 1940s, he organized an annual Jewish cultural arts festival in New York that featured musical and dance performances.*

In 1936, Weinberg put the English words of Lincoln's Gettysburg Address to music in a work written for chorus and instruments. This original version was performed at Carnegie Hall on December 13, 1937, by the Dessoff Choir.[53] *A few years later, in 1943, Weinberg composed a second variant of the work. This version called for the text to be read to the audience in Yiddish translation with musical accompaniment.*[54] *In 1954, he created yet a third musical setting for Lincoln's famous address, this one for chorus and orchestra (as shown on the previous page). Weinberg's music and the Yiddish translation place Lincoln's iconic American address into a distinctly Jewish artistic frame.*

Transcontinental Choral Library

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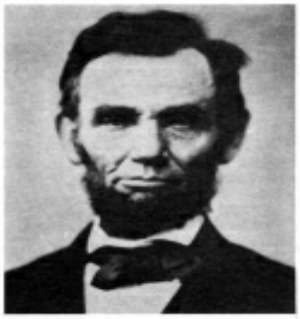


Abraham Lincoln's Immortal Words

The Gettysburg Address

Set for Mixed Voices (S. A. T. B.)

by

JACOB WEINBERG

Opus 64

Sixty Cents

TRANSCONTINENTAL MUSIC CORPORATION

NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

1954

Cover sheet of Jacob Weinberg's score of "The Gettysburg Address," 1954. Jacob Weinberg, a distinguished composer of both liturgical and secular Jewish works, wrote three musical settings for Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. His 1954 version called for the text to be read to the audience in Yiddish translation with musical accompaniment. Copyright © 1954 Transcontinental Music Publications; used by permission.

10. “ABRAHAM” BY IRVING BERLIN

Irving Berlin (1888–1989) is widely regarded as one of the greatest and most prolific songwriters and composers in all of American history. The son of a cantor from Belarus, Russia, Israel Baline (his original name) immigrated to the United States with his family in 1893. As a result of his father's early death, Berlin quit school and tried to make a living on New York's Lower East Side. He began working as a singing waiter, and this job prompted him to compose his own songs. In 1907, he published his first hit: “Marie from Sunny Italy.”

Berlin's list of megahits is legendary. His best known songs include “Alexander's Ragtime Band” (1911), “Oh! How I Hate to Get Up in the Morning” (1917), “God Bless America” (1918, rev. 1938), “A Pretty Girl Is Like a Melody” (1919), “Blue Skies” (1926), “Puttin' on the Ritz” (1930), “Easter Parade” (1933), “White Christmas” (1942), “Anything You Can Do I Can Do Better” (1946), “Doin' What Comes Natur'lly” (1946), and “There's No Business Like Show Business” (1946).

In 1942, Berlin composed twelve songs for Holiday Inn, *a film musical starring Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire. The film's runaway hit was “White Christmas.” One of the other tunes Berlin composed for the film was titled “Abraham,” a song about Abraham Lincoln that “embeds swing-style music-making within a nightclub scene rife with the trappings of minstrelsy.” In the film, Crosby and Marjorie Reynolds perform in blackface.*[55]

In addition to the minstrelsy elements of the song's performance, which to the modern listener are offensively stereotyped mannerisms and dialect, Berlin's use of the demeaning term “darky” in his lyrics sparked a controversy. Scholars are quick to remind readers that Berlin used the term in an entirely positive lyrical context, which praises Lincoln as the emancipator of the slaves. Yet even in 1942 the word provoked an immediate outcry of indignation. Berlin promptly instructed his publishers to withdraw the word from the song and replace it with “negroes.” “No song is important enough to offend a whole race,” Berlin said as he ordered his publisher to change the word. “I should never have released it had I known the epithet was objectionable.”[56]

Berlin's lyrics speak positively of Lincoln, reminding the listener that the nation's “united thanks” go to the son of “Nancy Hanks,” this land's “finest son.”

ABRAHAM

by Irving Berlin

Upon a February morn
A tiny baby boy was born—
Abraham, Abraham.
When he grew up, this tiny babe,
The folks all called him Honest Abe—
Abraham, Abraham.
In eighteen sixty he became
Our sixteenth President,
And now he's in the Hall of Fame,
A most respected gent.
And that is why we celebrate
This blessed February date—
Abraham, Abraham.

When black folks lived in slavery,
Who was it set the negro free?[57]
Abraham, Abraham.
When trouble came down from the shelf,
Whose heart was bigger than himself?
Abraham, Abraham.
“The country's going to the dogs!”
They shouted loud and strong;
Then from a cabin made of logs
The right man come along.
And that is why we celebrate
This blessed February date—
Abraham, Abraham.

The U.S.A.'s united thanks
To one whose name was Nancy Hanks—
Abraham, Abraham.
She gave this land the finest son
Who ever went to Washington—
Abraham, Abraham.
When someone told him Gen'ral Grant
Was drinking ev'ry night
He answered, “Go see if you can't
Get all my gen'rals tight.”
And that is why we celebrate
This blessed February date—
Abraham, Abraham.

11. “LINCOLN PORTRAIT” BY AARON COPLAND

Aaron Copland (1900–1990), child of east European immigrants, became one of the most respected American composers of the twentieth century. In 1942, the prominent conductor Andre Kostelanetz (1901–80) commissioned Copland to write a musical tribute to an “eminent American.” This request led Copland to compose one of his best-known works, “Lincoln Portrait,” which features numerous quotations from Lincoln's own words (see following page).

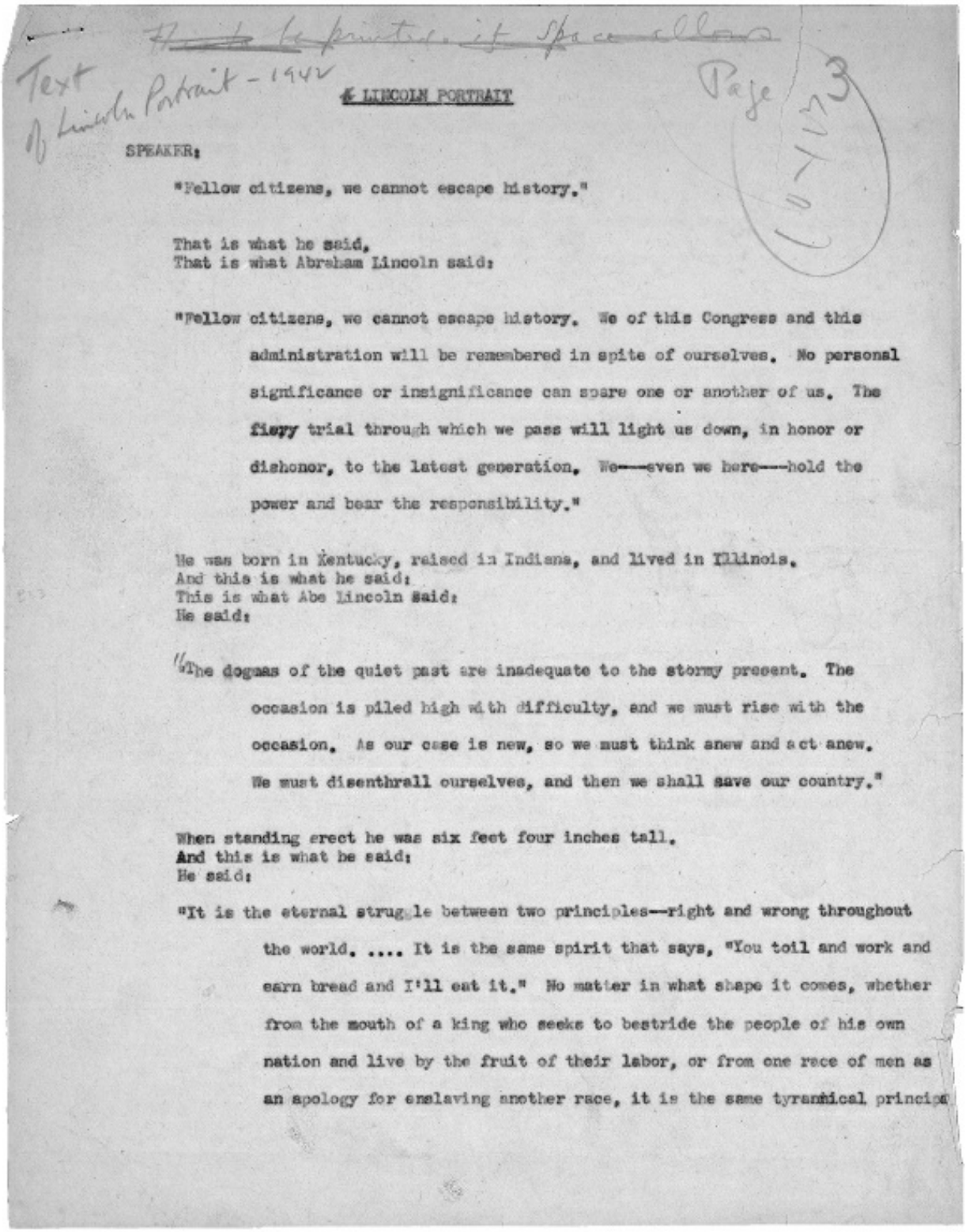
According to one of his biographers, Copland claimed he had heard Jacob Weinberg's “Gettysburg Address” at an American music festival prior to its having been performed by the Dessoff Choir in Carnegie Hall. This being the case, Copland heard Weinberg's work only a few years before he began composing his famous “Lincoln Portrait” in the early 1940s.[58]

Copland was raised in a Jewish home, and though he was not a practicing Jew, his childhood familiarity with Jewish chant and liturgy continued to influence him throughout his career. It has been noted that one of the most identifiable and emphatic lines in “Lincoln Portrait” is the repetition of the phrase “And this is what he said.” These words bear a striking similarity to the sentence “And God said, saying…,” which appears frequently in the Hebrew Bible. As one scholar observed, “Surrounded by Copland's text, Lincoln's own words sound both human and divine, pragmatic and idealistic.”[59]

12. THE PIONEERING RESEARCHER: ISAAC MARKENS

Newspaper correspondent and independent researcher Isaac Markens began studying Lincoln's life in the 1890s. His efforts to preserve Lincolniana were extraordinary. By winning the trust of the reclusive Robert Todd Lincoln, Markens obtained a fascinating oral history from Lincoln's only surviving child. Markens also played a pivotal role in retrieving original copies of the Gettysburg Address. His efforts to preserve the history of Lincoln's relationship with his Jewish contemporaries may, however, have been his most noteworthy historical achievement. Without Markens, who literally corresponded with many of Lincoln's Jewish contemporaries or their offspring before they died, much of what we know today would have evaporated into the mist of time.

Two examples of Markens's historical achievements are presented. The first document is an excerpt from his monograph Abraham Lincoln and the Jews, *wherein he reconstructs a crucial meeting between Cesar J. Kaskel and Abraham Lincoln at the Executive Mansion on January 3, 1863. Kaskel had traveled to the nation's capital from Paducah, Kentucky, to register his outrage over Ulysses S. Grant's infamous General Orders No. 11. It was during this meeting that Lincoln and Kaskel exchanged their oft-quoted repartee. Markens implied that the details of this episode were preserved and conveyed to him by Kaskel's younger brother, Julius, who was still living in Bensonhurst, New Jersey, when Markens was collecting data for his article.*



Text
of Lincoln Portrait - 1942

Page 3

LINCOLN PORTRAIT

SPEAKER:

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history."

That is what he said,
That is what Abraham Lincoln said:

"Fellow citizens, we cannot escape history. We of this Congress and this administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down, in honor or dishonor, to the latest generation. We---even we here---hold the power and bear the responsibility."

He was born in Kentucky, raised in Indiana, and lived in Illinois.
And this is what he said:
This is what Abe Lincoln said:
He said:

"The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise with the occasion. As our case is new, so we must think anew and act anew. We must disenthrall ourselves, and then we shall save our country."

When standing erect he was six feet four inches tall.
And this is what he said:
He said:

"It is the eternal struggle between two principles---right and wrong throughout the world. .... It is the same spirit that says, "You toil and work and earn bread and I'll eat it." No matter in what shape it comes, whether from the mouth of a king who seeks to bestride the people of his own nation and live by the fruit of their labor, or from one race of men as an apology for enslaving another race, it is the same tyrannical princip

Aaron Copland's annotated copy of the speaker's part of "Lincoln Portrait," written in 1942.
Courtesy Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center, The University of Texas at Austin.

A second example of Markens's remarkable historical instinct comes from his correspondence with Robert Todd Lincoln. For nearly two decades, Markens and Lincoln exchanged a cordial and historically significant correspondence. It was Markens who prodded Robert Lincoln to tell him that he had no recollection of either of his parents ever making reference to their having been descendants of Jewish parentage.[60] *In the communication that Lincoln sent to Markens on February 13, 1918, we see how Markens—through his interrogative missives—managed to extricate from the president's son remarkably interesting data that may have otherwise been lost.*

"And This Protection They Shall Have at Once"

It was determined to send a representative of the Jewish community to Washington to communicate with the President in person, and for that purpose Cesar Kaskel, one of the signers of the appeal, and a vice-president of the Paducah Union League Club, was selected.

Cesar Kaskel was a native of Prussia, in his thirtieth year, and one of the most respected merchants of the town. J[ulius] W. Kaskel, another signer of the appeal, was his brother. A record of the Paducah proceedings was preserved by the latter, now living at Bensonhurst, Brooklyn, N.Y., from which we learn that Cesar Kaskel at once left Paducah by steamer for Cairo. While en route he prepared a full account of the affair which on reaching Cairo was furnished to the agent of the Associated Press, this being the first newspaper report given to the country.

Kaskel, says *The Israelite*, took with him letters from Rabbi Max Lilienthal, and Daniel Wolf, a prominent Cincinnati merchant, to influential parties in Washington and arrived at the National Capital on the evening of January 3, 1863. Accompanied by Representative Gurley of Ohio the two at once sought an audience with the President, reaching the White House at about dusk. Announcing their presence, with an apology for calling at such an hour, the President sent word that he was "always glad to see his friends," and shortly made his appearance. On learning the object of their visit he remarked:

And so the children of Israel were driven from the happy land of Canaan?

Kaskel replied:

Yes, and that is why we have come unto Father Abraham's bosom, asking protection.

Lincoln responded:

And this protection they shall have at once.

Then seating himself at a table the President penned an order to General Halleck requesting his visitors to deliver it at once.

"You may leave for home at once if you wish," said General Halleck to Kaskel on reading Lincoln's instructions, "and before you reach there Grant's order will have been revoked."

Kaskel that same night started back to Paducah, and arriving there was surprised to learn that the order of revocation had not yet been promulgated.

"By whose orders do you return?" demanded the Post Commander, on learning of Kaskel's presence in town.

"By order of the President of the United States," replied Kaskel.

Halleck's instructions to Grant, it appears, had been delayed in transmission and the

latter's revocation was not issued until January 7, 1863. Two weeks later, January 21, Halleck wrote to Grant:

> The President has no objection to your expelling traitors and Jew peddlers which I suppose was the object of your order, but as it in terms proscribed an entire religious class, some of whom are fighting in our ranks, the President deems it necessary to revoke it.

Dr. Wise is authority for the statement that Halleck would not believe in the existence of Grant's order until Kaskel showed him the official copy.

Before the result of Kaskel's mission became known Rabbis Wise and Lilienthal, accompanied by Edgar M. Johnson, a lawyer of Cincinnati, Martin Bijur, a lawyer of Louisville, and Abraham Goldsmith, a merchant of Paducah, had gone to Washington. Learning of Kaskel's success on the way they determined nevertheless to complete the journey in order to express their thanks to the President for his prompt action. Rabbi Wise, in *The Israelite*, gave an interesting account of their interview.[61]

1775 N Street, Washington, D.C.
February 13, 1918

My dear Mr. Markens:

It seems to me the simplest way to answer your letter of February 5th is to return it to you with your interrogatories marked and to make the brief answers to them in this way:

1. The proper answer is that he was a total abstainer, but on two or three occasions in my life, not more I have seen him take a sip of a glass of ale and also a glass of champagne. On each occasion he was urged to do this as a tonic. I do not think it ever occurred to him of his own motion to drink anything except water or tea or coffee or milk. As you know, he always was a strong temperance advocate.

2. The Bloomington shipment you refer to is no doubt boxes of papers which Judge [David] Davis took charge of, as administrator of my father's estate, and caused to be removed to Bloomington, his home, where he had a safe storage place for them. They remained unopened until given over to Nicolay and Hay for their work. They are now in my possession.

3. I heard nothing of this while in London, but I have in some way understood that in one of the college libraries, whether in Oxford or in Cambridge I do not know, is hanging framed a lithographed copy of the Bixby Letter. As to the Gettysburg address and opinions of English publications thereon, I have not now any present memory.

4. His methods of office working were simply those of a very busy man who worked at all hours. He never dictated correspondence; he sometimes wrote a document and had his draft copied by either Nicolay or Hay; sometimes he himself copied his corrected draft and retained the draft in his papers; there were no letter press books at all; he never owned such a thing. When he preserved letters to himself, it was ordinarily done by replacing them in their envelopes with the writer's name inscribed; it was not his general habit to keep copies of letters written by himself.

5. I know nothing whatever about this.[62]

6. This letter is in my possession.[63]

7. I never heard of any picture of my grandfather, Thomas Lincoln.

I trust that you are very well and are enjoying some comfort as we are from the change in the dreadful weather of this winter.

Very Truly yours,
Robert T. Lincoln

Isaac Markens, Esq.
545 West 164th St.
New York City[64]

13. COLLECTOR OF LINCOLNIANA: EMANUEL HERTZ

Emanuel Hertz was a lawyer by profession, but studying the life of the sixteenth president became his preoccupying avocation. His family immigrated to the United States from Austria in 1884. He mastered English, earned a baccalaureate degree from New York City College, and studied law at Columbia University. From the earliest years of his legal career, Hertz studied Lincoln's life and devoted himself to acquiring Lincoln documents, pictures, and artifacts. By the 1930s, Hertz was said to have acquired the world's largest privately held collection of Lincolniana.

Like the pioneering researcher Isaac Markens, Hertz was interested in every facet of Lincoln's life but had a special interest in reconstructing the story of Lincoln and the Jews. Building on Markens's groundbreaking research, Hertz assembled an unparalleled collection of Jewish eulogies, homilies, and orations, many of which, without his efforts, might have been lost.

In addition to his interest in Lincoln's Jewish contacts, Hertz produced numerous volumes, articles, and speeches on Lincoln's life. In one of his articles, which first appeared in the American Hebrew *on February 6, 1926, Hertz likened Lincoln to the Bible's towering liberator, the prophet Moses.*

In 1927, Hertz asked his distinguished brother, Joseph, the chief rabbi of Great Britain, to write the foreword to his magnum opus on Lincoln and the Jews titled Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue. *In this foreword, Joseph Hertz recounted a story he had heard from one of his teachers, Rabbi Benjamin Szold of Baltimore. The fascinating anecdote, meant to demonstrate Lincoln's extraordinary compassion, is reproduced below.*

Foreword

by the Very Rev. Dr. J. H. Hertz

Heroic achievement, literary genius or towering personality, each of them leads to earthly fame. Therefore, the place of Abraham Lincoln who combined all these, and in a pre-eminent degree, is indeed secure in the annals of man.

He was the protagonist in the greatest war drama of the nineteenth century. He not only preserved unimpaired the heritage of Washington, but made America truly American. He rolled away the “reproach of Egypt”—negro slavery—from his countrymen. Others had scotched the serpent: he killed it. In a free land, he felt, it was not the white man who ruled the black, neither was it the black man who ruled the white: it was justice that ruled. Humanity has since hailed him “Lincoln the Emancipator.”

Few public men possessed his mastery of speech, his wonderful mother-wit and rare eloquence. Several of his utterances are among the most perfect things in the language. His Gettysburg Address stands unparalleled since the days of Pericles; while

in his stand for national righteousness and his absolute belief in the irresistibleness of right, he has the accent of Israel's Prophets.

And Lincoln *the man* is greater than his words or even his world-historic deeds. He walked in humility with his God, and he never forgot pity. My revered teacher, Dr. Benjamin Szold (may his memory be a blessing)[,] related to me the following incident: He had occasion to accompany a poor Jewish woman to the White House and beseech the President to pardon her wayward son who had deserted. She told her story in Yiddish, of which the President did not understand a word. But Abraham Lincoln only saw before him a mother imploring him for the life of her child; and as he listened to her unintelligible and yet agonising plea, the tears coursed down his cheeks.

The sublime simplicity and infinite kindliness of this man of the people who directed and stilled the storm of a titanic fratricidal conflict, have made his name a benediction far beyond his native land or even the confines of the English-speaking world. And nowhere has this *anima naturaliter Hebraica* received more sympathetic understanding, nowhere has his memory been cherished with more reverential affection, than in the American-Jewish pulpit, as the following pages amply testify.

London, March 8, 1927—5887[65]

14. THE METICULOUS SCHOLAR: BERTRAM W. KORN

Bertram Wallace Korn, rabbi, scholar, and military chaplain, was one of America's most prominent Reform rabbis during the post–World War II years. Upon receiving his doctor of Hebrew letters degree in 1949 from Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Korn assumed the pulpit of Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel in Philadelphia, where he remained for the rest of his career. While ministering to this large congregation, Korn became a noted authority on the history of American Jewry. His first published volume, American Jewry and the Civil War, *based on his doctoral dissertation, appeared in 1951. More than half a century after its publication, this pioneering work remains a valuable and authoritative resource on the subject. Korn devoted an entire chapter to the topic of Lincoln and the Jews.*

The selection below comes from an infrequently cited article titled "Lincoln and the Jews," written by Korn in 1955, four years after his American Jewry and the Civil War. *During the interim, Korn had acquired a remarkable letter that Lincoln had written to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton on November 4, 1862. A copy of this letter, along with Korn's penetrating analysis, sheds light on Lincoln's thoughts about the Jewish minority in the American nation.*

Lincoln and the Jews

A hitherto unknown and unpublished Lincoln letter which I recently had the good fortune to obtain for my collection of Jewish Americana adds one more to the few references to Jews to be found in the writings of Lincoln:

Executive Mansion
Washington, Nov. 4, 1862

Hon. Sec. of War.

Sir

I believe we have not yet appointed a Hebrew—As Cherie M. Levy, is well vouched, as a capable and faithful man, let him be appointed an Assistant Quarter-Master, with the rank of Captain.

Yours truly
A. Lincoln

This appointment was not a political reward; Levy was the son-in-law of Rabbi Morris J. Raphall of Congregation B'nai Jeshurun of New York City, who was a Democrat and defended slavery. Lincoln was, I believe, living up to his conviction that minority groups ought to be given fitting and fair recognition—and more! He was conscious of the anti-Semitic prejudice which rose to a high point during the tensions and crises of the Civil War and went out of his way to be kind to Jews. Many applicants were "well vouched" as "capable and faithful" men; but the fact that Levy was a Jew apparently made Lincoln eager to fulfill his request.[66]

…The Lincoln who urged a change in the law of Congress to permit the appointment of Jewish chaplains; who ordered the revocation of an anti-Semitic General Order issued by the only Union general who seemed capable of winning battles; and who recommended the appointment of an assistant quartermaster on the grounds of his being "a Hebrew," could not have had any prejudice against the Jews.

On the contrary, he seems to have had an unusual sympathy for them. Perhaps his deep love for the Bible and the tragedies of his own personal life made him feel a kinship with these sons of the prophets….

I believe it to be entirely possible that other as yet undiscovered and unpublished documents will bear out my contention that Lincoln was predisposed to be kind to Jews just because he was conscious of the effects of bigotry and intolerance upon their lives. Is this not what we would expect from the great spirit who spoke of a nation which would live "with malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right"?[67]

15. THE CONTEMPORARY AUTHORITY: HAROLD HOLZER

Harold Holzer, a scholar, writer, and lecturer, is a contemporary authority on Abraham Lincoln and the political culture of the Civil War era. By 2013, Holzer had published nearly three dozen volumes exploring various facets of Lincoln's career and the Civil War era.

In 2002, Holzer delivered an address on Lincoln and the Jews at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, California. After briefly discussing Lincoln's encounters with his Jewish contemporaries, Holzer described Lincoln's "religion." As the excerpts below emphasize, Holzer avers that it was Lincoln's manifest commitment to liberty and equality, together with his fervent belief in the primacy of the "Golden Rule," that has earned him the admiration of American Jewry, both then and now.

Excerpts from *Lincoln and the Jews: The Last Best Hope of Earth*

The fact is, Lincoln believed deeply in God the Father, but from early adulthood on, notwithstanding twenty years of Sundays in Baptist churches with his family, he seldom mentioned the Son or the Holy Ghost. He did not embrace Jesus as messiah or savior, and opponents occasionally branded him an infidel during his lifetime—often enough that several of his earliest sympathetic biographers took pains to claim that he was a true Christian. But there is scant evidence for it.

Lincoln believed in Divine Will, but of an "Old Testament" variety. As he put it in his Second Inaugural Address, in defense of the enormous sacrifices required by the

Civil War: “The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.” That comes right out of Psalm 19, a psalm of David.

Moreover, as Jews knew, Lincoln believed in equal opportunity for all. He had firmly rejected Know-Nothingism, the hateful mid-nineteenth-century Nativist movement opposed to immigration by Catholics and foreigners. As he put it: “How can anyone who abhors the oppression of negroes, be in favor of degrading classes of white people?” Such sentiments put some of his Christian contemporaries ill at ease, but it clearly made Jewish admirers, then and now, comfortable….

As Lincoln had once summed up his faith: “When I do good I feel good, and when I do bad I feel bad, and that's my religion.” Perhaps it is no accident that the sentiment is remarkably close to what the sage Hillel had urged in his teachings two millennia earlier: “To forbear doing unto others what would displease us.” That deceptively simple but poignant philosophy made Lincoln seem, to Jews of his day, like God's child and America's father at one and the same time. When Lincoln died, many Jews really did feel that “the beauty of Israel was slain upon the high places.”[68]

11

“Lincoln! Thou Shouldst Be Living at This Hour!” Lincoln as a Moral Compass for American Jews

Shortly after the end of World War I, at a time when the nation's love for Lincoln was in full bloom, an interesting poem authored by Kenyon West appeared in an anthology with a title that implied the volume's contents were sacred writings: *The Book of Lincoln.*

LINCOLN! “Thou shouldst be living at this hour!”
Thy reach of vision—prophet thou and seer—
Thy strong and steadfast wisdom, judgment clear,
Are needed in this stress, thy old-time power
The ship of state to save from storms that lower
And threaten to engulf. Dark reefs loom near!
No “watchful waiting”[1] will avail us here,
That wind-swept, tossing ship past rocks that tower
To guide to sunlit waters—calm, serene.
Oh! for a leader, fearless, strong, and wise,
Of swift decision, and with insight keen
To see the dangers; scorn all compromise;
Restore the honour lost, the faith we prize,
And bring us back the glory that hath been!

The poem's opening line—“Lincoln! Thou shouldst be living at this hour!”—is highly suggestive of Walt Whitman's famous poetic elegy “O Captain! My Captain!,” composed to memorialize Lincoln not long after his death in 1865. Whitman's poem laments a fallen leader who is gone forever: “fallen cold and dead.” “O Captain! My Captain!” expressed sentiments of overwhelming loss at the time of Lincoln's death, but in the years following, as the nation commemorated the centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth, a cry for the return of the great leader appeared, as the nation once again called for its fallen “captain,” who now must speak to his people from beyond the grave. By examining Lincoln's life and scrutinizing his human instincts, Americans could depend on him to provide inspiration and guidance as they faced a continual onslaught of social and political challenges. All through the twentieth century, the crises the nation faced inevitably seemed comparable to the tribulations that Lincoln confronted during his own Civil War era.[2]

Throughout the course of the twentieth century, people from all walks of life extracted moral strength and political wisdom from the wellspring of inspiration that flowed from Lincoln's biographical legacy. Republicans and Democrats, northerners and southerners, conservatives and liberals—all wanted to make him the touchstone for their special causes and agendas. Secretary of War William Howard Taft may have been one of the first to pose a famous rhetorical question: What would Lincoln do? Speaking at a dinner marking the ninety-ninth anniversary of Lincoln's birth, Taft averred that “if Lincoln were living today he would be a Republican and a protectionist.” Assertions like Taft's were not always plausibly argued. Still, the question became a popular one and was asked again and again throughout the course of the century. What would Lincoln do if he were alive today?[3]

In the “Roaring Twenties,” there were those who contended that Lincoln was the avatar of peace, prosperity, and optimism. From this perspective, the sixteenth president would advise the nation to enjoy its prosperity. In his address at the dedication ceremonies for the Lincoln Memorial on May 30, 1922, President Warren G. Harding—ironically speaking to a racially segregated audience—opined that had Lincoln been alive, his heart would have been “aglow” in the knowledge that the nation cherished the same ideals that he, Lincoln, valued. “We are going on,” Harding predicted, “always on, holding to constitutional methods, amending to meet the requirements of a progressive civilization, clinging to majority rule, properly restrained, which is ‘the only true sovereign of a free people,’[4] and working to the fulfillment of the destiny of the world's greatest republic!” Five years later, to the very day, Harding's successor, Calvin Coolidge, addressed the crowd gathered at Gettysburg in honor of Dedication Day. “The government of the people, by the people, for the people, which Lincoln described in his immortal address,” the president told the crowd, “is a government of peace, not of war.” He suggested that Lincoln would have wanted the nation “to endeavor by every means within [its] power to prevent the shedding of human blood in the attempted settlement of international controversies.”[5]

Once the nation fell into the jaws of the Great Depression, however, Lincoln was drafted to serve as the advocate of another message. Herbert Hoover contended that Lincoln would have wanted the nation to stand fast against those who would use the economic crisis to fortify and centralize the power of the federal government. Lincoln would not have wanted to curtail the individual liberties that all Americans valued. Hoover urged the American people “to show the same commitment, courage, and resourcefulness as they had under Lincoln's leadership.” Only a few years later, in 1938, when the dark clouds of worldwide war gathered on the horizon, Lincoln's moral legacy offered the nation wisdom that pertained to an entirely different set of political and economic circumstances. While speaking at the dedication of the memorial on the Gettysburg Battlefield on July 3, 1938, Franklin D. Roosevelt told his audience that, in most situations, comparing oneself to leaders from bygone days is a pointless exercise: “It seldom helps to wonder how a statesman of one generation would surmount the crisis of another. A statesman deals with concrete difficulties—with things which must be done from day to day. Not often can he frame conscious patterns for the far-off future. But the fullness of the stature of Lincoln's nature and the fundamental conflict which events forced upon his Presidency invite us ever.”[6]

Less than a year later, Roosevelt began to prepare the nation for the possibility of war in Europe. He pushed for increased military spending and advocated for the modernization of the country's weaponry. During this time, FDR did not publicly ponder whether Lincoln would have endorsed his administration's policies. Yet a popular Broadway play about Lincoln left little doubt as to what the sixteenth president would want the nation to do. Robert E. Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*, which premiered on October 15, 1938, became an instant sensation. As the play reaches its climax, Lincoln addresses a crowd during his debates with Stephen Douglas. Even though Sherwood's script was built on a foundation of Lincoln's own words, the author shaped Lincoln's soliloquy so as to make the speech “more allusive to the imminent threat of totalitarianism than to the southern slavocracy.” The play ends with Lincoln departing Springfield for Washington. He reminds the audience that America must always be willing to fight for liberty and democracy if it hoped to survive in a dangerous world. The play was unambiguous about what Lincoln would do. He would oppose totalitarianism. He would be prepared to fight the dictators.[7]

In the post-World War II era, as the modern civil rights movement began to take shape,

Lincoln became a natural and authentic ally for civil rights activists. In 1947, Harry S. Truman became the first American president to address the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), and he did not hesitate to invoke Lincoln's name when he promised African Americans that the federal government under his leadership would move to end discrimination, violence, and racial prejudice in American life:

> The civil rights laws written in the early years of our republic…were written to protect the citizen against any possible tyrannical act by the new government in this country… [but] we cannot stop there. We must keep moving forward, with new concepts of civil rights to safeguard our heritage. The extension of civil rights today means, not protection of the people against the Government, but protection of the people by the Government. We must make the Federal Government a friendly, vigilant defender of the rights and equalities of all Americans. And again I mean all Americans.

Speaking in front of Daniel Chester French's imposing sculpture, Truman was literally and figuratively standing at Lincoln's feet when he confidently informed the crowd: “Abraham Lincoln understood so well the ideal, which you and I seek today.”[8]

Truman's speech at the Lincoln Memorial was neither the first nor the last time the monument served as a commanding backdrop for those who worked to advance the cause of the modern civil rights movement. In 1939, after representatives of the Daughters of the American Revolution informed African American contralto Marian Anderson (1897–1993), a great operatic talent of the period, that she would not be permitted to sing to an integrated audience from the stage of Constitution Hall, the NAACP organized a massive concert in protest. With the help of the Roosevelt administration, the NAACP's concert was held in front of the Lincoln Memorial. Photographers snapped dozens of pictures memorializing what the audience saw: French's lifelike statue of Lincoln watching sympathetically from behind as the performer sang “America the Beautiful.”[9]

Those images of Lincoln “watching” Marian Anderson sing flashed across the nation in 1939, and they made an unforgettable impression on thousands of Americans, including a ten-year-old boy named Martin Luther King Jr. Five years later, in the context of a speech he delivered in an oratory contest, King spoke movingly about the past and presciently about the future: “She sang as never before,” he said, “with tears in her eyes. When the words of ‘America’ and ‘Nobody Knows de Trouble I Seen’ rang out over that great gathering, there was a hush on the sea of uplifted faces, black and white, and a new baptism of liberty, equality, and fraternity. That was a touching tribute, but Miss Anderson may not as yet spend the night in any good hotel in America.” Two decades later, King stood on those same steps and delivered his own unforgettable performance as Lincoln watched approvingly, once again, from behind.[10]

Throughout this same period, American Jews joined with the rest of the nation in asking themselves, “What would Lincoln do?” Not surprisingly, Lincoln offered Jews the same political counsel and moral guidance he gave to the general community. Yet American Jews continued to believe that even though Lincoln was speaking to the nation as a whole, his moral legacy was particularly relevant to Jewish causes and concerns.

As part of the festivities marking the 100th anniversary of Lincoln's birth in 1909, Gratz College in Philadelphia invited the distinguished physician, scholar, and civic leader Solomon Solis-Cohen (1857–1948) to deliver the Lincoln Centennial Address. Although Solis-Cohen devoted much of his speech to an analysis of Lincoln's greatness, he used his parting comments to emphasize his conviction that American Jews had good reason to let Lincoln serve as an

exemplar of one who tried to make the world better for all humankind:

> And as Americans, as Jews, as men, let us meet the problems of our day in the same spirit of justice and charity wherein Lincoln met the problems of his day. Slavery still exists in our land, though in a subtler form than that which it took in the brick kilns of Pithom and Ramses or the cotton-fields and rice swamps of Mississippi and Carolina. Underneath all the conflicts of races, of nations, of individuals, lies one great problem: that of vindicating the equal right of every human soul to a freedom restricted only by the equal freedom of its fellows. “That which is hateful to thee, do not to any other,” said Hillel; and Lincoln, applying the same thought to the conditions of this time and country, spoke words that I would have linger in your memory as the essence of our communion with his spirit tonight: “Them that deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it.”[11]

At Temple Israel in St. Louis, Rabbi Leon Harrison (1866–1928) used the centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birthday to comment on the great social issues of the day. Harrison informed his congregants that Lincoln, were he alive, would be a “true American” who would fight for the rights of the common man, which were being trammeled by corporate greed. The rabbi's homiletic technique was apparently a success. Newspaper reports appearing the following week noted that Harrison's congregants “loudly cheered” when their rabbi “denounced as traitors the rich men of the city who have monopolized the public utilities.”[12]

Stephen S. Wise habitually yoked Lincoln's memory to his views on current events. For example, he compared Lincoln to Woodrow Wilson on a number of occasions both before and after World War I. As Wilson prepared to leave office in March 1921, Wise again likened the ailing president to Lincoln. He told his listeners that both men were unfairly disparaged for no reason other than that they sought to “enhance the greatness” of their country. In 1922, Wise compared the troubling renaissance of the Ku Klux Klan to the vexing social issues that Lincoln had faced during his lifetime “with the problem of slavery and abolition.” Calling on America to make the same stand as Lincoln did vis-à-vis slavery during the Civil War, Wise vehemently declared: “Either the Ku Klux Klan has got to go or America will perish.”[13]

In the 1930s, Jewish leaders used Lincoln's memory as a prod to agitate against Hitler and Nazi policies. Just weeks before the Germans handed Chancellor Adolf Hitler an electoral endorsement in March 1933, Wise delivered an inflammatory address titled “Germany Chooses Hitler—America Chose Lincoln.” Wise was not alone in his effort to enlist Lincoln's memory in service of American opposition to Nazism and Nazi policies. In 1937, for instance, the editors of Philadelphia's *Jewish Exponent* unquestionably had Hitler in mind when telling their readers that Lincoln's birthday should serve as a stark reminder of the dangers the nation faced when he was president and that await all those who blithely acquiesce to tyranny:

> Time in no way lessens the affectionate feeling the American people cherish for the great martyr President Abraham Lincoln. This is a wholesome sign. The outstanding feature in Lincoln's character is his passionate belief in the vindication of the right, his indomitable courage in the face of adversity and his unquenchable confidence in the inherent goodness of human nature. This lesson from the life of this great President is needed at all times and especially in an age when tyranny finds acquiescence among enlightened people, when justice and discrimination are condoned by otherwise moral nations and individuals. Lincoln's life should serve as a potent stimulus to many of us

> today to continue the struggle for the right, to maintain hope for a revitalized civilization and to stir us to renewed faith in the final victory of the causes of justice and liberty throughout the world. The anniversary observed today should strengthen us in this critical period and imbue us with courage for better times to come, even though the present appears dark…. Viewed in this light, the birthday anniversary of Abraham Lincoln takes on new and timely significance.[14]

Several years later, on Lincoln's birthday in February 1945, the editors of Boston's *Jewish Advocate* pointed out that Hitler's impending demise would be, when all is said and done, a validation of Lincoln's legacy and the moral inheritance he bequeathed to America:

> Once again we celebrate the birthday of Abraham Lincoln, a man who, perhaps above all others, typifies those values for which civilized mankind is now embattled in the fight against Hitlerism.
>
> It was Abraham Lincoln who in the Gettysburg speech gave the definition of democracy which we Americans accept today—"a government of the people, by the people, and for the people."
>
> Hitler had perhaps not realized it, but in taking up the fight against democracy he had to fight "Old Abe," too, for Abraham Lincoln in the spiritual sense, is not dead. The ideals for which he fought have become impregnated in the American people. It may be that here and there, in greater or lesser fashion, there are people in America who have forgotten this lesson but all the Lincoln in the American people cannot be easily rooted out.
>
> This is what Hitler is learning today—the hard way. This is what any of those who eye Hitlerist method must sooner or later find out. Yes, the lesson of democracy which Abraham Lincoln taught has gone deeper in our bones than some of our Fascists realize. Abraham Lincoln taught also another lesson which Hitler is in a position to understand now, the lesson "that you can fool some of the people all of the time, all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time."[15]

After World War II, Americans—Jews and non-Jews—slowly began to confront the meaning of the calamitous atrocities the Nazis had perpetrated on European Jewry. These realizations coincided with the beginnings of the modern civil rights movement, and many Jews dedicated themselves anew to the idea that all Americans deserved equal opportunity under the law. For many Americans—and particularly in the Jewish community—the social conditions that made it possible for a government-sanctioned genocide to occur in Germany during the 1930s and 1940s were directly connected to the fight for social justice in America in the 1950s and 1960s. Rabbi Joachim Prinz (1902–88), a refugee from Nazi Germany who immigrated to America and dedicated himself to the cause of civil rights, articulated this very idea in the words he spoke at the March on Washington, August 28, 1963:

> When I was the rabbi of the Jewish community in Berlin under the Hitler regime, I learned many things. The most important thing that I learned under those tragic circumstances was that bigotry and hatred are not the most urgent problem. The most urgent, the most disgraceful, the most shameful and the most tragic problem is silence. A great people which had created a great civilization had become a nation of silent onlookers. They remained silent in the face of hate, in the face of brutality and in the

face of mass murder. America must not become a nation of onlookers. America must not remain silent.[16]

After World War II, the civil rights movement in America enlisted the support of many American Jews who concluded that, had more German citizens been willing to defend the civil rights of Jews and other oppressed minorities during the 1930s, the Holocaust might well have been averted. The connection between Lincoln and the civil rights movement in the 1950s and 1960s was self-evident to many, but this moral lesson seemed particularly salient to many in the American Jewish community. Lincoln, the man who protected Jewish civil rights during his administration, would want American Jews to continue the fight for social justice. This assertion contributed to a widespread conviction that Jews in the post-Holocaust world must actively support the crusade for civil rights in America. To do anything less would be blasphemous to the memory of the six million Jews who perished in Europe. Commenting on the civil rights legislation that President Truman submitted to the U.S. Congress at the end of January 1949, Cincinnati's *American Israelite* emphasized that Abraham Lincoln had been a civil rights advocate in his era, and he would similarly want all people to support the modern civil rights movement:

> If a modest percentage of the verbal tributes paid annually to Abraham Lincoln were but translated into daily acts of living in the spirit of that great man, the world would be advanced immeasurably along the path to liberty, equality and fraternity….
>
> Nevertheless Lincoln the man and Lincoln the legend continue to serve by firing countless thousands of individuals around the world with a love for democracy that is genuine and irresistible.
>
> In a day when a president has actually "sunk his teeth" into the hard core of the question of civil liberties, we need to study and to take to heart anew the lesson which the emancipator himself learned and taught in another dark and trying day in humanity's long struggle upward.[17]

Even into the 1980s, the annual commemoration of Lincoln's birthday continued to prompt American Jews to anchor their commitment to breaking down walls of prejudice and intolerance in the moral legacy inherited from the sixteenth president. Rabbi Judea B. Miller (1930–95) illustrated this phenomenon when he took note of the fact that, from the 1940s through the 1980s, National Brotherhood Week, sponsored by the National Conference of Christians and Jews, fell during the third week of February—the week separating Lincoln's and Washington's birthdays. Despite the event's symbolic temporal situation, Miller pointed out that after all the years of commemoration, the idea of brotherhood in America remained "really tentative and fragile." There had been only halting progress, and as far as Miller was concerned, all that National Brotherhood Week had to offer the community was "our unsuccessful efforts for peace today and our frequent crusading attitude of self-righteousness." Yet Miller found strength in the living legacy of Abraham Lincoln, who continued to inspire him to sustain the effort. "Maybe Brotherhood Week and the whole concept of human brotherhood is just a pious hope, a vague dream. But if it is just a dream, it is a wonderful dream. With more people of power who have the spirit of an Abraham Lincoln it may someday become a reality."[18]

In the most famous of all his addresses, the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln said, "It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced." Although Lincoln most certainly was referring to the work of preserving

the Union, he himself became a moral clarion that called on future generations of Americans to dedicate themselves to the "unfinished work" left by those who preceded them. Thus, in response to the question "What would Lincoln do?," it has been repeatedly asserted that Lincoln would have never tolerated an immoral society. As one politician put it, Lincoln would have worked to abolish the "new slavery" of poverty, homelessness, drugs, and human despair.[19] These ideas were particularly compelling to American Jews, who remembered him as a man who stood up for their constitutional rights.

A week prior to Abraham Lincoln's birthday in February 1956, Autherine Juanita Lucy (b. 1929), the first black student to attend the University of Alabama, was suspended only three days after she began her program in library science. Earlier that same day, a hostile mob had assembled to prevent Lucy from attending classes, and the university maintained it could no longer guarantee her safety. Commenting on this event, the editors of the *Jewish Advocate* of Boston passionately denounced the bigotry that had given the world a "foul impression" of America. "We also know that it is a false impression," the editor added, "created by the worst segment of the population."[20]

The paper then called on its readers to pledge themselves to complete "Lincoln's unfinished business." Why? The editors reminded readers that when Lincoln was coming to power in the late 1850s, thousands of Jewish immigrants from Central Europe were flocking to these shores. At that time, many Americans feared these newcomers and joined the Know Nothing Party. Yet Abraham Lincoln stood up for those Jewish immigrants—he had "better sense." He "both typified and symbolized" a better America. For this very reason, the editors wrote, Jews and all Americans must follow Lincoln's example "in the fight between the forces of light and darkness." For Jews, Lincoln epitomized a moral imperative that called them, as Jews and as Americans, to dare to do their duty as they understood it.[21]

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1. I BESEECH YOU IN HIS NAME: LOVE THE OPPRESSED

Jacob Salmon Raisin (1878–1946), a scholar and writer, was rabbi of Congregation Beth Elohim in Charleston, South Carolina, for nearly three decades. Raisin was about fourteen years old in 1892, when his parents immigrated to the United States from Russian Poland. Five years later he matriculated at Cincinnati's Hebrew Union College, where he earned his rabbinical diploma. Before coming to Charleston in 1915, he served congregations in Port Gibson, Mississippi; Butte, Montana; Las Vegas, New Mexico; and Troy, New York.

In 1906, while Raisin was the rabbi of Congregation B'nai Israel in Butte, he delivered a noteworthy sermon on Lincoln's birthday. He exhorted his listeners by saying, "I beseech you by the love you bear his name to love the oppressed." Raisin also told his congregation that Lincoln was "the benefactor not only of the Southern blacks but of the whites as well." Nevertheless, Raisin preached, the "white man has sunk into bondage worse than was ever felt in the South." If the American public ever hoped to confront the problems of "political corruption & economic rottenness," they should rely on Lincoln for inspiration. "Emulate his example," the rabbi told his people, and "love the oppressed."[22]

In 1906, Jacob Salmon Raisin, rabbi, Hebraist, and scholar, sermonized on Lincoln to his congregation in Butte, Montana. Courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Less than a decade later, Raisin would accept a call to Charleston, where he would become a firsthand witness to the stratified society he had criticized while he was serving in Butte.

Lincoln, the First American

"…Every man can say things that are true of Abraham Lincoln, but no man can say

anything new of Abraham Lincoln”[23]—this was the verdict of Frederick Douglas[s] over a quarter of a century ago. And who at this late hour can doubt its veracity? Who, after the manifold eulogies showered upon him since, after having been repeatedly declared by a grateful people as the First American after the best element in the South has united with the universal feeling of the North in doing honor to his memory & singing paeans of praise to his life & canonized as martyr & saint after his death, who now can venture to say anything true & yet new of Abraham Lincoln?

That was a hero such as the world has seldom, if ever, seen before; that was a man for whose like we search but in vain in the voluminous annals of the past. Nor can we justly indulge in the hope of finding his equal in the unwritten records of the future. From the lowliest station in life he rose to the rank of the noblest of the earth; from a shepherd of flocks he grew to be a leader of men, from a rail-splitter he forged his way to the White House & from a humble boatman on the Mississippi he became the captain of the Ship of State. Like most of the great leaders of the people of Israel, like David, like Saul, like Moses himself, he removed all obstacles & hindrances, conquered all opposition & though not only unaided but even decried & derided by blinded dupes or scheming & envious time-servers, he succeeded in inscribing his name & enshrining his fame in the hearts of his countrymen to the remotest generation….

Should only the black man be the friend of Abraham Lincoln? Should the African race alone whom he, like Moses the Jew, had liberated from a worse than Egyptian bondage, celebrate his birthday? Were he even a son of Ham we should have good cause to rejoice upon this contribution to mankind. Had he been born in any other part of the earth we might well be proud of & be grateful for such a specimen of noble manhood. I am thankful for a Booker T. Washington & a Louis [Lajos] Kossuth even [though] the one is not of my race & the other does not belong to my country. But since Lincoln was born on our soil & was flesh of our flesh & time of our time how great must be our joy & how deep our gratitude for the blessing which in him God has bestowed upon our nation.

Nor should this celebration be limited to the North. As one who lived for five years in the South & became more or less identified with their institutions, I claim him for our South land. He was a Southerner of Southerners. A Kentuckian by birth, he later on went to New Orleans & and spent several years as a boatman on the Mississippi: while as President of the United States he, with the great common sense sharpened in the school of adversity, had the good fortune of making real what our noblest Southern gentlemen, what Washington, Jefferson, Patric[k] Henry & Richard Lee were dreaming of, striving for & searching after but could as yet only be as good as an ideal. And when his efforts were crowned with success, when he finally broke the yoke of slavery…has he not thereby [been] the benefactor not only of the Southern blacks but of the whites as well? The remover of the heaviest burden of the South as well as the realizer of the fondest hopes of the North? Are we not as much indebted to him for our moral salvation as are the negroes for their bodily emancipation?

Alas that Abraham Lincoln who like Abraham our Patriarch walked in simplicity & integrity before the Lord, was nipped in the very midst of his usefulness. What could he not have accomplished for our country & especially the South, had not the murderous hand of an assassin suddenly removed him from the sphere of his activity? The grave race-problem which still stares us in the face & which God only knows when & how it

will be solved might by this time have become a thing of the past. White & colored might now have learned their duties to each other & themselves, have known the requirements of the new era inaugurated by him & knowing them might have lived like brethren together in peace and harmony. But alas God saw fit otherwise. While our nation was Rachel-like bemoaning & finding no consolation for her bravest & best that were lost, while the skirts of Columbia were still crimson with the undried blood of her boys in blue & those in grey, she was suddenly to be bereaved of the greatest of them all, of Abraham Lincoln.

About forty years have now elapsed since his death—as many years as the Children of Israel roamed in the Wilderness of Paran on their way to the Promised Land. What has not our nation endured during that long & dreary period! How often did not we too exclaim, in those gloomy, unsettled years, during the horrible Reconstruction Days, in the reign of the Carpet-bagger, when everyone did as was pleasing in his eyes; Ah, for the days of old, it was better then than now! But thank God, that period of fire and sword, of storm & stress is now nearing its close. Already the South has become a Land of Promise. Already the "New South" foreseen by [Henry W.] Grady,[24] fertilized by the blood of the fathers[,] is rising by the brains of their descendants. More prosperous than ever before, more enlightened than in the dark sixties & seventies, better days, better years, are awaiting my people; days & years better by far than were ever expected & even most sanguinely hoped for by him whose birthday we recently celebrated, whom we lovingly call our "First American," admire as the greatest of presidents, & cherish as the noblest of our citizens, the good, the brave, the "honest" Abraham Lincoln.

In the dark days of 1862, President Lincoln issued a proclamation asking for three hundred thousand volunteers to fill the stricken ranks of the army. Immediately after the call, Mr. Gibbons,[25] of New York[,] wrote a poem, the first stanza of which read:

> We're coming, Father Abraham,
> Six hundred thousand more,
> From Mississippi's winding stream
> & from New England's Shore.
> We leave our plows & work-shops,
> Our wives & children dear,
> With hearts too full for utterance
> With but one silent tear;
> We dare not look behind us
> But steadfastly before
> We are coming Father Abraham,
> Six hundred thousand more.

It is this cry that should be raised in our times of political corruption & economic rottenness. "We are serving Father Abraham!" We have freed the blacks, but the white man has sunk into bondage worse than was ever felt in the South. I beseech you by the memory of our martyred President to hate slavery of any sort, spiritual as well as physical. I beseech you by the love you bear his name to love the oppressed. I beseech you by the honor which you are willing to show the day of his birth to emulate his example, to try rather to be on the side of God than to expect God to come over on your

side. In this way & in this way only, shall we best show our appreciation of & veneration for him who…

> Standing like a tower
> Our children shall behold his frame,
> The kindly-hearted,[26] brave, foreseeing man,
> Sagacious, patient, dreading praise, not blame,
> New birth of our soil, the first American.[27]

Amen.

2. HE WOULD STAND LIKE A ROCK FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

In 1898, a Congregationalist minister and Social Gospel activist named Charles Monroe Sheldon (1857–1946) published a volume titled In His Steps: "What Would Jesus Do?"[28] *Nearly a century would pass before Sheldon's question was rediscovered and flourished as a wildly popular American slogan.*[29] *It was also at the dawn of the twentieth century that a similar question, "What would Lincoln do?," began to be heard. Dozens of speakers and writers wondered aloud how Lincoln might have responded to contemporary social, political, economic, and religious challenges. This rhetorical device reached the height of its popularity during the era of World War I, but the trend, which waxed and waned throughout the twentieth century, included in every decade those who wanted to ponder what Lincoln would do if he were then alive.*

Rabbi Leon Harrison was one of many American rabbis who asked this question, first in February 1909, when he delivered a sermon marking the centennial of Lincoln's birth. On that occasion, Harrison asserted that if Lincoln were still alive, he would be a political Progressive fighting for the rights of labor, children, and women.[30]

Harrison, delivering a very similar message to a group of elderly Jewish Civil War veterans on March 27, 1914, at Temple Israel in St. Louis, expressed confidence that he knew what Lincoln would do were he still alive. According to the rabbi, Lincoln would oppose corruption in government, fight the power of business monopolies, support women's suffrage, prohibit child labor, advance the needs of public education, protect the rights of the "industrial classes," and promote peace among the nations of the world. In short, the rabbi insisted that Lincoln, the first Republican president, would have actually been, in 1914, a Progressive just like the Democrat in the White House, Woodrow Wilson.

What Would Lincoln Do in the White House Now?

If then I ask, what would Lincoln do that has not yet been done by him who now occupies his high place of executive authority, what would the answer be?

He would, I think, do some things to which the hand of his successor is set; and other things, too, that the nation has at heart to execute.

He would stand like a rock, as in his own age, for human rights. He would defend the humble against the powerful; the small trader against the monopolist that seeks to crush and ruin him by legal and immoral tricks. Lincoln always hated monopoly; for he believed absolutely in the equal rights of every man to our common, national inheritance of opportunity. Monopoly, he realized, not only crushes the individual, but corrupts the Commonwealth. It is the invisible government, as illegitimate as it is

invisible. It is the hand that soils the whiteness of judicial ermine, whose tainted money contemptuously buys up the country cattle in our legislatures. To regulate and control these great corporations, by making them as amenable to the majesty of the Law as the humblest citizen, would surely be the first task that he would make his own, so that the plain man may not be robbed of his inalienable rights; that he shall not be menaced and overshadowed by a giant competitor against whom he cannot hold his own.

It is a pure accident that we have such a man in the White House today. He might have been a cheap and windy politician; for it is a political machine in this country that lifts up and throws down. It is a few bosses that govern, instead of the whole nation. They select, instead of all of us selecting, by direct vote of the people in the primaries, candidates that are finally to be balloted for at the polls.

You ask what would Lincoln do? This reform in the original choice of candidates is emphatically what he would set himself to bring about. For he believed in a government of all the people, not of a few parasites upon the body politic; uncrowned tyrants, ruling more autocratically than any Czar. There is nothing that would be commended and promoted more zealously by Abraham Lincoln, in the spirit of his life and immortal achievements, than this great and needed change in the political administration of our country.

For he believed in the equal rights of every man, yes, and of every woman. It may not be known to many, that Abraham Lincoln believed in Woman's Suffrage, and publicly declared himself to that effect. He assuredly would have favored national legislation for the protection of women; to regulate their hours of labor; to guarantee them a minimum wage, at least equal to the cost of subsistence.

He would certainly have thrown the whole force of his tremendous personality against the diabolical horrors of Child Labor, as practiced in virtuous New England today, and more especially in the horrible child-working factories of the South, where their life is a hell worse than a convict's jail. This horrible evil he would not long allow to mock at our boasted humanity, to defy with its heartless greed, the best endeavors of patriots and humanitarians.

And the poor and unprivileged have not only economic rights, but also have intellectual rights of opportunity to acquire the traditional heritage of the mind. There are country colleges where many of our lads can work their way through, and gain an education by their own honest toil. But I know of no institution where all who come are furnished with this opportunity. And I am wondering whether it would not be within the scope of the United States government, to establish a great American University; not so much for the uncommon people, as for the common people; to teach not only the Arts and Sciences, but all professions and careers; where the poor boy might come and labor in the spirit of Ezra and Nehemiah, who built the walls of Jerusalem, with a sword in one hand and a trowel in the other; simultaneously building and battling. So our young men could fight the battle of subsistence, while laying stone upon stone of their intellectual structure.

I believe that Abraham Lincoln, who studied by the light of a blazing pine log, and whose books could be counted on the fingers of one hand, would be heart and soul in favor of establishing a great school of learning, where all the children of the poor could not only learn, but labor also for their livelihood.

And I believe further and finally, that this great man, who, all through his early life,

was in the dark shadow of impending war, and who was afterwards plunged into its blackest horrors, would have used every resource of his great wisdom, of his remarkable power over men, to bring nearer the peaceful settlement of all burning issues, not only between nation and nation, but between class and class. For the world is entering into a new epoch. Once the world-wide struggle was for political rights. Then came our great war for the equal civil rights of every man. And now the conflict is beginning on the part of millions of workers, for their industrial rights. We have strikes; and the voluntary self-starvation of the poor, as well as the impoverishment of the rich, who will not yield, be it through pride, or principle.

And the public suffers; and the poor suffer vastly more than the rich. The complex life of a civilized community may be suspended and paralyzed by such an industrial crisis. Power and authority must be used by the national government, to promulgate such a law as that of New Zealand, for the compulsory arbitration of industrial disputes. And while the decision of such a tribunal need not be obligatory, it should at least be rendered, and made public, some time before the strike is allowed to be declared, so that public opinion may be informed by an authority in which it has confidence; and may throw its tremendous influence on one side or on the other. I believe this would have been one of the cardinal aims of this man, whose own horny hands had toiled for years for his daily bread; whose whole heart deeply sympathized with and loved the poor; and who loved fair play and justice even more, as manifested in the right way, the short way, the truly American way of settling these terrible conflicts, that sometimes threaten to cleave our entire nation asunder.

Peace between industrial classes would surely have been his aim and end. And peace between the nations. It would be a crowning glory of our generation, if in his spirit we would achieve a peaceful union with all of the great Powers, if we would agree to discontinue, by mutual consent, the present insane race for preeminence in armies and navies, and thus save the millions that are thus squandered in quickly obsolete engines of destruction; and if we would agree to arbitrate all questions whatsoever, not actually vital, to the existence of our nation.

But if we make treaties, we must keep them. And no one would be more insistent than he, who was the soul of justice and honor, that when we enter into an agreement of plain and unmistakable meaning, like our treaty with England with regard to the Panama Canal, that we should keep it to the letter; even if conditions have changed, and it is not to our material profit to keep our plighted national word. Yet, whether it be profitable or not, it is necessary. About this, there can be no question. It shames us, and lowers our dignity and good repute in the eyes of all civilized nations, that we do not at present propose to live up to our treaty with England, according to the common acceptance of the meaning of its terms by virtually all impartial and qualified witnesses.

What would Lincoln do today, if he were clothed with his pristine power? This is indeed a question replete with interest and charm. But there is a question still more fascinating. It is this—what would Lincoln BE today? What type of man would most nearly represent him in his essence and deeper self, regardless of the surface qualities, due to his origin and environment; in the elements that are of interest to us, as they bespeak the powerful personality behind them all. I cannot help thinking, that to an important extent he would be, in far-flung vision, in the justice and sanity of his views, in the greatness and thoroughly patriotic inspiration of the ends set before him, much

like the man we have chosen to be our ruler now. For he illustrates a splendid and characteristic type of American manhood. He is no man's man; he is his own master. He obeys no dictation; he listens to no illicit suggestion. He is swayed and moved only by the divine passion of righteousness that is sovereign in the man. He is a true American. He not only rules us, but represents the best that is in us….

What he was, what he would be, may we strive to be. May that gaunt and shadowy figure still cheer and hearten the wavering line; still be our captain and our chieftain, as he is our hero and national glory.

Soldiers! This text for us, was a reality for you. Our aspirations were your achievements. We imagine the picture; you beheld the original. You knew him as he was. You beheld the mighty frame that enshrined his tender heart. His rugged and kindly face was known to you. You saw him, with eyes of flesh.

And you recall him now, in his spirit and influence. You remember the sturdy virtues that he inspired or deepened in your valiant hearts—the courage, the patriotism, the self-sacrifice that were his, and yours too. Today brings back those great and glorious days. Today you recall once more those fields of honor and of tragedy. You remember your comrades, your companions who will not return, but who are not forgotten, who sleep in glory. And Fame rears their memorial.

Once more you have entered this House of God, with your flag, our flag, borne before you, the flag of our beloved country. This flag was carried in by fewer than before. Time is gathering toll of your bowed frames and gray heads. And more and more, therefore, do we seek to honor you, does the nation wish to manifest its admiration and reverence for the heroes that were its brave defenders. And therefore we have asked our children here to sing the stirring songs of patriotism; and to look upon your venerable faces; and to see you salute the flag, the colors you have fought and bled for. The youngest are here to look upon our oldest and worthiest men. And their presence will console and animate you, and make you feel that you have not toiled and fought in vain. For upon these young hearts your example and your very countenance shall be impressed; and into their young hands you will commit the heritage that you have won for this nation, that there may be under God a new birth of liberty; that the freedom so painfully won by this great American people shall not perish from the earth.[31]

3. AMERICANISM AND LINCOLN'S SPIRIT

The Bureau of Jewish Education in New York City organized an association of high school students called the "League of the Jewish Youth." The league actively sought to attract adolescents who were enrolled in a formal program of Jewish education as well as those who were "unschooled." The league's overarching mission was to strengthen the Jewish identification of these adolescents.[32]

In 1918, the League of the Jewish Youth held a "Lincoln Program" at New York's Central Jewish Institute.[33] *The program focused attention on the responsibilities and obligations of American citizenship. The event's organizers reminded their young attendees to imbibe the spirit of freedom, home, and shared values that the United States offered its Jewish citizenry. At the same time, the adolescents were reminded that, as Jews, they had much to offer America. The program as well as the accompanying tableau reproduced from another event which took place in Milwaukee on May 19, 1919, underscored the sought-for ideal of "blending" Jewish heritage*

and American life.

As we see from the program itself, Rabbi Jacob Kohn (1881–1968) of New York's Ansche Chesed Synagogue delivered a keynote address titled "A Jewish Conception of Lincoln." Unfortunately, the text of Kohn's address on that occasion does not seem to have survived. However, reproduced below are excerpts from another Lincoln address that Kohn gave as they were reported in the New York Times *in February 1923. Speaking before a meeting of the United Synagogue of America, the congregational body of Conservative Judaism, Kohn expressed grave concern over the American government's approach to reconstruction and reconciliation since World War I. He urged his listeners to consider what Lincoln would do if he could advise the nation. Lincoln would call upon America to behave with "charity,…love and good-will" toward all the nations of the world.*

What Is Americanism and What Does It Demand of Us?

Can it demand that we deny who we are? Is it possible that it should ask us to become estranged from our fathers and mothers? Shall it ask us to forget the People from whom we are sprung?

No! For Americanism is something positive, not negative; it demands a loyalty, not a disloyalty.

America demands that we give to it what is finest and most profound in our People's life. What these things are we have sought to inscribe on the emblem of our League. "Torah, Avodah, Gemiluth Hasodim,"[34] symbolize for us all of those spiritual ideals and that spirit of service which we have struggled to develop throughout the forty centuries of our history.

But in no less degree does America demand that we also take from it what is finest and most profound in its own life. And we are gathered here tonight for just this purpose—to gain a little deeper insight into the great things for which America stands.

This, then, is the confession of faith of our League of the Jewish Youth.

Not by negation and neglect of our Jewish souls, but by contributing what is finest in us to America and by taking the finest in America unto ourselves can we become loyal to America.

PROGRAM

1. Star Spangled Banner	*Audience*
2. Our Conception of Americanism *The League of the Jewish Youth, recited by Rose Goldman*	
3. Introduction of the Chairman	*Daniel Cogan, Pres. Inter-Club Council*
4. Introductory Address	*Abraham A. Silberberg, Chairman, Social Activities Committee*
5. Violin Solo Concerto No 2.	*Leonard Phillip Geller*
6. Recitation: "The Jesters Recantation"	*Mr. Philip Adler*
7. Vocal Solo • Swanee River • Old Black Joe • Comin' through the Rye	*Miss Rose Rabbach*
8. Address: "A Jewish Conception of Lincoln"	*Rabbi Jacob Kohn*
9. Hatikvah *Miss Sadie Cheifetz at the piano*	*Audience*
10. Dancing[35]	

Need of Lincoln's Spirit

His Reconstruction Policy Seen as World's Hope

by Rabbi Kohn

Special to the New York Times

Pittsburgh, Feb. 12—The need today for Lincoln's reconstruction policy as outlined in his second inaugural address, was stressed by Rabbi Jacob Kohn of New York at the annual convention of the United Synagogue of America, which is taking place here today.

Americanization pageant, Milwaukee, 1919. For thousands of east European Jewish immigrant children, Lincoln epitomized the true American spirit. Courtesy Wisconsin Historical Society, WHS-5348.

"His formula was a simple one," said Rabbi Kohn. "He would proceed with 'malice toward none, with charity for all…to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations.' He did not live to see the politicians of his day make mock of the sentiment to which he had pledged the nation. In that he was more fortunate than one of his successors in the presidential office.

"The world is still seeking an effective formula for reconstruction. Can we not imagine Lincoln urging upon the nations, America included, the policy which once he offered to our nation alone in the hour of bitter feud? Of charity, of love and good-will there is but little on earth today; of bigotry and of malice there is a heart-breaking abundance. Old national feuds have been revived and intensified, racial hate and suspicion are being fanned into flame; religious intolerance once more unseats men's reason, so that the better world order of which men have dreamed and for which the youth of the world was called upon to spill its blood seems to have been but a mirage of the human soul.

"The wisest political formulae, the most astute economic plans, will remain abortive unless the spirit in which men undertake the task of reconstruction is that

which Lincoln foreshadowed."[36]

4. "LOVE ONE'S FELLOWMEN WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RACE OR COLOR"

Samuel S. Cohon (1888–1958) immigrated to the United States in 1904 and was ordained at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati in 1912. In 1921, when the sermon quoted here was written, Cohon served as rabbi of Temple Mizpah in Chicago. A few years later, in 1923, he returned to Cincinnati to become a professor of theology at his alma mater, where he remained until his death. Rabbi Cohon was an important figure in Jewish academic life and published numerous books and articles, many of which focus on the relationship between Judaism and Christianity. He also played an influential role in the development of the "newly revised version" of The Union Prayerbook, *which was first published in 1940.*[37]

In the following excerpts from Cohon's sermon of February 11, 1921, titled "The Character of Abraham Lincoln," Cohon took aim at the rise of nativist sentiment that plagued American society during and after World War I. The rabbi had little use for the wave of xenophobia and, especially, the exclusionary nationalism that was termed "100 percent Americanism." It is also interesting to note how, in 1921, Cohon was decrying "all those who seek to strengthen the barriers that stand between the White man and the Negro" as well as those who fostered religious prejudice. Lincoln's religious convictions shaped his "life-mission" and spurred him to expand "human liberty." America and American Jewry, he asserted, should follow Lincoln's personal example in their effort to live religious lives.

The Character of Abraham Lincoln

Lincoln affiliated himself with no Christian denomination, but he was a thoroughly religious man. The Bible was his chief companion through life. He read it as a boy and drew inspiration from its pages as a man. By it he was sustained in his doubts and guided in his difficulties. From it he learned that to believe in a living God, to love God with all heart and soul, and to love one's fellowmen without distinction of race or color, is the whole of religion. His entire outlook upon life and upon the problems of the day, was colored by ideals of the Bible. In his farewell address to his friends at Springfield in 1861, he expressed himself in these words: "I now leave, not knowing when or whether I shall return, with a task before me greater than that which rested upon Washington. Without the assistance of that divine Being who ever attended him, I cannot succeed. With that assistance, I cannot fail. Trusting in Him, who can go with me and remain with you and be everywhere for good, let us confidently hope that all will be well." In approaching the great issues of the day, he ceaselessly sought the light of God. And he gave evidence to his faith, in his public addresses, which are Biblical not only in language but also in spirit. In fact, he appears like a character from the Hebrew Bible. His Inaugural Address and his proclamations display a profound trust in the mercy and justice of God. Like a priest he seeks atonement for the people, and like a prophet he chastises them and leads them to summits of religious aspiration. He pleaded with them: "We have grown in numbers, wealth, and power, as no other nation has grown; but we have forgotten God…. We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. Intoxicated by unbroken success we have become…too proud to pray to the God that made us. We have been preserved these many years in peace and prosperity. It behooves us, then,…to confess our national sins, and to pray for clemency and forgiveness." In public as in personal crises, he sought strength and consolation in

prayer.

His sterling honesty and firm faith in God and in right, shaped his life-mission of securing the foundations of national Union and of human liberty….

His broad sympathies put to shame our one hundred percenters who are ready to deny their fellow citizen's freedom of thought and of expression, who seek to promote the welfare of our country through jealous intrigues against neighboring lands. His big heart that beat with love for the downtrodden and the disinherited masses, stands out as an eternal warning against those who perpetuate the institution of slavery under changed forms. It warns all those who seek to strengthen the barriers that stand between the White man and the Negro and who sharpen the prejudices of men of one religious denomination against those of another. To all forward-looking men throughout the world, his faith in democracy is like a pillar of fire illumining their way through our trying days of reconstruction. And his simple yet profound faith in and love of God are an inspiration and a benediction to all who seek the Lord and rely upon His guidance.[38]

5. A JEWISH LODESTAR

For some rabbis, Abraham Lincoln served as a Jewish role model. According to Rabbi Philip A. Langh (1895–1946) of Anshe Emes[39] *Congregation in Chicago, President Lincoln was "the nearest to the Jewish genius in character, in spirit, in ideals." Langh implied that American Jews would be well served to make Lincoln a Jewish lodestar. The American Jew was "only paying homage to the memory of the greatest [American leader] of them all" when they emulated Lincoln's Jewish ideals: compassion* (rachmonos), *humility* (anovos), *and integrity* (t'mimus).

Jewish Ideals in Lincoln

"Lincoln is not a type. He stands alone—no ancestors, no fellows, no successors."

These words uttered about the great emancipator are of particular meaning to the Jew. There is no leading figure in American history whose character so much approximates the genius of the Jew as does that of Abraham Lincoln, whose life so expresses those traits that have ever been held up and idealized by the Jew.

In reading of the life of Lincoln, the student of Jewish literature is immediately reminded of the figure of Hillel, the great rabbi and scholar, who lived in Palestine shortly before the destruction of the second Jewish commonwealth, and who later became its patriarch. A striking parallel can be drawn of the lives of the two men. Both came from poor and lowly homes and both rose to the highest position within the gift of their people. One spent his youthful days pioneering in the unsettled lands of the middle west, clearing woods, building humble log cabins and out of the untamed wilderness endeavoring to eke out a mere existence. The other's early years were passed in Babylonia, regarded at the time by the older Jewish settlement of Palestine as a barbarous land without culture and civilization.

As boys, both labored at the same occupation—Lincoln a rail splitter, Hillel, the wood chopper. Both were thirsty for knowledge; in their love of learning both were typically Jewish. In the country where Lincoln was brought up, there were few books obtainable. Whenever he heard of one anywhere, far or near, he would go on foot to borrow it. "I have read all the books I have ever heard of in the country for a circuit of fifty miles," writes the young Lincoln. And of Hillel, we well know that fascinating story of the lad who, refused admission into the academy because unable to pay the fee,

climbed to the skylight over the class rooms, lying there covered by a blanket of snow, yet unmindful of the cold, while drinking in the words of living waters that issued below from the lips of the great teachers, Shmaya and Abtalyon.[40]

Both were known for their infinite patience; for that true humility; for the golden gentleness that the Jews call “anovo.” Amid their exalted position they each retained a simplicity that was genuine, a humanness that was touching. Both would mingle unassumingly with everyone, listening to their lowliest wants and attending to their humblest petitions. When Lincoln was asked by his advisors to send away a throng that was tiring him with its petty troubles, he said: “They don't want much and they get so little. Each one considers his business of great importance. I know how I should feel if I were in their place.”

And of Hillel similarly, “Be gentle as Hillel” became a common proverb. “My humility is my greatness and my greatness is my humility,” was one of his sayings. In the minds of a loving posterity Hillel became the symbol for patience. A man once came to him and, wishing to scoff at religion, challenged him to teach him Judaism while standing on one foot. He had previously gone to Shammai, the contemporary and fellow scholar of Hillel, but who, incensed at the impudence, had thrown the stranger out. But Hillel was gentle and so he said to him: “Do not do unto others what thou wouldst not that others do unto thee. This is the whole of the Torah. The rest is mere commentary.” This recalls again Lincoln's summary of religion when he declared: “Whenever any church will inscribe over its altar as qualification of membership the statement, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy soul and with all thy might,’ and ‘Love thy neighbor as thyself’—that church will I join with all my heart and with all my soul.”[41]

Both were given at the hands of an admiring people the highest gift within their power, one the presidency of the Sanhedrin, the other the leadership of a continent. Hillel, when elected over and above many rivals, humbly said to them: “It is not because I am cleverer than you that I have been appointed head of the Sanhedrin.” Witness Lincoln's beautiful remark to his compatriots when in February, 1861, leaving Springfield to assume his arduous duties at the national capitol, he said: “Without the assistance of the Divine Being, I cannot succeed: with that assistance I cannot fail.”

There are other qualities of character that endear Lincoln to the student of Jewish thought. Lincoln was deeply religious, imbued by a sense of profound piety and feeling the ever-presence of God. For a mind reared in the environs of western America like his, it was unusual to have developed the conception of national sin. Lincoln regarded the Civil War as a punishment of God upon America, both north and south, for the sin of having enslaved a whole people. In his second inaugural he said: “The Almighty has his own purposes…. He gives to both north and south this terrible war as the woe due to those by whom the offense came…. As was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, ‘The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.’”

In the president of the United States to find the consciousness of national sin, of a sin that calls for collective atonement, is to say the least, surprising. It was not the scolding of an Isaiah of old, or of Amos—not the rebuke of rabbi or priest—not the utterance of an evangelist or missionary, nor the fanaticism of a religious zealot, but it was Lincoln the commander-in-chief of the armies of the north, who said: “We have grown in numbers, wealth and power, as no other nation has ever grown. But we have

forgotten God. We have been the recipients of the choicest bounties of heaven. Intoxicated by unbroken success we have become too proud to pray to the God that made us. We have been preserved in peace and prosperity. It behooves us then to confess our national sins and to pray for clemency and forgiveness." Nor were these words addressed to a camp of contrite sinners, nor to a church in solemn worship assembled, but it was a national proclamation to the millions of citizenry by the president of their republic. It expresses a "tmimus," a religious piety characteristically Jewish.

As arbiter over the fate and destiny of millions of soldiers, it oft fell to the lot of Lincoln to exercise clemency to condemned men and to grant pardons, a privilege of which he oft availed himself and for which he was much censured. But he could not help it. He had the quality of "rachmonos"—the quality of mercy—in a large measure. Is there a finer story extant of Lincoln than that of the pardon granted to William Scott, the young soldier found asleep while on sentry duty and sentenced to be shot? The president in response to the latter's appeal said: "My boy, you are not going to be shot tomorrow. I am going to send you back to your regiment. But I have been put to a good deal of trouble on your account…and what I want to know is, how are you going to pay my bill?" The young soldier answered and spoke of various ways in which he could raise money to pay the president. Then Lincoln put his hands on the lad's shoulders, looked into his face as though sorry and said: "My boy, my bill is a very large one. Your friends cannot pay it, nor your bounty, nor your farm nor all your comrades. There is only one man in all the world who can pay it and his name is William Scott. If from this day William Scott does his duty, so that if I were there when he came to die, he could look me in the face as he does now and say, I have kept my promise, and I have done my duty as a soldier, then my debt will be paid. Will you make that promise and try to keep it?" Some months later the young soldier, while rescuing wounded from the firing line, was shot mortally and thus paid the full measure of devotion that his commander-in-chief had asked of him.

The late lamented Solomon Schechter, who wrote a remarkable essay on Lincoln showing a wonderful insight into the genius of the martyred president, pointed out that Lincoln's inimitable faculty of story telling and using parables is thoroughly akin to the Jewish characteristic of using the "moshol" or "comparison," and the "maaseh" or "story." There have been written volumes of stories and parables attributed to the master story teller, that he uttered—and did not utter—and this aspect of the great emancipator is one of the most attractive.

But whether in his profound religious piety, whether in his quality of "rachmonos," whether in his true "anovo" or humility, whether in his craving for knowledge, whether in his talent for "moshol," whether in a life strangely parallel to that of our own Hillel, the close kinship of Lincoln with Jewish ideals is evident. It is not disrespectful of the other great men of American history; it is only paying homage to the memory of the greatest of them all to say that the nearest to the Jewish genius in character, in spirit, in ideals, was Abraham Lincoln.

And so it is indeed true what has been said of him. "Lincoln is not a type. He stands alone—no ancestors, no fellows, no successors."[42]

6. GERMANY DESPERATELY NEEDS A LINCOLN

In February 14, 1933, the Jewish Advocate *published excerpts from an address Rabbi Stephen S. Wise delivered to mark Lincoln's birthday. He used the occasion to comment on contemporary events—national elections in Germany that were scheduled to take place some two weeks later, on March 5. Adolf Hitler had already been named chancellor of Germany in January 1933, so there was every reason to believe the Germans would vote Hitler and his Nazi Party into office.*

Wise used Lincoln as a foil for Hitler. He began by comparing the values that Lincoln and Hitler espoused, and then the rabbi extended this parallel by comparing the moral fiber of America to that of Germany. The rabbi made it clear that in spite of the fact that Germany desperately needed a Lincoln in 1933, the nation would almost certainly select his moral antipode. Wise concluded by asserting that under crisis and pressure, Americans have always chosen the greatest of leaders to extricate them from the difficulties they faced. On the eve of the German elections, Wise predicted the Germans would turn their backs on their "great and classic tradition of learning and freedom" by handing over their government to the likes of Hitler.

Germany Chooses Hitler—America Chose Lincoln

New York, Feb. 14 (Special Correspondence)—In the course of the address by Rabbi Stephen S. Wise before the Free Synagogue at Carnegie Hall on Lincoln's birthday, Dr. Wise said:

"To marvel at the surrender of Germany to Hitlerism is not to interfere in German policies. Germany is free to choose any sort of government from extreme right to extreme left. Germany may deem it wise and needful, at the behest of its captains of industry, to choose a regime which shall seek to destroy the German Socialist and Communist groups. These are German, not American problems, save as a problem and its solution in one land has its reverberations in every other land.

"If we deal with Hitler, it is not because he is Fascist, or Nazist, not because he is in favor of revision of the Versailles peace treaty or the Polish corridor. These are world problems and our interest in them is that of Americans and humans. But insofar as Hitlerism includes a definitely formulated and activated anti-Jewish policy, we are deeply concerned, and we believe that Americans, irrespective of faith and racial origin, will come to share our concern touching the danger to the German republic of forswearing its enlightened and basic policy of equal and inviolate rights for all its citizens.

"Nor will Americans of faith and race other than our own view with tolerance or equanimity the threatened invasion of Jewish rights and the continuance of assaults upon Jewish life and property by the followers of Hitler. Jews are not strangers nor aliens in Germany. They have lived in Germany for a thousand years, they have been among Germany's builders and creators. Some of Israel's greatest sons have been among the noblest figures in the intellectual and spiritual life of Germany. Jews, wherever they may dwell, whether in Germany or in America, can hardly be expected to learn with unconcern that the fundamental rights of Jews are endangered, Jews whose residence in Germany goes back a thousand years and more, by the leader of a political party whose German citizenship dates back one year.

"Let it not be thought that only Jewish rights are imperiled, though these are most gravely assailed in theory and in substance alike by the Hitlerist party.

"Hitlerism may do unlimited damage to Jews, but it will do still more hurt to the

German Republic and the German name. The world is beginning to turn with sympathy and understanding to the German people who have waged a valiant battle for their own rehabilitation and that sympathy will be alienated, that sympathy will be lost if Germany should give carte blanche to a group of men who have boasted that Jews must be degraded to a lower status of citizenship, that Jews must be virtually eliminated from the callings in which they have fruitfully and beneficently served for centuries.

"In saying that America chose Lincoln and Germany is in danger of choosing Hitler, I would not pretend that America has always chosen Lincolns and Germany has always chosen Hitlers. I do, however, maintain that in the time of America's most awful crisis, America chose its greatest son, chose him who alone stands as the peer of the 'father of his country.' America chose Lincoln who, at a time of fratricidal strife and bitterest divisiveness brought to the sundered halves of his country and its people a program of reconciliation, a policy of infinite forbearance. Thus Lincoln said: 'With charity to all and with malice to none.' Germany chooses Hitler, who, whatever the rightfulness or wrongfulness of his political-economic program substitutes for the maxim of Lincoln 'With charity for Nordics and malice to Semites.' Such a principle, such a program, such a policy cannot serve a great nation. A house is never served by him who divides it against itself. A nation can only be served by apostles of forbearance and understanding and conciliation. Lincoln was such an apostle. It were well for Germany, with its great and classic tradition of learning and freedom, to bethink itself before it embarks upon an adventure which will mean that its decisions touching its inner affairs shall be spoken by the sword."[43]

7. HOW WOULD LINCOLN SERVE?

Dr. Samuel H. Goldenson (1878–1962), rabbi of Congregation Emanu-El of New York City, exuded a palpably grim disposition as he spoke from his pulpit on the 130th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, February 12, 1939. He was distressed by world events. During the course of the preceding year, Hitler's behavior had become increasingly ominous. The Anschluss, Germany's annexation of Austria, took place on March 13, 1938. On September 30, 1938, France, Britain, and Italy handed Germany the Sudetenland. The Nazis ransacked more than 1,000 synagogues and broke the windows of more than 7,500 Jewish businesses on "Kristallnacht" (the "Night of Broken Glass") on November 9–10, 1938. Little wonder why Goldenson began his sermon by observing, "I doubt whether at any time since [Lincoln] passed into the Great Beyond has the anniversary [of his birth] been so significant, has the anniversary been fraught with so much sense of the relevance of his life for our day, as in this year 1939."

What would Lincoln do if he was alive in the year 1939? Goldenson maintained that Lincoln would live by the precepts of "moral reason." Contrasting Lincoln and his manifest respect for reason and for the values of human individualism with the mindless and wanton cruelty of modern dictators, Goldenson viewed Lincoln as an "exemplar of democracy and humanity" in a modern world that stood on the brink of war. "If you and I feel him more," the rabbi concluded, "if you and I live by his nature and his vision more—the world will become a better place to live in."

If Abraham Lincoln Were Alive Today: A Sunday Sermon

We have had many anniversaries since Lincoln died but I doubt whether at any time since he passed into the Great Beyond has the anniversary been so significant, has the

anniversary been fraught with so much sense of the relevance of his life for our day, as in this year 1939. And why? Because during recent months especially there has developed for us the full realization of a type of thinking about human beings, about human life, about human society that contrasts itself so completely with Abraham Lincoln and his ways of thinking about man and man's place in the economy of the world. Of all the great figures in history I doubt whether there has ever been a leader of men, aside from Moses himself, who constitutes such an antithesis, such a complete antithesis, between himself and the dictators of our day. He stands at the opposite pole from them. Every aspect in which he may be compared with them—his personal qualities of mind and heart, his conception of the nature of man, his thought about life in general, his philosophy of human welfare, his political policies and program, and his personal commitments—all of them range him upon the opposite side, completely opposed to the men who are known as the dictators in modern society. And this morning let me indicate the major differences between Abraham Lincoln as a leader of men, as a great political spokesman, and the dictators of our day.

To Abraham Lincoln the source of all value was found in the nature and the worth and the dignity of the individual man, the concrete human being without reference to race or creed or color. He loved the individual and all his thinking began with his estimate of the value of the individual, his respect for a human soul because it was a human soul….

You know, friends, this makes me wonder what has happened to society. I often say to myself: How can we explain some of the things that are happening in our day? You know what happens if a sorrow comes into your own family: A child dies, a father or mother dies, a husband or wife dies—how we become grief stricken. Very often the world becomes totally dark for us because of the sorrow through the bereavement of a beloved one. See how precious human life is to us and how much our happiness and our sorrow are bound up with human lives, with men and women that are close to us. How precious they are to us. And I ask myself: What happens in human society that enables men and women, especially men—let me leave out the women—enables men to plan war upon a large scale? It is an enterprise in which one group of men actually try to kill another group of men as if these persons who are killed in war cease to be brothers and sisters, cease to be husbands and wives, cease to be fathers and mothers. And yet that is exactly what is happening in modern society—planning war on a large scale as if human beings cease to be precious.

Now Abraham Lincoln could not think that way. His eye was always fastened upon the concrete person who is the center of a network of relationship. Now, friends, contrast this point of view of vision with the central doctrine of the dictator states. What is the source and seat of value in dictatorships? Not the individual person, not the concrete human being, not the man or the woman as a person, but rather the state, the totality of something that they call the state. See how impersonal it is. See how far-off it is. See what a complete change of attitude there is. The state is the important thing. The state must be served. The state must be saved. The state must be worked for—whatever that is. And the result is that the individual is lost sight of. He becomes merely the means, the tool, an instrument to serve the state itself. That is the first and the first great difference between Lincoln's thinking and the thinking of the dictators. On the one hand you have man the concrete. On the other you have the state, the impersonal and

the abstract.

…And what is the contrast to Abraham Lincoln at this particular point. How do the dictators serve their cause? Not through rational thinking but through force—the use of sheer power. Not mentality, not morality but sheer physical force. There is here a throwback to the earlier days when men had not achieved the maturity of thoughtful and responsible persons. And let me tell you that that is the reason why there has developed in the recent thinking of the dictators a rather new policy. Or if it is not altogether new it has been developed with greater emphasis than ever. And what is that new policy? It is the public policy of hatred—hatred as a public policy. Why? Because after all the average person, no matter where he lives, whether he lives in England or in America or in France or in Germany or in Italy, the average person has something good in him, something kind, something soft, something lovely in him. The average person is not a brute. He does not like force to be used on him and he does not like to use force on another. And because the average person does not like the use of force and the agency of power, that person has to be indoctrinated so that he will be moved to be something different than he normally is. That is the reason why there is an effort to fill his heart with hatred. It is only when he becomes filled with hatred and fear that he can use force, that he will be willing to use force. So we have in modern society hatred and fear as new public policies.

Oh, how this contrasts itself with Abraham Lincoln. There is no man in the history of our civilization who detested hatred more than Abraham Lincoln. Possibly you recall the utterance that he gave in the very midst of the Civil War. Those that knew him said that he was the unhappiest man in the world during the war because the kindliest of men, the simplest of men, found himself engaged in a business that was so contrasting to his nature. Knowing that he was right in his eagerness to save these common black folk from bondage, knowing all these things yet nothing compensated him for the realization that human beings were hurting one another, even murdering one another. And in the midst of the Civil War during his inaugural address he came forth with one of the noblest utterances of all time: “With malice toward none and charity towards all.” Just think of it. “With malice toward none and charity towards all.”

When have we heard the word of charity last in the modern world. When has one of these dictators ever spoken of charity or appreciation or things like that. Here is Abraham Lincoln, the gentlest and the kindest of persons. Why. Because force was not in his nature. He would not believe in force. Rather he believed in moralized freedom.

And the next contrast that we find between him and the dictators is in his insistence throughout that the supreme guarantee for human beings living together is that they should live under law—live under law—and to him law was the collective will of the people themselves. No human being is ever secure in a society, who does not live in a society, that believes in law, that has a constitution of mutual understanding and mutual respect. Throughout his period, even during the great war, many a suggestion was made to him to interpret the law differently to gain his advantage or to speed up or accelerate his purposes by changing the basic law. And always he resisted it. He opposed it on the ground that ultimately the sole source and guarantee of the individual is to uphold the law as it is. And if a change is required, that change must come in the regular way—through the provisions made in the basic law.

Compare this with what is happening in the dictator states. Those unhappy people

living in Germany or in Italy or in Japan. They do not know from day to day what may happen. A new decree may be made at any time, at any time, by the individual and not through the operation of the regular forces in accordance with a basic law. Here then is another great difference. [In] the law there is the expression of an individual will. It is the expression of an individual purpose. It is the expression of the commitment of a single mind that speaks of itself as the arbiter of the will and the destiny of the people. It is altogether unthinkable for a man of Abraham Lincoln's character to assume such a role. Why?

This brings me to the last aspect of the difference, for after all this includes all the rest: the personal difference. Abraham Lincoln had two major qualities—personal qualities—honesty and humility. You know, friends, very often the complex things of life, the difficult problems in human relations, derive from very simple traits of nature. Abraham Lincoln was an honest person. He was known as honest Abe. And the honesty had to do with two things: his love of facts, his love of reality. He had an eye for things as they were. And then a great passion to state what he saw accurately, honestly. That is a double quality: realism as to the outside; self-criticism within. And so whatever he thought about any problem he stated that problem so simply, so directly, that the commonest man understood. He drew his illustrations, he drew his stories, from the things that everyone can see and understand and feel. And so he was known as “Honest Abe.” And then too Abraham Lincoln was one of the humblest of men. It is true he was born in a lowly place, born in a lowly capacity. Why, friends, there are any number of persons who are born in lowly places and are not humble. Abraham Lincoln liked to do two things: He liked to remind himself of his lowly birth and he liked to remind others of his lowly birth. Sometimes we recall our lowly birth but keep it to ourselves. Abraham Lincoln had a way of calling attention to it because of his great honesty, because there was a lesson in it, because he wanted to challenge others to be humble of the lowly state of most people in life. Most people do not occupy the important positions in life. Most people in life are not fitted for them. And Abraham Lincoln felt that it would help him if he reminded himself and others that he was one of them.

With such qualities one cannot become a dictator. Abraham Lincoln would check his utterances and very often with the effect they had upon the lowliest and the commonest. You know, friends, that he was one of the great debaters in American history. He always submitted his point of view, his line of reasoning to others, not only that he might be sure of himself but that they might know exactly how he thought and felt. Now that is a point of view, an aspect of thinking, that is entirely different from the dictators. Here then is Abraham Lincoln. He lives for us again as he should live and I hope he will live throughout the ages. What a great asset he has been. What a great challenge he is. And I hope and pray that the time will come when he will become an influence in the lives of others across the sea as he has been here. And may the time come even here when he shall be more deeply favored, more genuinely loved, than ever before. If you and I understand him more, if you and I feel him more, if you and I live by his nature and his vision more—the world will become a better place to live in, and will become the exemplar of democracy and humanity than which nothing else is more needed in our day.

Amen.[44]

8. FAITH IN DEMOCRACY IS AS ETERNAL AS FAITH IN ONE GOD

Like his colleague Samuel Goldenson, Rabbi Ferdinand M. Isserman of Temple Israel in St. Louis advised his congregation to look to Lincoln as they faced an impending world war. On Friday evening, December 29, 1939, Isserman was inspired to speak about Lincoln after he had seen a local performance of Robert Sherwood's play Abe Lincoln in Illinois.[45] *The theme of the rabbi's sermon was the fate of democracy in a world that was facing a rise of fascism.*

In his conclusion, Isserman compares Lincoln to Moses, Socrates, Jesus, and John Huss, all of whom were reformers who, like Lincoln, were ahead of their times. They all faced bitter opposition during their lifetimes, yet future generations eventually learned to revere their wisdom. "No American is more significant," Isserman asserts, than Lincoln, and he challenged his congregation to do what Lincoln would have done: "preserve and…protect that liberty and that democracy" for which Lincoln and so many of their predecessors fought and died.

Robert Sherwood's *Abe Lincoln in Illinois*

It is being urged today that there is no guarantee that democracy is the last word on government. Elemental governmental forms have changed in the past. Why shall we assume that they will not change in the future? Why should we take it for granted that the particular form of government that is ours now, has about it the stamp of eternity. Judaism is now more than twenty centuries old. Its belief in One God and one humanity was created by Moses and the prophets many, many, generations ago. In all the centuries that have passed, there have been many changes in the world. Boundary lines have been changed. Continents have been settled. Peoples have migrated. Languages have appeared and disappeared. Power has been wielded by different empires. Feudalism, nationalism, capitalism have held sway over economic systems. Yet midst all the flux and change of history, the worship of One God, the faith in one humanity, in Judaism, and even in Christianity has remained unchanged. Why? Because there is eternal truth and in eternal truth there is no change. Here are the limits to which man can go in religion. Here are the highest peaks which mortal mind and imagination can ascend. What monotheism is in the field of religion, democracy is in the field of government. The right of every man to govern himself, and the recognition that every man has inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, are the highest in government and therefore shall not pass away. Abraham Lincoln sensed that in his age. We must sense that in our age. Changes will come where there are imperfections. Changes may come in methods of government, with regards to proportional representation, with regards to the cabinet form of government, with regards to the tenure of office of president or of judges, but the concept that men have the God-given right to share in the government, there can be no improvement and there will be no change. The faith in democracy is as eternal as the faith in one God. That Lincoln knew. That our generation must know.

In the past few years, we have heard talk that democracy is doomed, that the future belongs to dictatorship. That talk is diminishing. The longer dictatorships endure, the more will they discredit themselves and the more will they indicate the superiority of democracy. Dictatorship both of the left and of the right, have revealed their utter brutality, their lack of moral scruples. Germany with its invasion of Czecho-Slovakia, Austria and Poland. Italy with its invasion of Ethiopia and Albania. Russia with its inhumanitarian attack upon Finland. Dictatorships have brought war. Dictatorships

have denied their people fundamental rights. Dictatorships degrade men by treating them like beasts. Dictatorships despise human beings. Dictatorships are inefficient. Dictatorships are indifferent to human life. That we have realized and thus we are more than ever aware of the efficiency, of the superiority and the blessings of democratic form of government….

Lincoln's religion was assailed in his day. When asked by the clergyman with what denomination he was affiliated, Lincoln replied that he was affiliated with no one denomination, although in Washington he did attend the Presbyterian church. He replied, to his questioner, that when he finds as a church whose creed is, "Love the Lord with all thy heart and thy neighbor as thyself," that, that church he would join. This, to the clergyman was atheism. Most clergymen today would recognize that Lincoln was voicing high religion. If Lincoln lived in St. Louis with his religious views he would be welcome in many churches. There are still those in our midst, however, who still believe that only their conception of religion is correct, that only those are religious that believe as they do. They would imprison religion in the cell of one creed, in the jail of one denomination. They would march it in lockstep to the cadence of one melody and would robe it with the vestments of one form of ecclesiasticism. They would still call Lincoln an infidel. Thomas Jefferson's religion was like that of Lincoln's. He too was called atheist and infidel in his generation. The religion of Jefferson and of Lincoln is the religion of the future. They were ahead of the pygmied, ecclesiastics of their own day.

…There are those who think that he was fortunate in dying as he did, before he was compelled to confront the difficulties of reconstruction, its havoc, its despair, its confusion, its dishonesty. He died before he was charged with the failure of reconstruction. Though many believed that if Lincoln had lived, many of the evils that still plague the south, would have been eliminated. According to most of his contemporaries, Lincoln was a failure. A man who did not fit in. A man who did not belong. Unhappy at home, unhappy in his career. Hated by his associates and the cabinet, hated by most of the influential men of the day. According to his own lights, he failed. But sometimes, to fail in life is to succeed, and to succeed in life is to fail. Moses, the Hebrew emancipator, was buried in an unknown grave. To his generation he was a failure. Jesus was crucified to the cross. To his generation he seemed a failure. Socrates was executed by the people of Athens. To them he seemed to be a failure. John Huss was burned at the stake. And so on throughout the past. The failures of one age become the martyrs and the hero[e]s of history. Lincoln was a failure in his age, but to posterity, no American is more significant. His whole life is the history of young America, its promise and its hope. His struggle and his martyrdom remain a challenge to America and to the world, to preserve and to protect that liberty and that democracy for all mankind on the altar of which Lincoln's life was offered.[46]

9. IMAGINING LINCOLN IN THE 1950S

After World War II, American Jewish leaders continued to use Lincoln as a moral touchstone for social action. During the height of the Cold War and McCarthy eras, Rabbi Charles E. Shulman (1900–1968) addressed himself to the question "What would Lincoln have said?," specifically about American politics in the early 1950s. Shulman told his congregation that Lincoln would have become a bitter opponent to what Shulman regarded as the degradation of the Republican

Party that Lincoln himself had helped to establish. He urged his listeners to speak out in opposition to the same wrongs that Lincoln decried: racial inequality, McCarthyism, the Korean War, and the general climate of fear that had gripped the nation at the century's midpassage. "American superiority," Shulman declared, could not be won through national isolationism or by expansionary military power. It must be achieved "in terms of the spirit" that Abraham Lincoln epitomized. If Lincoln was living in 1951, the rabbi concluded, he would still be fighting for "a new birth of freedom." Americans in every era must take up that same "Lincolnian ideal" that, according to Shulman, has remained our national destiny.

Lincoln's Message for Our Times

February 9, 1951

Four score and seven years ago last November 19th a lean and sad eyed man took a slip of paper from his pocket and stepped forward on a wood platform that had been built in the cemetery [*sic*] at Gettysburg. There were ten thousand people present. They had already listened for two hours to an oration by the noted orator of the time—Edward Everett of Boston. Lincoln wondered whether his remarks would be effective. In a high pitched voice he began his speech, a short speech—two and a half minutes—that ended with the words "that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people and for the people shall not perish from the earth."

With those words the Gettysburg address was history.

History records some curious immediate reactions to that address. Prophets are not honored in their lifetime. Few thought much of his words, as few appreciated the man. Had not Lincoln himself said in his speech "the world will little note nor long remember what we say here…"?

The Harrisburg Patriot—the newspaper printed nearest to the scene at Gettysburg had this to say about the speech:

"We pass over the silly remarks of the President. For the credit of the nation we are willing that the veil of oblivion shall be dropped over them and that they shall no more be repeated or thought of…"

The Venerable London Times across the Atlantic said: "Anything more dull or commonplace it would not be easy to produce."

Time rendered different judgments on that two and a half minute address of Lincoln's. The speech is now cast in bronze on the walls of Oxford College in England as one of the truly great utterances of the English language.

It is more recognizable than the Declaration of Independence.

Anyone in America who has had an elementary school education knows the address.

It is more familiar to Americans than the first stanza of the Star Spangled Banner.

I. Four score years and seven have now passed since Lincoln's famous "Four Score" address. Now as we approach Lincoln's birthday we might ask ourselves the question: How fares it with the land conceived in liberty and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal?

The answer is: Some of the things Lincoln had envisaged have come to pass. This nation is united in many things. It is an indissoluble union of States.

It has achieved incredible wealth.

It has assumed leadership of incalculable proportions unwillingly and hesitatingly —leadership greater than [e]ven Lincoln could have for[e]seen during the Civil War.

But the problems that have to do with the angels of our better nature are still unsettled. They still beset us.

Let us list a few:

1. The Negro problem which divided North and South still divides us. In the month of February, Linco[l]n's Birthday, which, incidentally is not recognized in some southern States, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People protested in vain to the State of Virginia against the execution of seven negroes for rape —stating no white man ever so convicted had ever been executed in the State of Virginia.

2. Freedom is a confused thing in our land when hysteria and fear rule.

We are afraid of the Russians

We are afraid of communism

We are afraid of our own neighbors

We are afraid of ourselves

We are afraid of our own immortal documents of freedom. In a world shrunken as it is our own hearts and minds shrink instead of expanding to meet the challenge.

3. The Great Republican Party whose banner was carried so nobly by Abraham Lincoln, gives frightened counsel of retreat to its adherents. Marquis Childs, able commentator and observer in Washington tells us in this month of Lincoln's birthday that the current optimism of the Republican party for capturing the Presidency in the next election in 1952 and which gives this party leadership confidence is THEIR BELIEF THAT THEY HAVE A GIMMICK WHICH CANNOT FAIL.

The gimmick? Senator [Joseph] McCarthy of Wisconsin and the technique of the big smear. McCarthy received more applause at the Washington Rally starting the Republican campaign than did Mr. Robert Taft.

What is the intent of the gimmick? Childs tells us. IT IS A STOP AT NOTHING technique which seems to ardent Republicans long frustrated in defeat, a heaven-sent answer to their prayer. McCarthy is now in a place of high counsels and invested with power on the senate Sub-committee having charge of appropriations through which he can conduct increasing guerilla warfare against the State Department and American foreign policy.

AND THIS AT A TIME WHEN THE NATIONS OF THE SHRUNKEN WORLD ARE LOOKING TO AMERICA FOR LEADERSHIP AND SEEKING TO FIND FAITH IN THEMSELVES THROUGH FAITH IN THE GREAT DEMOCRACY FATHERED BY WASHINGTON AND BROTHERED BY LINCOLN!

4. And if we would discern the character of the Republican leadership symbolized by Senator McCarthy and the press of the nation behind him which caters to the fears, the prejudices of people, we might, in passing, take note of the remarks of this particular senator as well as the huge one page large type editorial that appeared recently in the Hearst Press.

McCarthy accused everyone and every institution not on his approved list of being communist and did so in terms which fall outside the libel orbit. He added that administration leaders are fighting communism abroad “to disguise their sell out to communism at home.”

And the Hearst editorial? I let you judge it under their title: “THE ONE WORLD

MIND”

> The astonishing capacity for self-deception possessed by the advocates of world government is perfectly demonstrated in Senator [Estes] Kefauver's selection of this particular time to present a “federal Union resolution” in Congress. Senator Kefauver's resolution calls for an international “Federal Convention” to be held this year. IT WOULD AUTHORIZE PRESIDENT TRUMAN TO INVITE THE DEMOCRACIES WHICH SPONSORED THE NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY TO MEET WITH DELEGATES FROM THE UNITED STATES. AND THESE DELEGATES WOULD EXPLORE HOW FAR THEIR PEOPLES AND THE PEOPLES OF SUCH OTHER DEMOCRACIES AS THE CONVENTION MAY INVITE CAN APPLY THEM WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITED NATIONS [AND] THE PRINCIPLES OF FREE FEDERAL UNION.
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> What Senator Kefauver is actually proposing is that THE UNITED STATES SUMMON THE NATIONS OF WESTERN EUROPE AND OFFER TO ABOLISH ITSELF AS A NATION, SURRENDERING ITS SOVEREIGN POWERS TO THOSE NATIONS. As allies of the United States these nations have been weak and unreliable, as friends they have been faithless. Senator Kefauver and 26 of his colleagues in the Senate sponsor a proposal that the people of the United States invite those defaulting nations to govern us.
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> They would impose their socialism in place of our republican self-government, extract taxes from us as they pleased, draft our men for their armies, our women for their factories, appropriate the bulk of our productive wealth for their own enrichment.

II. WHAT WOULD LINCOLN HAVE SAID TO SUCH UTTERANCES AS those of Hoover, McCarthy, Taft, [William Randolph] Hearst and others who ostensibly are the voices of the Republican Party to which Lincoln belonged?

Here is one of his well known utterances in reply to the question:

“WHAT CONSTITUTES THE BULWARK OF OUR OWN LIBERTY AND INDEPENDENCE? It is not our army and navy. Our defense is the spirit which prizes liberty and the heritage of all men, in all lands everywhere. Destroy this spirit and you have planted the seeds of despotism at your door. Accustomed to trampling on the rights of others you have lost the genius of your own independence and become the fit subject of the first cunning tyrant who rises among you.”

B) When one delves into Lincoln's writings he is immediately struck with the truth that although Americans have not been strong enough to make living the vision of a government by the people and for the people, the ideal is still in evidence in America—in fact it shines all the more brilliantly because of Lincoln who gives it concretion.

C) If Lincoln were living today he would perceive that America's heart must grow bigger as the world grows smaller—that America's destiny must extend spiritually to far flung corners of the earth, that the American blood shed in far away places for justice must be rededicated on an enlarged Gettysburg pattern so that the peoples liberated at the cost of so much suffering cannot perish from our globe.

III. ISSUES THAT LINCOLN WOULD MEET:

1. Communism. The problem involved in Communism is ideological. Americans would resolutely have to see the ideas behind the acts. Linco[l]n's faith in the capacity of the democratic idea to meet the challenge of the other ideas lay clearly in his public

utterances.

"Fellow Citizen," he said in his annual message to congress, "We cannot escape history. We of this congress and the administration will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No personal significance or insignificance can spare one or another of us. The fiery trial through which we pass will light us down in honor or dishonor."

In our present international relations we cannot escape history. We will be remembered in spite of ourselves. No isolationism will help us. No fear will help us. No running from the issue that is joined will help us. ONLY THE WILL TO FACE UP TO OUR PROBLEMS SPIRITUALLY AS OUR SOLDIERS ARE FACING UP TO THEM PHYSICALLY IN KOREA CAN AVAIL.

Nor can we desert those who wish to stand at our side in the world any more than Lincoln could have deserted the blacks who stood ready to fight for their freedom in civil war times. Today the people of the yellow, the brown, the black races and the white people of Europe remain in the face of the enslavement of communism.

Our American superiority must be in terms of the spirit that Lincoln demonstrated if we are to prevail in the world of today.

2. International cooperation. Lincoln's little known letter to the workingmen of Manchester[,] England[,] January 19, 1863, shows us his thinking on international affairs. THEY DO NOT SPEAK OF THE PEOPLE OF OTHER NATIONS AS FAITHLESS AND AS READY TO DESPOIL US. Here are his sentiments:

"I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of the address and resolutions which you sent me on the eve of the new year.

"I know you deeply deplore the sufferings which the workingmen of Manchester and in all Europe are called to endure in this crisis. It has been often and studiously represented that the attempt to overthrow this government which was built on the foundation of human rights, and to substitute for it one which should rest exclusively on the basis of human slavery was likely to obtain the favor of Europe. Through the action of our disloyal citizens, the workingmen of Europe have been subjected to severe trials, for the purpose of forcing their sanction to that attempt. Under the circumstances, I cannot but regard your decisive utterances upon the question as an instance of sublime Christian heroism which has not been surpassed in any age in any country. It is indeed an energetic and reinspiring assurance of the inherent power of truth, and of the ultimate and universal triumph of justice, humanity and freedom. I do not doubt that the sentiments you have expressed will be sustained by your great nation; and on the other hand, I have no hesitation in assuring you that they will excite admiration, esteem and the most reciprocal feelings of friendship among the American people. I hail this interchange of sentiment, therefore, as an augury that whatever else may happen, whatever misfortune may befall your country or my own, the peace and friendship which now exist between the two nations will be, as it shall be my desire to make them, perpetual…"

This, mind you, at a time when England was helping the South break the Northern Blockade of Southern ports and trying to get cotton out to Europe!

3. HIS LARGESSE OF SPIRIT…in contrast with the smallness of spirit of present leaders who carry the banner of Lincoln's party: Here are significant words from his second inaugural:

"Neither party expected for the war the magnitude or the duration which it has

already attained. Neither anticipated that the cause of the conflict might cease with, or even before the conflict itself chouls [*sic*] cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces, but let us judge not that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered…that of neither has been answered fully.

"With malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right, let us strive to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for the widow and his orphan—to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

CONCLUSION

This sermon is not an attack upon any party. It is devoted to the enhancement of the national ideals. Americans make mistakes these days. They shall probably continue to make mistakes. But the great Americans who have dreamed mighty dreams and have conceived of the greatness of the plan which made and kept us a nation are still the guides to follow in this hour—democrats like Jefferson, Wilson and Franklin Roosevelt, Republicans like Lincoln. Of all the Americans that have come to the high office of President of these United States, Lincoln preeminently had the vision of a united country and a united mankind. To hear Republicans speak in his name in the fashion they do these days is to injure the nobility of their party—the party of Lincoln—but not to injure Lincoln's stature. To have Democratic party members behave in the fashion they do in Virginia and elsewhere in the North and South is to injure the greatness of a party made great by Jefferson and others, but not to injure Jefferson.

The struggle to gain for the nation under God a new birth of freedom still continues…. It must in every age. That is a trut[h] to remember on his birthday. We the living of 1951 must again be dedicated to the task yet remaining…that our safety as a nation lie[s] with a new birth of freedom everywhere on earth. That is our destiny. Not by running from the task but by meeting it unflinchingly will be worthy of our American heritage—and the Lincolnian ideal.[47]

Tehilla Lichtenstein, spiritual leader of the Society of Jewish Science, preached a sermon on Lincoln and the Cold War in 1950. Photo by Blackstone Studios, 20 West 57th Street, New York; courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

10. THE SOCIETY OF JEWISH SCIENCE AND LINCOLN'S IDEOLOGY

Tehilla Lichtenstein (1893–1973) and her husband, Rabbi Morris Lichtenstein (1889–1938), were among the founders, in 1922, of the Society of Jewish Science, a group formed to counteract Christian Science's growing influence upon American Jews. After her husband's death in 1938, Tehilla became the organization's preacher. Over the years and despite the group's diminishing membership, Tehilla became a well-known public speaker, as well as a practitioner and teacher of the "healing methods" of Jewish science. She edited the society's journal, the Jewish Science Interpreter*, and hosted a weekly radio broadcast.*

Speaking during the early years of the Cold War, Tehilla Lichtenstein posed a rhetorical question to her listeners: "Did Lincoln have the answer" to the threat of mass mutual destruction from a nuclear holocaust? Responding to her own question, Lichtenstein concluded, "I think he did." Lincoln's penetrating moral clarity, encapsulated in the admonition "with malice toward none, with charity for all," convinced Lichtenstein that Lincoln's mind was fundamentally aligned with the ideology of Jewish Science. "Oh, that with all our getting we could get us a heart of wisdom!" Lichtenstein wrote. Her antidote for a world standing on the brink of nuclear destruction was to listen deeply to "the kindly voice of our martyred President."

Did Lincoln Have the Answer?

Address delivered at the Jewish Science Forum, New York, 1950

The answer to what? To all the awesome problems which are demanding solution today by a confused and frightened humanity. What shall we do with that dreadful enemy which is threatening to annihilate man, to lay low all the achievements of centuries, to

bring to rubble and extinction this now flourishing planet? I am not referring to Russia when I use the phrase “dreadful enemy,” I am merely describing man's own diabolical cleverness which has driven him to the discovery of the deepest secrets of God's creation, which has unearthed for him all the laws of matter by which the basic elements of the universe can be taken apart and put together in hitherto unheard of forms, forms of such ferocious power that just a few of them are sufficient to blow little man clear off the planet which he now [believes he] understands so well. Yes, did Lincoln have the answer as to what man should do to avert the threat of the hell-bomb, as it is called by some—the hydrogen bomb—which man is about to construct? Lincoln knew nothing about the advanced mathematical prowess which, less than a hundred and fifty years after his birth, his simple birth in the rude log cabin so dear to those who prize his memory, has enabled us to invent an infernal machine capable of destroying 360 million human beings in one explosion. I can see him smiling sadly, perhaps wryly, at the stupidity of the human race as enormous as its cleverness, perhaps asking drily, “Why go to all that trouble? The lemmings do it much more simply. They commit mass suicide by just jumping off a high cliff into the sea.” No doubt his wryness would hide a deep grief at the mad rush towards death which humanity is making. Could he have told us how, can he even now tell us how that same brilliant instrument, that wondrous mind in man's possession, could lead him to life instead of extinction, to rich full living, instead of base dying?…Did Lincoln have the answer?

I think he did. He said, in his profoundly simple way, which concealed to the unthinking the depths of his vision,…simply, “With malice towards none, and charity towards all.” As simply, as it is said in Leviticus, “Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,” which, if achieved by the heart of man, in every corner of the earth would lay low all of the barriers to happiness which man has erected against himself. With malice towards none, with charity towards all, there is the answer to man's mortal dilemma today, even the answer to the threat of the Hydrogen bomb….

To avert the war which, to many, seems imminent with communist Russia, we must teach ourselves to look upon Russia and upon the rest of the world with an unjaundiced eye. We must rid ourselves of malice, and partake of the sweet bread of charitableness. Just now we are so full of resentment, so bitter, so ready to put all blame upon the other one, we will not even listen to anyone's side of the story but our own; and towards us, too, is the same blind anger and unwillingness to listen; the Russians are all bitterness towards us as we are towards them. We wonder what has happened to all the sunshine and brotherliness of yesteryear, when Roosevelt and Stalin sat smilingly by each other at a conference table, seeking to work out together a way to bring about the welfare of the world…. [Now][48] our newspapers and theirs have only evil things to say, one about the other; we hear of nothing but their base intent, and they learn nothing but of our black and rapacious designs.

…[We] have no other alternative than to listen to the kindly voice of our martyred president, gently bidding us harbor malice toward none and charity for all. It may seem paradoxical to turn to him for an answer to our besetting and frightening troubles, to turn to him to help us avert war, who was himself the leader and commander-in-chief in a war against his own people. But Lincoln fought bitterly, bitterly against that war; he pleaded with north and south to refrain from bloodshed and fratricide. He told his counselors and those who pressed for a declaration of war, for the use of arms, that he

would do anything, stop at nothing, to avert such action. Even the freeing of the slaves, which was so dear a goal to his heart, even the emancipation of his black brethren, he was willing to defer; he was willing to let slavery stand for the time being, to leave that in abeyance, rather than plunge the nation into the sin of war. But the war was forced upon him, he took command with a broken and sorrowing heart, only when that way alone was left to him for the saving of his country. It was towards his supposed enemies, towards those against whom he sent his generals to battle, that he uttered his declaration of love and his plea for charity. I am sure he would have asked for charity towards the poor mad actor who brought upon him the untimely death of martyrdom.

We, who are supposedly at peace with all the world, we who supposedly have no enemies, can we not teach ourselves to face the peoples of the world, even those most unlike ourselves, without rancor, without anger, with the charity that begets wisdom? Can we in any other way than that hope to avert the holocaust of World War Three? Oh, that with all our getting we could get us a heart of wisdom! With malice towards none [,] with charity for all, if we do not make that our answer today, the world will be a silent world tomorrow![49]

11. CALLING THE JEWISH COMMUNITY TO ACTION

On February 12, 1960, Rav A. Soloff (b. 1927), a young rabbinic ordinee of the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, commemorated Lincoln's birthday by preaching his sermon on the topic of civil rights at the East End Temple in New York City. He told his congregation that Lincoln's birthday was a fitting occasion for calling the American Jewish community to action. Lincoln's legacy should serve to inspire all Americans, and especially Jewish Americans, to oppose racism and be champions of justice for all peoples.

Soloff contended that Lincoln's birthday was important "to all *Americans" because the sixteenth president "lives…more radiantly than ever before as symbol of these American ideals: unity, equality, brotherhood." Debunking the rationalizations that justify racism's continuing entrenchment in America, Soloff urged his congregants not to "sit by and wait" but actively to work on behalf of the civil rights movement. "Today is the time to rise and act, to stand and be counted among the NAACPers, the ACLUers, the Urban Leaguers, Americans who believe Lincoln must live radiantly in our laws, in our society, in our hearts."*

Rabbi Rav A. Soloff characterized Lincoln as a living moral compass in his 1960 sermon on the civil rights movement. Photo by Augusta Berns, Bamberger Studios; courtesy The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Lincoln Lives

Exactly one hundred years ago Abraham Lincoln's birthday, his fifty-first, was still a private affair. Mr. Lincoln held no public office, but the taste for what lay ahead was in his mouth. Already an important Republican, in just a fortnight he would deliver “the Cooper Union speech” which so favorably introduced Westerner Lincoln to the political powers of the East. Within the year, thanks to the skill of photographer [Mathew] Brady and the absence of television, ugly Abe Lincoln would be nominated and elected sixteenth president of the United States. And in little over half a decade the immortal Captain would lie dead, having guided his nation through its ordeal by blood and fire.

Today, as has been increasingly true for the past 99 years, Lincoln's Birthday is of moment to *all* Americans. That man, long dead, lives in our generation more radiantly than ever before as symbol of these American ideals: unity, equality, brotherhood.

Lincoln lives alongside us and burns within us now as never before, because at last a ninety-year-old log-jam is breaking up. Perhaps it took two World Wars on top of the murderous Civil War to smash through the massive mud wall of rabid, short-sighted, selfish and self-destructive American racism. Perhaps it took three generations of tireless, often seemingly fruitless effort to set the groundwork. But at last we see genuine emancipation on its way to all Americans.

In the decades since World War II began the Negro has moved at a rate “unmatched by any race—certainly any minority race—in the history of human

achievement. Since 1940 the number of Negroes in colleges and professional schools has tripled to more than 200,000. There are ten times as many Negro students of engineering and architecture as two decades ago…. The percentage of U.S. Negroes in college is greater than the percentage of all the people of Great Britain in college." And corresponding to this change in the educational picture, have come drastic changes in employment, economic status and political influence.

Of course violent opposition continues: 530 specific, documented acts of racial violence in eleven Southern States over the course of four years—six Negroes killed, 50 bombings and burnings and so on. Of course glaring, unconscionable inequities persist: the Federal Civil Rights Commission reports that "Against the prejudice of registrars and jurors, the United States Government appears under present laws to be helpless to make good the guarantees of the United States Constitution, and almost 4 million out of 5 million potential Negro voters are kept from southern ballot boxes." Of course progress at best is gallingly snail-paced—I mean here in New York, not elsewhere—boys who should become engineers still prepare to push carts in the garment district just because their skin is black.

But the writing hand has left its incontrovertible message on the wall of our nation: Lincoln lives! The unity of America will not again be challenged. The most violent conceivable secessionist movement of 1960 would be an exodus of Southern delegates from the Democratic National Convention, and after the 1948 experience, even *that* seems unlikely.

Lincoln lives! American fact will increasingly accord with our faith in the equality of all men. Congress cannot defer forever, States cannot defy forever, citizens cannot deny forever the clear, clarion demand for moral action.

Lincoln lives! Americans will accept his ideal of hearts bearing malice toward none. Ah, the Lincoln heart—this is the most delicate and the most difficult of our race problems. How?

To cleanse our hearts of malice, and our lips from speaking guile, we must first clear our minds of a great deal of nonsense. We wish to be soft-hearted, but not soft-headed. Let me mention just three items.

First, the problem is primarily objective. One sensitive white American, looking into his society and into his own heart reports the "ubiquitous, demonic intruder is not Jim Crow—symbol of sanctified and legislated segregation, presiding fiend over lynchings…[rather][50] call him James Crow, Esquire, a shabby-genteel and soft-voiced demon…. [Now][51] James Crow, Esquire—the apostle of genteel apartheid—disowns the cruder and more violent Jim…. But, in very real sense, the influence of James is more baleful than Jim's…."

No! The influence of James Crow, of personal prejudice and social pressure may poison the soul of the persecutor, may pain, possibly scar the soul of the victim, but by no hard-headed, cold-eyed standard is its influence "more baleful" than that of "sanctified and legislated segregation."

Give every American the right to vote, the right to any job he can fill, the right to all the education he can stand, the right to any housing he can afford—(colored neighbors, as you know from recent real-estate studies, do *not* automatically lower property values), give him his rights—then go hate him in the secret places of your heart, if you can: the soul that withers will be your own.

Second, it is popular nonsense that you can't alter attitudes by legislation, by law. Attorney General [William P.] Rogers comments, "(The Law) is not a mere abstract body of rules which government officials have imposed upon our society, rather the constitution and the laws of our nation express the conscience and morality of a free people…. Because our laws have a moral foundation, they serve to teach, to mold attitudes and outlooks and to crystallize public opinion in support of concepts which are fair and just." The timid soul who would not fight legal segregation now supports legal desegregation; law was his teacher and his pastor.

Third, it is popular nonsense that all self-conscious effort at interracial harmony is vain, that personal attitudes of racial decency and social conditions promoting racial decency cannot be deliberately created. Sociologist Dr. Herbert Blumer concludes otherwise. "There can be no question [that][52] conscious, designed desegregation acts back on and abets natural, unwitting racial desegregation." In other words, *Mitoch shelo l'shmo, bo l'shmo*—right action undertaken even out of mixed motives leads to right action for pure motives.[53]

So Jews have to be reminded of their sacred duty to promote unity, equality, brotherhood? I think that in principle we do not. But there is always the question of what to do, and when. There is a time in human affairs to sit by and wait. Today is the time to rise and act, to stand and be counted among the NAACPers, the ACLUers, the Urban Leaguers, Americans who believe Lincoln must live radiantly in our laws, in our society, in our hearts, Americans who will not see our nation's spiritual maturation put off and will not put off their own spiritual maturation any longer.

By *next* February 12th let us each have a year's personal Lincolnesque accomplishment to review.

Amen.[54]

12. MAY HIS MEMORY BE AS A BLESSING

After World War II, Jewish newspapers frequently used the anniversary of Lincoln's birth as an occasion to remind readers why American Jews cherished the sixteenth president's memory. In an editorial written for Lincoln's birthday in 1970, Albert W. Bloom (1918–90), the editor of Pittsburgh's Jewish Chronicle, *declared that Lincoln was the "President who comes closest to following the character and footsteps of the ancient Hebrew Prophets." Even during the Vietnam War era, when civil dissidence was pervasive and established values routinely challenged, American Jews commemorated Lincoln's life and insisted that his memory was a blessing.*

Abraham Lincoln (Feb. 12, 1809–April 15, 1865)

February 12, 1970

Abraham Lincoln died on April 15, 1865. He was 56 years old. Not a great deal of time for a once near-illiterate ragged little orphan boy to lift himself up to "belong to the ages." But so he does.

Almost cuttingly brief is the encyclopedic reference:

"On the evening of April 14, 1865, John Wilkes Booth shot Lincoln as he sat in Ford's Theater in Washington, and early the next morning he died."

What tidal waves of history washed over the span of that act and the span of the Lincoln years. Even today, the waves still have not quieted. The constitutional

amendments perhaps only hinted at in the first Lincoln Inaugural eventually took form.

But the skeletal thrust of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments (slavery abolished; citizenship rights not to be abridged; equal voting rights for all citizens without regard "of race, color, or previous condition of servitude") have yet to be properly fleshed out.

To this day.

He might have been speaking to all Americans, black and white, this very day when on March 4, 1861 he said:

"In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war…I am loath to close. We are not enemies but friends. We must not be enemies.

"Though passion may have strained, it must not break our bonds of affection. The mystic chords of memory, stretching from every battle-field, and patriot grave, to every living heart and hearthstone, all over this broad land, will yet swell the chorus of Union, when again touched, as surely they will be, by the better angels of our nature."

Abraham Lincoln, the President who comes closest to following the character and footsteps of the ancient Hebrew Prophets—"may his memory be as a blessing" to us all —without regard "of race, color, or previous condition of servitude."[55]

12
Lincoln Miscellany

By paraphrasing the words that the French sociologist Émile Durkheim used in 1883 to describe the heroes of France, a contemporary scholar of sociology summarized Abraham Lincoln's status in the collective memory of the American people. Lincoln is "America's universal man: changing and remaining the same; standing beside the people and above the people; a reflection of and model for them—at once behind, above, and within them." In many respects, this characterization also serves as a useful description of American Jewry's collective memory of Abraham Lincoln. For many American Jews, Lincoln remains a venerable symbol of the best in American life. He endures as an iconic embodiment of America's highest political values as well as its most noble social aspirations. Yet, at the same time, there lingers within the American Jewish experience an ongoing inclination to adopt Lincoln spiritually and to understand him as a fellow American Jewish sojourner—or, to paraphrase Lincoln's own famous turn of phrase, American Jews persistently tend to think of Lincoln as an *almost* chosen person.[1]

In 2011, Ron Paul (b. 1935), a member of the U.S. House of Representatives and three-time presidential candidate, raised many eyebrows by asserting that Abraham Lincoln wanted "to nationalize everything." Paul's glittering generality was certain to vex millions of Americans who considered Lincoln to be republicanism incarnate. Yet, Lincoln's many statements about the role a good government should play in serving the needs of the people, conjoined with his status as the "common man" who rose from humble origins to lead his nation, have convinced many ideologues in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries that had Lincoln been living in their own era, he would have been sympathetic to a liberal or even socialist point of view.

In 1910, a disgruntled ex-Catholic-turned-socialist-activist named Burke McCarty published a pamphlet titled *Little Sermons in Socialism by Abraham Lincoln.* In the pamphlet's preface, McCarty acknowledged that Lincoln was not a socialist, because no such term existed in his day. She also acknowledged that no one could possibly know whether, had Lincoln lived in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, he would have ever associated himself with socialism or the socialist cause. Having offered those qualifications, McCarty stated her thesis unabashedly: "We do claim, and know, however, that Abraham Lincoln was in spirit to the hour of his death, a class conscious working man, that his sympathies were with that class, that he voiced the great principles of the modem constructive Socialism of today, and that had he lived and been loyal and consistent with these principles which he always professed, he would be found within the ranks of the Socialist Party."[2]

McCarty proceeded to offer readers a host of Lincoln quotations, often wrenched out of context, which validated her thesis. Was it not Lincoln who said, "To secure each laborer the whole product of his labor, or as nearly as possible, is a worthy object of any good government"? Did not Lincoln state that "whatever any one man earns with his hands and by the sweat of his brow, he shall enjoy in peace"? Why did Lincoln proclaim, "Whatever concerns the whole, should be confided to the whole—the general government"? McCarty's ideas about Lincoln were hardly unique; American socialists and communists mustered dozens of Lincoln quotations and bandied them in their newspapers and journals, on Lincoln's birthday, and on a variety of similar occasions.[3]

Thousands of Jewish immigrants from Eastern Europe carried a sympathetic appreciation for socialist principles with them to these shores. Many others who did not come to America with

these political tendencies were drawn to them after they had been introduced to the harsh working conditions that characterized the burgeoning American industrialism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Just like other socialists in America, Jewish socialists embraced Lincoln and encountered him as a comrade. The Yiddish press became a vehicle for transmitting these ideas to the East European immigrant masses. The fact that "there was little in Lincoln's presidency to warrant his becoming a symbol of economic reform" did not prevent socialists from adopting Lincoln as an exemplar, and the same was true for Jewish socialists.[4]

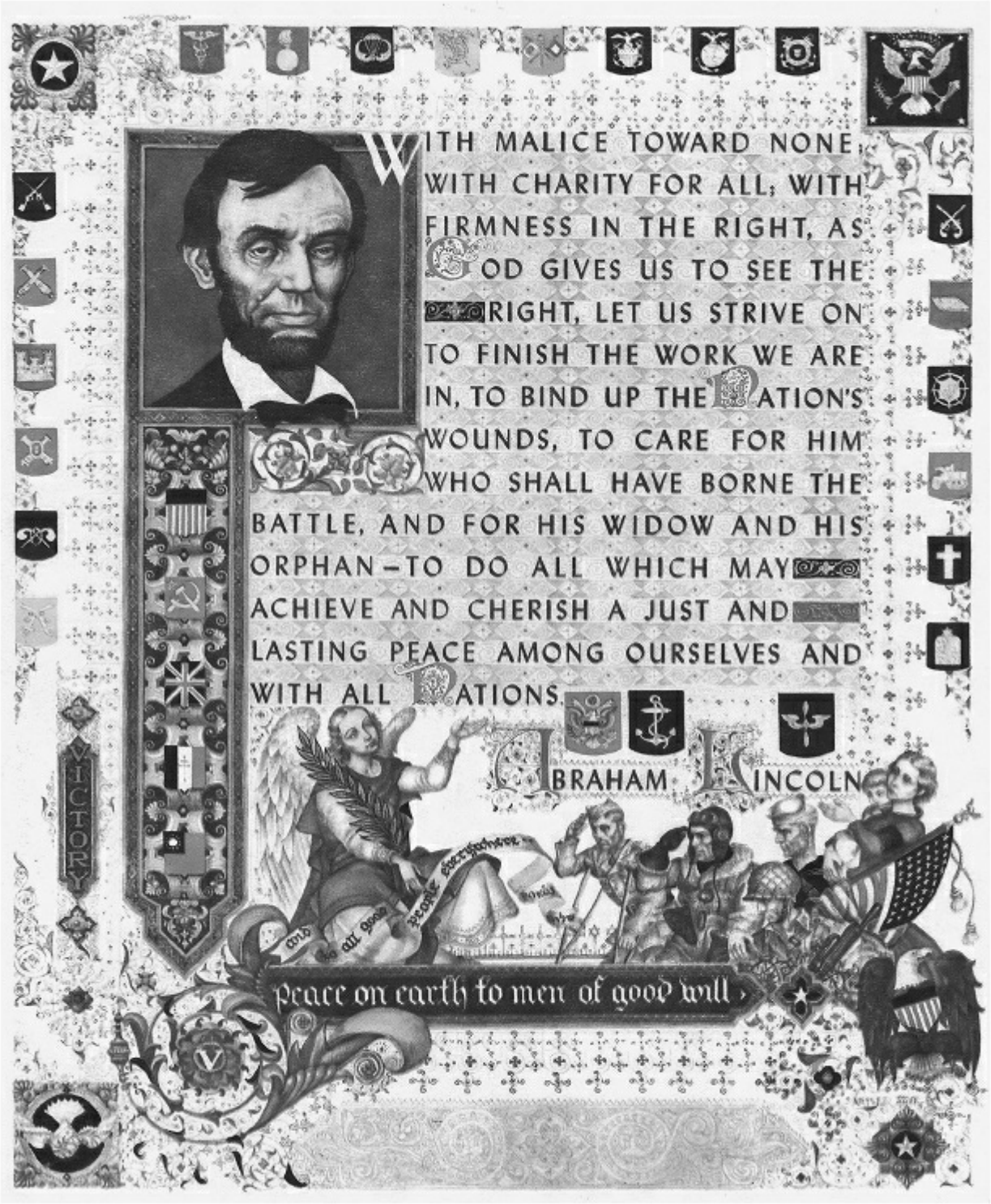
During the first half of the twentieth century, Yiddish culture was a potent force in America, particularly in New York and other large urban centers. Yiddish newspapers flourished and reached hundreds of thousands of readers on a daily basis. Yiddish theater, schools, and publishing blossomed. It was at this time that Yiddish poetry emerged as one of the most colorful and popular literary genres for the East European Jewish immigrants. Dozens of Yiddish poets aspired to express in Yiddish the best traditions of American poetry. As the introspective poet Aaron Glanz Leyeles (1889–1966) wrote, "Not in vain have we read the American poem / And inhaled, absorbed the Whitman tone" (*Nisht umzist geleyent s'lid amerikaner / un gezapt in zikh dem Vitmaner*). For the American Yiddish poets, Lincoln served as a key symbol of Americanism and of the principles of freedom and justice that they prized. Lincoln appeared in hundreds of Yiddish poems. He suffered with his readers and sympathized with their longings. Leivick Halpern (1888–1962), a leading Yiddish author and poet who wrote under the pen name H. Leivick, explained in his poem "To America" that the Yiddish poet carried within him the "bounty of American freedom, which has been sanctified by the blood of Lincoln," and in one of Reuben Ludwig's (1895–1926) Yiddish poems, "Symposium," Abraham Lincoln, John Brown, and Walt Whitman return from the grave to indict contemporary America.[5]

According to the assessment of at least one scholar, Lincoln was actually the American Jewish left's greatest literary hero. In fact, some Jewish socialists suggested that their love and respect for Abraham Lincoln was even greater than that which was conferred on him by the average American: "Here in America, we socialists celebrate the birthday of the man who brought slavery in America to an end. American capitalists, in contrast, celebrate this day because the end of black slavery ushered in the new lucrative era of wage-salary." Ultimately, Lincoln became an inspirational model for the American Jewish left's deep concern for all downtrodden minorities.[6]

In 1936, this impulse expressed itself in the desire on the part of nearly 3,000 Americans, who joined with thousands of foreign nationals from around the world, to fight in military brigades against Francisco Franco's pro-fascist forces in the Spanish Civil War. Many of these brigades were organized by the Communist International in Moscow. According to some estimates, 10 percent of these foreign fighters were Jews who came from around the globe to fight the Spanish fascists. European and American Jews fought side by side, expressing bitter opposition to the political oppression and program of anti-Semitism that Franco's ally, Nazi Germany, propagated in the mid-1930s. The Jews who fought in the Spanish Civil War from the United States were mostly political leftists, but they were *American* radicals, and they expressed their ideas through the American cultural symbols with which they were familiar. As one historian emphasized, for the American radicals who fought Franco, "the language of the Spanish Civil War was the language of the American Civil War." In particular, this American spirit influenced the naming of the battalions and brigades. The Jewish fighters who went to Spain wanted to project themselves to the world as *American* freedom fighters: "The men voted on a name for the battalion, selecting Abraham Lincoln as the best representative of how they

saw themselves—men who would fight to free the oppressed."[7]

In addition to his symbolic significance for Jewish socialists and political radicals, Lincoln continued to serve as a cultural icon for millions of East European immigrants as they moved through the process of Americanization. One of the most prominent examples of Lincoln's status as a cultural icon for the East European immigrants during the twentieth century may be seen in the work of Arthur Szyk (1894–1951), a popular graphic artist, book illuminator, and caricaturist. Born in Łódź, Poland, Szyk immigrated to the United States in 1940. He quickly adapted to his new country, and during World War II, Szyk became what has been referred to as an "artist-activist." Through his distinctive style of illumination and miniature portraitures, Szyk created a body of artwork expressive of American ideals for posters, magazines, and books. He was particularly interested in rendering images of significant American events, personalities, and documents that expressed the ideals that he considered to be core values of American democracy: tolerance and mutual respect. Abraham Lincoln was the subject of two of Szyk's famous illuminations. In 1946, he created a poster that featured a likeness of Lincoln overlooking a framed manuscript that contained the concluding words from Lincoln's second inaugural address ("With malice toward none, with charity for all…"). The following year, 1947, Szyk produced a second work, this time for *Coronet* magazine, focusing on an excerpt from Lincoln's "Reply to the New York Workingmen's Democratic Republican Association" ("The strongest bond of human sympathy, outside of the family relation, should be one uniting all working people, of all nations, and tongues, and kindreds").[8]



In 1946 Arthur Szyk, a Polish-Jewish immigrant, created a lithographed illumination of Lincoln's second inaugural address. Courtesy the Arthur Szyk Society.

The Gettysburg Address has repeatedly been called the greatest speech in American history. Historians continue to offer differing interpretations as to how the speech eventually rose to its

current status as American sacred writ. Most scholars agree that by the dawn of the twentieth century and the centennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth, the Gettysburg Address was well on its way to becoming one of the nation's most iconic speeches. As it was with Lincoln himself, Americans consistently interpreted the Gettysburg Address against the context of their own era.[9]

At the turn of the century, for example, when an emphasis on the ideals of national unity intensified and the wounds of the Civil War were healing, Americans became convinced that Lincoln's famous phrase "last full measure of devotion" referred not only to Union soldiers but to the Confederate dead as well. Throughout the course of the twentieth century, the Gettysburg Address was used as an inspirational source that sustained the spirit of America as it endured two world wars, a great economic depression, and the enmities of the Cold War. "If the power of the words shines brightly," one historian recently wrote about the famous speech, then "the uses to which [the words of the Gettysburg Address] have been put, in the United States and around the world, also continue to reverberate."[10]

As we have already seen, American Jews joined together with the rest of the nation in sacralizing the Gettysburg Address. Lincoln scholars and collectors like Isaac Markens and Emanuel Hertz contributed to the archival preservation of the famous document. In Markens's case, he played a pioneering role in reconstructing the history of the various drafts of the famous address. American Jewish leaders adored the address, and it became as revered in Jewish settings as it was in public schools. Its status among many Jewish communal leaders during the early years of the twentieth century may be illustrated by a contribution the financiers Jacob Schiff and Felix Warburg (1871–1937) made when they were donating funds to reinvigorate the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York: Schiff funded the installation of a bronze tablet emblazoned with the words of the Gettysburg Address, not the Holy Scriptures. The tablet was hung on the wall of the school's main auditorium. As far as Schiff as concerned, *this* was the message that American rabbis needed to learn.[11]

It was widely believed that in memorizing and reciting the words of the Gettysburg Address, the children of East European Jewish immigrants would experience acculturation and Americanization. A few famous East European Jewish immigrants put Lincoln's brief but powerful oration in musical settings for the general public's enjoyment, and these early efforts may well have culminated in the iconic composition of Aaron Copland, the child of immigrant Jews, whose "Lincoln Portrait" has become a patriotic mainstay.

At the same time, this same immigrant cohort would offer its own distinctive contributions to the speech's overall exaltation in American life. Rabbi Leo Baeck (1873–1956), widely regarded as one of the most heroic and saintly religious leaders of the twentieth century, venerated Lincoln. From 1933 to 1939, the scholarly Baeck had been president of the Reichsvertretung der Deutschen Juden, an umbrella organization serving the German-Jewish community under the Hitler regime. Even prior to the rise of the Nazis, Baeck studied Lincoln's writings, and he frequently recited lines from the Gettysburg Address. Although he had many opportunities to leave Germany before the outbreak of World War II, Baeck refused to abandon his people. During this dark time, Baeck later recalled how he drew strength from rereading Lincoln's inspirational rhetoric. Corresponding to a friend in 1941, Baeck confessed he had recently "read again the magnificent speech by Abraham Lincoln, on November 19, 1863, in Gettysburg, in which he said '…this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom.'" Baeck viewed Lincoln as "a truly religious man," and he was convinced that Lincoln's ideas would ultimately have a beneficial effect on the American people: "Happy is the nation," Baeck wrote, "to which these words could be said by this man."[12]

On February 12, 1948, Baeck—now a survivor of the Nazi Holocaust—was invited to deliver the opening prayer in the U.S. House of Representatives. He used the occasion to praise Lincoln and pray for the welfare of the American nation: “Our Father, our God,” Baeck began, “we pray unto Thee on this day on which six score and nineteen years ago was born that man who came to be Thy servant.” He told the legislators that Lincoln was the “herald” of God's “command and promise” who had been born for “the sake of this land” in order to serve as “a witness and testimony of humanity.” He extolled Lincoln as an “everlasting blessing of this country and of mankind.”[13]

In the years following World War II, Jewish folklorists began to examine the concluding paragraph in the address Lincoln delivered before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society in Milwaukee on September 30, 1859. Lincoln closed this speech by alluding to the story of an “an Eastern monarch” who asked his “wise men” to provide him with a sentence that would be “true and appropriate in all times and situations.” The “wise men” fulfilled the monarch's wish by presenting him with this wisdom: “And this, too, shall pass away.”[14]

The story Lincoln referenced first began to attract Jewish interest in the mid-1950s, when Israeli anthropologists and scholars of Jewish folklore began collecting oral histories from new immigrants who settled in Israel during that era. In 1955, one of the first legends to be recorded for the newly established Israel Folktale Archives at Haifa University was a story about King Solomon that concluded with the very same phrase, “And this, too, shall pass.”

Although the story of the “monarch” was not widely known, the story's key phrase, “This, too, shall pass” (in Hebrew *gam zu ya'avor*), had long been a familiar folk idiom in various Jewish communities around the world. During World War II, for instance, Jewish entrepreneurs sold a “Good Luck Ring” for “Your Boy in the Service” as well as the Hebrew initials gimmel, zayin, and yod, for *gam zu ya'avor*. Ethnologists could not help but wonder how Lincoln obtained this particularly Jewish story. Was it possible that one of Lincoln's Jewish acquaintances related the tale and the legend's distinctive moral appealed to the future president's sensibilities? Perhaps. Yet it is much more likely that Lincoln simply heard the story in a speech or while he was riding the law circuit, or perhaps he read it himself in a book he obtained. In any event, Jews took pleasure in this post–World War II discovery that Lincoln once cited a story that many believed to be of Jewish origin, and this coincidence bolstered the longstanding conviction that Lincoln was intuitively in sympathy with Jewish folk wisdom.[15]

In 1976, the bicentennial anniversary of American independence, Stanley Kunitz (1905–2006), the Pulitzer Prize–winning Poet Laureate Consultant to the Library of Congress, wrote a poem for the library's exhibition of the contents of Lincoln's pockets the night he was assassinated. The poem, “The Lincoln Relics,” spoke longingly of Lincoln's “legend and fame,” which was “slipping away from us.” Kunitz, whose parents were raised in Eastern Europe, mused many years later about the role his Jewish ethical tradition may have had on his poetry. “The people of the Diaspora carry the memory of exile in their blood,” Kunitz said. If so, that Diaspora memory, with its longing for a nation that was lost, would have been present when he conceptualized Lincoln as the paradigmatic symbol of the nation's lost glory, of a national greatness that was waning. The poet's words expressed nostalgia for a heroic Lincoln as well as for the nation's ebbing greatness.[16]

In a recent volume that examines the role Abraham Lincoln played in twentieth-century America, sociologist Barry Schwartz offers an explanation as to why Kunitz may have sensed that Lincoln was “slipping away.” He notes that in the years following World War II, and particularly after the Korean War, Abraham Lincoln's general prestige and reputation began to

diminish. Various national surveys taken between the years 1945 and 2004 indicated that "Lincoln was still the man he had always been, [he] was still admired, but with less fervor than before." To explain this phenomenon, Schwartz offers several theories. First, the onset of a postindustrial society caused dramatic changes in science, technology, and the media, which have influenced cultural norms and resulted in an erosion of American society's "traditional authority structures." Second, the civil rights movement of the late 1950s and 1960s focused almost univocal attention on Lincoln the emancipator. The many other points of relevance that historically had made Lincoln such a vibrant national icon (for example, the savior of the Union, the man of courage, the man of integrity, the general, the First American, and so on) had been displaced. Then, after the intense focus on Lincoln as an emancipator during the civil rights era, the 1970s marked a time when scholars began publishing research that challenged whether Lincoln was genuinely deserving of being called the "Great Emancipator."[17]

Despite the cultural forces that may have dampened Lincoln's iconic status in the last third of the twentieth century, Schwartz notes that Lincoln's prestige cannot fall below a certain threshold because every society must have a "sense of sameness and continuity with what went before." The power of national memory fuels an engine that constantly refits and revises Lincoln's image to meet society's "need for a [stately] past," even as it mitigates the dawning "sense that such a past is no longer relevant." During this period of attenuation, there were still American Jews who provided new ways to make Lincoln relevant to the American mind.[18]

For instance, the psychologist Abraham H. Maslow (1908–70) earned a following by promulgating his now famous "hierarchy of human needs" theory.[19] Maslow, also a child of East European Jewish immigrants, recollected that his own childhood was lonely and unhappy since he felt himself to be "the little Jewish boy in the non-Jewish neighborhood." It is interesting to note Maslow's deep attraction to Lincoln, who became for Maslow an exemplar of the "self-actualized" human being—a person whose life embodies the values of morality, creativity, spontaneity, problem solving, lack of prejudice, and acceptance of facts.[20] From Maslow's point of view, Lincoln "stood for something outside of [his] own skin," and he achieved what Maslow called a "transcendence of time." Even after death, according to Maslow, other human beings can still experience a relationship with self-actualized people like Lincoln in "a very personal and affectionate way."[21]

In his entertaining book *Land of Lincoln*, author Andrew Ferguson describes his encounter with a man named Oscar Esche, who immigrated to Chicago from Thailand in 1973. Not long after arriving in this country, Esche and his wife opened a small restaurant called the Thai Little Home Café in Wicker Park. Having learned about Lincoln while yet living in Thailand, the Esches took a trip to Springfield to visit Lincoln's memorial, and there they purchased a souvenir statue of Lincoln for their restaurant. The Esches became immovably convinced that the Lincoln statue helped their business steadily flourish. In an expression of their gratitude for the sixteenth president's spiritual support, Ferguson reported, every morning the Esches "set out a meal for Lincoln in the restaurant, next to his statue."

> "It's a full meal—everything, entree, dessert, appetizer, drink also," Mr. Esche said. "We change the meal every day, so it's always different. We serve him everything."
>
> Mrs. Esche interrupted.
>
> "Yes," Mr. Esche said. "Everything but *no pork*."
>
> Oh?
>
> "We do not want to be disrespectful."

I guess Mr. Esche saw my puzzled look.

"He is *Abraham* Lincoln, yes?" he said, with special emphasis. "Jewish people, they don't eat pork."[22]

Americans have unquestionably maintained a very personal and affectionate relationship with Abraham Lincoln, long after his death. He occupies a unique place in the collective memory of the American nation, and his enduring rapport with American Jews is one intriguing facet of a much larger Lincoln phenomenon in American culture. It is a fact that Lincoln maintained good relations with many Jews during the course of his lifetime. He also developed real friendships with a select number of Jewish contemporaries. It is similarly true that he exerted himself on a number of occasions in order to protect their constitutional rights—rights that might otherwise have been in jeopardy. Yet beyond all of this, there remains a lingering faith that somehow Abraham Lincoln was more than a distant friend, more than a fair-minded chief executive. Of the countless ways in which Americans have managed to preserve a meaningful relationship with Lincoln for nearly 150 years, the alluring hope that he was somehow—either by lineage or by legacy—a Jew continues to remain one of the most interesting facets of Lincoln's historical legacy in the American nation.

DOCUMENTS

1. Lincoln's Socialist Leanings
2. Lincoln in Yiddish Poetry
3. Lincoln's Masterpiece: American Jewry and the Gettysburg Address
4. This, Too, Shall Pass
5. Lincoln and Jewish Education
6. Was Abraham Lincoln Jewish?

1. LINCOLN'S SOCIALIST LEANINGS

For Americanized Central European Jews whose families had come to the United States during the 1830s, 1840s, and 1850s, Abraham Lincoln continued to serve as an inspiring exemplar of American patriotism, freedom, and justice. For a noteworthy segment of the East European Jewish immigrant masses, however, who began pouring into this country beginning in the 1880s, Lincoln came to exemplify a somewhat different set of sociopolitical values. Many of the Central European Jews, whose ancestors had settled in the United States prior to the mass migration of Jews from Eastern Europe, believed that Abraham Lincoln's legacy should be used to facilitate the Americanization and cultural indoctrination of their East European immigrant coreligionists. Yet as we can see from the document below, many East European Jewish immigrants began to develop their own distinctive rationale for adulating Lincoln as an American hero. In particular, they identified with Lincoln's role as the Great Emancipator, the man who gave his life so that all Americans could be free and equal regardless of race, color, or religious creed. As we have already seen in previous chapters, East European Jewish immigrants related Lincoln's role in the emancipation of African Americans to their own economic struggles as well as to the immigrant circumstances they encountered in their new country.

Some of the East European Jewish immigrants identified with the values of communism, socialism, and anarchism, and some were actively involved in the American labor movement. These Jews appreciated Lincoln's reputation as an American leader who believed that all peoples, including American slaves, were inherently entitled to equal access under the law. As one historian summarized, "More than any other American hero, Lincoln was embraced in radical Jewish circles."[23]

Lincoln's legacy as a "Common Man" took on special relevance to East European immigrant Jews who were socialists or labor activists. They maintained that if Lincoln—friend of the "common man"—had been alive at the dawn of the twentieth century, he would have been an opponent of capitalism and a firm partisan of labor. Lincoln was, after all, one of the people. As a young man, he had been a laborer—a member of the proletariat—so from this perspective he would have most definitely sympathized with the socialist ideals that meant so much to many of the immigrants.

In the following editorial that appeared in the Yiddish daily newspaper the Forverts *(commonly referred to in English as the* Jewish Daily Forward*) on February 10, 1900, we find one interesting example of how East European Jewish socialists regarded Lincoln as one of their own. According to the editors of the* Forverts, *Lincoln was a comrade in "mankind's larger campaign for freedom." The authors of this Yiddish editorial accuse American capitalists of exploiting Lincoln's legacy in order to convince naive immigrants that the American Horatio Alger story was anything but a pro-capitalist myth.*

In line with the editorial's Marxist point of view, Lincoln did indeed deserve some credit for freeing the slaves. The American slavocracy testified to the fundamentally oppressive nature of capitalism, and by dismantling the slave system Lincoln was contributing to the collapse and ultimate defeat of this corrupt social system. The Yiddish socialists held Lincoln up as a heroic figure in mankind's battle for freedom, and they believed he was a fellow worker in the struggle against America's ruling plutocracy.

In Honor of Lincoln's Birthday

In two days the American nation will mark the birthday of the man whose fate and circumstances placed him at the helm of the great battle for the freedom from slavery of the Negro race—Abraham Lincoln.

This person deserved a better fate than to become the ideal of today's American bourgeoisie. Abraham Lincoln, who despised slavery—and lost a great deal throughout his life—what similarities does he have with today's American oppressors and political corruptionists?! What does Lincoln have in common with today's American land thieves?

Were this honest martyr to come out of his grave today and see the progress the American people have made in the area of freedom and justice, he would not wait for a political adversary to put another bullet in his heart!

What connection does the United States of today have with Abraham Lincoln? Lincoln was not what the ruling class expects from today's American "statesman." In the wild desert of today's American politics there is no such growth as Abraham Lincoln.

How sad does the progress of the United States look in comparison even to the shadow of Abraham Lincoln. How can the likes of [William] McKinley, Mark Hanna and [Theodore] Roosevelt compare with him?

How much credit is due to Lincoln for the liberation of the Negro slaves? Only history can judge this. He was definitely an honest man. He possessed honest convictions, and he loved the American nation from the depths of his heart. These qualities are so far removed from today's politicians—as far as heaven is from earth.

Freeing the Negro slaves was based on a historic economic need, which was inevitable. Therefore, one cannot credit any individual or group of individuals or parties with that achievement. But the feeling against slavery filled many refined souls in the campaign for freedom.

The Lincolns, Greeleys, Wendell Phillipses, John Browns, and Whittiers[24] of the fifties and sixties loved this freedom with all their being and fought for it. Some of them fought for it their entire lives.

Not only did they hate black slavery. Many of them, Horace Greeley for example, were involved in an open battle against the white slave masters…. In fact, shortly before his death, Lincoln declared that the greatest danger for the United States was the power of capitalism.

Lincoln's prophecy came true. The American plutocracy burdened the American people with heavy chains, chains like the slaves bore. The desire to enslave the black race has returned today as the desire to enslave entire nations.

Lincoln's battle for emancipation has become McKinley's battle for expansion. From the principle of freedom has developed the principle of slavery.

So—what does today's ruling class in America have to do with Abraham Lincoln?

American capitalists love to use Lincoln as an example for today's youth. Here in America, they say, everyone has the opportunity to become a somebody! The President of the United States was a simple wood-chopping youth!

Do today's American youth really have such opportunities? Is there no Chinese Wall[25] blocking today's working youth? Is not every opportunity occupied by capital and for capital? Does an American working youth have the slightest chance of becoming something other than a slave to capitalism? Is this not exactly what Abraham Lincoln was so fearful of and concerned about?

Abraham Lincoln! The politics of today's bourgeoisie is not a continuation of his battle. His battle is a chapter in the history of mankind's larger campaign for freedom. His inheritors are those who battle for human freedom and against the leadership of the plutocrats![26]

2. LINCOLN IN YIDDISH POETRY

Many poems about life in America were written in Yiddish, and even a simple list of the titles of some of these poems evokes a picture of an earlier time, full of natural beauty, hope, and unexplored opportunity but also, at the same time, of injustice, alienation, and loneliness. As one browses through the index of America in Yiddish Poetry *(1967), selected and translated into English by Jehiel B. and Sarah H. Cooperman, a panorama of the American and the American Jewish experience unfolds. Included in this collection of Yiddish poetry in translation are four poems inspired by Abraham Lincoln.*

The first poem, composed by Reuben Iceland (1884–1955), focuses on Lincoln's famous trip to Richmond on April 3, 1865, less than two weeks prior to his death. Charles Carleton Coffin (1823–96), the well-known war correspondent, had described how former slaves greeted Lincoln as if he were the conquering messiah. "Hallelujah!" and "Bless the Lord!" they cried out,

kissing his hands. Reuben Iceland painted a picture, in Yiddish verse, of that famous scene that Coffin memorialized in his writings.[27] *In the second poem, "Abraham Lincoln in the White House," Isaac Elhanan Rontch (1899–1985) poetically conveys how intensely Lincoln worried over the war and the future of his nation. He was the lonely, sleepless figure walking incessantly through the halls of the White House.*[28] *Leonid Feinberg (1907–69), in his poem, recreates in rhyme and verse the thoughts that may have been running through Lincoln's head during his final moments at Ford's Theater. The assassin, he writes, set Lincoln free. Finally, the voice of Malka Lee's (1904–76) poem, "Father Abraham Lincoln," views Lincoln through the rejoicing eyes of a former slave, expressing how the Yiddish poets identified with the "fellow sufferers," those minorities who had been oppressed and persecuted like their own forebears.*

LINCOLN IN RICHMOND

by Reuben Iceland[29]

The city in flames. And clusters
Of thick black smoke to the sky curl.
Fat, devouring flames.
And drunken yelling and singing.
Panicky flight of whites;
And just-liberated Negroes,
With garish rags on bodies black,
Stream in waves from place to place,
Screaming and singing,
And carrying devastation in their beastly broad feet.

A mass of black heads, bowed by a storm.

The mob in magnitude is growing and the storm in vehemence,
And painfully he bends his back in shame;
His ears glow red.
Was it this he looked for?
Is not this a mockery,
An affliction from above
For vanity and thirst for power?
He sees devastation, and sees even more,
And with his big, clumsy hand
He wipes the cold sweat off his bony brow.

The mob in magnitude is growing and the storm in vehemence,
And suddenly he stiffens into a wall
Of black heads and deadly silence.
And soon a yell comes through, sharp and fearsome:
"Lincoln!"
And like a wind carries:
"Lincoln!"
And one calls, with eyes staring:
"Lincoln! Jesus's Holy One!"

And, quivering, a voice calls: “Messiah!”
And women their children lift high:
“See the Redeemer!”
And someone shouts wildly:
“The Day of Judgment!”
And wave-like flows over the heads:
“The Judgment Day!
The Judgment Day!
The Judgment Day!”
And thousands fall on their knees in trepidation and awe,
Half singing, half screaming and beating foreheads
On the stones of the pavement.

And he, at whose feet thousands lie,
Stands, humble and meek.
And feels that harder much than scorn is to bear praise,
And lower than dust
Humbles human adoration.
And never before did he crave so much
After rest and quiet and a place
His years to end
With wife and children away from people
And be free of any lust for glory
Vain—and fame.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN IN THE WHITE HOUSE

by Isaac Elhanan Rontch[30]

He paces about deeply absorbed, as in the depths of anguish,
Through the hushed parlors of the White House.
It is pitch night, it is deep night,

The long, long hands outstretched
To the Gettysburg battlefield,
To soldier sons of all the states.

The land is all asleep, the citizens rest;
And Washington, the capital, is silent.
Only the President is awake—
Father Abe, great and humble.

He sees young, strong men marching
Off in smoke to suffering and to death.
He hears the drums beating, the trumpets blaring,
Horses taking leave of city stones.

It's now quiet in the White House,
In the lateness of the night, in deep, black night;

But restless is the tall, gloomy President.

He sees ambulances move endlessly,
Like caravans through the desert, crowded with sick.
The town is full of them,
Their throes deafen the sky.
Abe Lincoln covers his face,
Bent with torture and anguish,
And cries and weeps within himself:
"I cannot bear it any longer."
He looks out of the window in the White House,
Abe Lincoln, the President in the Civil War.
It is night, it is black, it is horror.
The land calls, the world calls,
Generations call, long since passed:
"Free the land of shame,
Free the soul of disgrace!"

The land calls you, Abe Lincoln;
Hands of the black slave are outstretched to you,
Prophets of all times are calling upon you.

The blood of the Civil War will be wiped off;
Like the bright sun will truth shine.
United once more will the people be;
And stronger than war, peace is.
In fire and in blood freedom is born
And man must purify himself in torment of battle
To be free.

The city sleeps, the land slumbers.
But in the White House paces lonely,
Deep in thought,
Abe Lincoln, the President.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

by Leonid Feinberg[31]

The play goes on…Honest Abe sits in thought.
His heart is heavy, his face is weary,
He sees how the theater stares cautiously,
But of the play his wakeful ear hears naught.

In his ear echoes still the rumble of artillery…
He sees before him so much blood and dust…
And suddenly—banging…Abe picks himself up
And falls on hands caressed and tenderly.

His dim gaze becomes filled with lead.
On his face spreads the veiled shadow of death:
“I have the slaves from slavery led—
And I swear, by God, I have no regrets.

“And me, today the murderer here set free
From the heavy cross of my daily Golgotha.”

FATHER ABRAHAM LINCOLN

by Malka Lee[32]

Of what did my mind become aware—
Lincoln, father of the slaves?
I stand in the fields and look over there
Where the wonders of the world lie engraved.

Where the mountain ranges extend,
On blue mists outspread,
I see there runs a chain of men,
A race with upraised heads.

Father Lincoln, with his hat stiff-crowned,
I see through the mountains he spans;
In its own blood the sun goes down,
The clouds swim by like swans.

For me his lion's voice blares,
For them he freedom decreed.
I stay in the fields and look over there,
How the freed slaves proceed.

The black sons sing,
Their jungle rhythms blare.
And he leads the children to the morning,
Where black and white are brothers there.

The horizon is wrapped in a red firebrand,
The sun goes down in a flaming glow.
I spread over them my motionless hand—
Oh, let us together with him go!

I am the flame of the sunset
That into the valley descended.
Everything stilled in your chansonette,
I am with the mountain and valley blended.

Stars in the roof of the sky ignite,
The quietude sings as with pre-creation;

On a silver horn rides the night
And seeds the valley with stars diamond-spun.

3. LINCOLN'S MASTERPIECE: AMERICAN JEWRY AND THE GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

The first document reproduced below is a copy of a brief address and prayer that Rabbi Sabato Morais delivered on July 4, 1863, in the sanctuary of Philadelphia's Mickve Israel Congregation. Morais was an outspoken supporter of Lincoln's policies, and on Independence Day in 1863, the synagogue hosted members of the Union League of Philadelphia, a local patriotic social society established in 1862, whose purpose was to uphold the Constitution of the United States and support the president's efforts to preserve the Union.[33] *The Union League invited the rabbi to speak on a patriotic theme befitting the occasion.*

As we can see from the document, Morais was unable to muster much patriotic gasconade. He told his listeners he was deeply despondent over the gruesome loss of life that had just occurred on the Gettysburg battlefield—not far from Philadelphia—on July 1–3, 1863. In the course of Morais's address, he soberly reflected on the profundity of a loss this great, which he linked to the upcoming weeks of penitence preceding the Jewish fast day that occurred on the ninth day of Av (Tisha B'Av).[34]

What is genuinely intriguing about this document, beyond Morais's characteristic eloquence, is the first sentence of the third paragraph, where the rabbi remarks, "I am not indifferent, my dear friends! to the event, which four score and seven years ago, brought to this new world light and joy" *(emphasis added). The following Friday, July 10, 1863, the* Jewish Messenger, *a Jewish newspaper published in New York, printed the entirety of Morais's July 4, 1863 address.*

Most scholars agree that Lincoln's famous turn of phrase "Four score and seven years ago" came from the King James Version of the Bible, with which he was so familiar, and wherein the phrase "three score and ten" appears numerous times. It is nevertheless fascinating to discover that Morais's use of "four score and seven years ago" is arrestingly identical to the immortal words Lincoln employed as he began the Gettysburg Address on November 19, 1863.[35] *Is it possible that Lincoln had read Morais's sermon and made mental note of the rabbi's biblical rhetoric? This question has no definitive answer.*[36]

The second Gettysburg document comes from a public reception organized by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS) honoring Moses Alexander (1853–1932), governor of Idaho.[37] *The reception was held on Thursday evening, August 26, 1915, in Faneuil Hall in Boston. To bring some humor to the occasion, the highly regarded Hebrew writer Abraham Alpert (1871?–1939), whose nom de plume was "Ish Kovno,"*[38] *contributed an English parody on the Gettysburg Address lampooning the HIAS. The American Hebraist selected Lincoln's famous oration to serve as the source of a parody that would entertain those who were immersed in the work of immigrant aid. That "Ish Kovno" chose to satirize the "Gettysburg Address"—and not some other familiar Jewish or American text—is a clear indication that Lincoln's speech was already very well known.*

It is also interesting to note that many of the Alpert spoofs about the HIAS will still bring a smile to the face of Jewish communal leaders one hundred years after this parody was first published.

Address

יום צרה ותוכחה היום ונאצה הזה

This day is a day of trouble, of rebuke, and derision.[39]

Brethren? You will have recognized in my quotation the words wherewith the messengers of Hezekiah addressed the prophet, Isaiah, in the name of their sorrow-stricken king. The army of Assyria had then invaded the country of Judah and its chief general had added insult to the injury, by public expressions of opprobrium and blasphemy. To avert national dishonor and ruin, the prayer of the inspired servant of God, was at that juncture earnestly solicited.

But the text I have chosen may possibly be deemed too doleful for the occasion I was officially asked to recall to your memory. A stirring oration on political topics may perhaps be anticipated, as the most fitting manner of complying with the request. But with all due deference to the opinion entertained by the influential body of men, who have applied for my services, I will say,—as the heathen Seer of whom we have read in the section of this morning,—אתו אדבר הדבר אשר ישים אלהים בפי—" The word which God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak."[40]

I am not indifferent, my dear friends! to the event, which four score and seven years ago, brought to this new world light and joy. I yield to none in feelings of deep reverence for the sages and patriots that labored for its consummation. The principles enunciated in the document unfolded and first read in yonder hall, command still my highest admiration. But the more intently I gaze upon the bright past, the darker does the present appear in my vision.

The murky clouds which have long hovered all over the American horizon, gathered at length menacingly nearer to our homes. The thunder was ready to burst upon our heads, and we,—in our mad security,—neglected to set up the lightning rods, wherewith to blunt its violence. Behold, my hearers! the deplorable consequences and weep. The dust raised by the foot of invasion has tarnished our escutcheon. Havoc and devastation rage in our borders. Verily, I feel humbled to the earth, for, I have heard the reproach of our neighbors—though loyal—whose proffered help we have imperatively needed to shield us from danger. I cannot therefore ignore the present humiliation, and triumph over the past. To evoke joyful feelings in your breasts by description of our former achievements, would be a vain effort; for this day which commemorates them is to us יום צרה ותוכחה ונאצה—"a day of trouble, of rebuke and derision."

But another powerful motive combines to affect us very sadly. Brethren! This day is the opening of the three unpropitious weeks, which preceded the overthrow of Israel's nationality. From the seventeenth of Tamuz, date the aggravation of those evils unparalleled in history, which culminated in the burning of Solomon's temple and the dispersion of our people. The daily sacrifices, which amidst the horrors of a protracted war, had still continued to be offered, ceased upon this day. The Roman sword, reeking with the blood of the brave defenders of the land of their birth, transfixed defenseless women and innocent infants, who had sought refuge beneath the wings of God's dwelling. By the altar whereupon they laid oblations in homage to the Most High, the priests of the Lord fell victims to Roman ruthlessness. The ensign of heathen foes polluted the courts of our Sanctuary. Their carousals were indulged in, even within the holy precincts, which none was suffered to enter but the anointed descendant of Aaron upon יום הכפורים the great day of Atonement. Aye, my Brethren! Upon this inauspicious day, the ravages of famine deadened maternal feelings and robbed nature of its instincts.

Can it be then reasonably expected that I should expatiate upon a joyful theme? Can I delineate in glowing characters the happiness and glory derived, for a period, from the declaration that the colonial states had sundered apart the bonds of dependence, when the effects of a long thralldom and of fraternal strife stare me in the face? No, the times do not warrant it; the melancholy occurrences that befell us, my brothers and sisters in faith, at this season, direct my thoughts to a gloomy subject.

But if I cannot, consistently with the feeling I experience at present, revert to the joyous events of the past, I may and will beseech the Eternal our God the future.

In the communication received officially, I was requested to hold such service as may propitiate the blessing of Heaven upon us and our cause. You will all concur with me in the opinion that I could not more appropriately fulfill the expressed wish than by inviting you to prayer. פנה אל תפלת הערער ולא בזה את תפלתם "God regardeth the entreaty of the forlorn and despiseth not their petition."[41] To it did our fathers betake themselves when suffering tribulations and were relieved. With that armour they protected themselves against heavenly wrath, and the same panoply shall defend us this day from the arrows of a provoked Deity.

PRAYER

Almighty God! Suffer our entreaty to ascend Thy throne and hearken unto it, as Thou didst hearken unto that King Hezekiah and Isaiah the prophet. Our merits cannot, like theirs, intercede for us, but Thy mercy is not measured by human virtues, for alas! we should then have long since been driven from Thy presence.

Behold our confusion by reason of him that reproacheth and derideth. Uplift us from the dust into which our sins have cast us. Raise the horn of our salvation. Encircle Pennsylvania with Thy mighty shield, protect the lives of her inhabitants. Let her adversaries be foiled in their devices; let the fowler's snare be broken, and the souls of Thy suppliants be delivered. Cause the din of war to cease from this our beloved State. But let the sound of Thy praises be heard in her borders, at the tidings of her success. Oh! Return unto us! O God of our salvation, remove from Thy servants Thy fierce anger. Then this day which has brought us trouble, rebuke and derision will henceforth be celebrated with a joyful heart with glory and national happiness. For in Thee alone we trust, O Most High! And through Thy divine aid we shall again walk in enlargement. So may it speedily be, and say ye, Amen.[42]

Gettysburg Address Parody

Four score and seven years ago a score of loyal Jewish citizens brought forth in this community a new organization conceived in necessity and dedicated to the proposition that we "aid, Americanize and naturalize the Jewish immigrants." Now we are engaged in a great civil strife, testing whether this organization or any organization so conceived and so dedicated can long endure. We are met at the crisis of that strife. We have come to dedicate the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society as a monument for those who gave their energies that this organization might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this. But in a larger sense we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this body. The willing workers here and elsewhere, who have worked here, have consecrated it far above our powers to add or detract.

The world will little note or long remember what we say here, but it can never

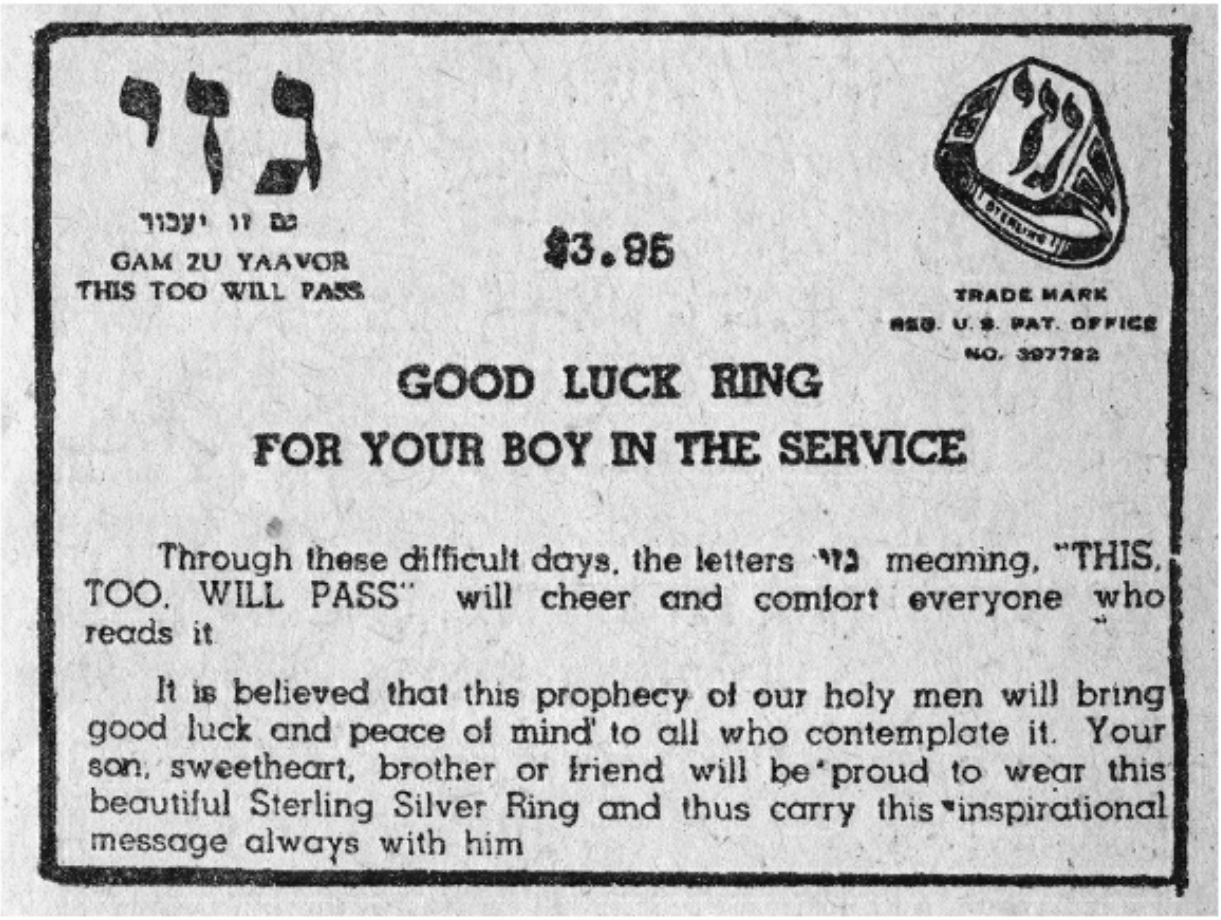
forget what they did. It is for us, the present members, rather to be dedicated here to the unfinished task which they who labored here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us, that from these willing workers we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these efforts and sacrifices shall not have been in vain; that this organization, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom, and that the government of this organization by the Jews, and for the Jews, shall not perish from the earth. A. A. (With apologies to Abraham Lincoln.)[43]

4. THIS, TOO, SHALL PASS

On September 30, 1859, Abraham Lincoln delivered an address to the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society in Milwaukee. Although this speech is not as well known as many others and its rhetoric is not as soaring as that in many of his famous addresses, Lincoln's 1859 Milwaukee speech proved to be a significant and thoughtful oration. He famously told his audience to be wary of politicians who flatter them, since farmers "are neither better nor worse than other people," only "more numerous." In another clever turn of phrase, Lincoln described agriculture as a form of "cultivated thought," saying, "Every blade of grass is a study; and to produce two, where there was but one, is both a profit and a pleasure."[44]

During these agricultural gatherings, "premiums" or prizes were given to farmers who made outstanding contributions to the field of agriculture. Lincoln made reference to this ceremony at the end of his Milwaukee address, and many commented on the concluding paragraphs of the speech, reproduced below. In it, Lincoln quotes an interesting story that was meant to offer a measure of comfort and perspective to those farmers who were destined to experience disappointment in failing to receive a premium from the agricultural society.

The story Lincoln cites is a folk legend that begins, "An Eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence, to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations." The wise men presented the monarch with the words "And this, too, shall pass away." Those familiar with Jewish folk literature will recognize this famous apothegm, which is frequently recited in Hebrew, Yiddish, and English and is often mistakenly attributed to the Talmud, though the phrase does not appear as such anywhere in the rabbinic literature. Yet a very similar phrase, "This, too, is for the good" (gam zu l'tovah), *does indeed come from the Talmud.*[45]



World War II "good luck ring" advertisement. In 1859, Lincoln cited a familiar folk legend known as the "This, Too, Shall Pass" story. The expression has endured as a popular Jewish folk saying, "Gam zu ya'avor." See Yehudah Avidah, "Gam Zeh Ya'avor," *Yeda-'Am: Journal of the Israel Folklore Society* 7–8 (May 1951): 14.

In the Journal of American Folklore, *a distinguished scholar of Jewish folklore, Dov Noy (1920–2013) of Haifa University, noted there exist numerous versions of this story in the folk literature of various Middle Eastern Jewish communities. The Jewish versions of this legend tend to identify the "monarch" as King Solomon.*[46] *During World War II, jewelers and artists began to produce "good luck rings" with the Hebrew acronym "gimmel-zayin-yod" symbolizing this phrase,* gam zu ya'avor *("This, too, shall pass"). Later, rings engraved with the entire phrase began to appear, and jewelry of this sort has increased in popularity up to the present day.*[47]

Lincoln's closing observations at the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, beyond their characteristic kindness, are intriguing because of the legend he chose to quote. Lincoln's use of a folk story that appeared in Jewish literature and that resonated with the spirit of Judaism's ancient wisdom has only served to reinforce a generalized impression that the sixteenth president possessed an intuitive appreciation of Jewish lore and learning.

Concluding Section of an Address by Abraham Lincoln before the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society

Some of you will be successful, and such will need but little philosophy to take them home in cheerful spirits; others will be disappointed, and will be in a less happy mood. To such, let it be said, “Lay it not too much to heart.” Let them adopt the maxim, “Better luck next time”; and then, by renewed exertion, make that better luck for themselves.

And by the successful, and unsuccessful, let it be remembered, that while occasions like the present, bring their sober and durable benefits, the exultations and mortifications of them are but temporary; that the victor shall soon be the vanquished, if he relax in his exertion; and that the vanquished this year, may be victor the next, in spite of all competition.

It is said an Eastern monarch once charged his wise men to invent him a sentence, to be ever in view, and which should be true and appropriate in all times and situations. They presented him the words: “*And this, too, shall pass away.”* How much it expresses! How chastening in the hour of pride! How consoling in the depths of affliction! “And this, too, shall pass away.” And yet, let us hope, it is not *quite* true. Let us hope, rather, that by the best cultivation of the physical world, beneath and around us, and the intellectual and moral world within us, we shall secure an individual, social, and political prosperity and happiness, whose course shall be onward and upward, and which, while the earth endures, shall not pass away.[48]

5. LINCOLN AND JEWISH EDUCATION

The extent to which Lincoln still serves as an American Jewish exemplar can be seen in the exceptional role he has played in the world of Jewish education. During the last half of the twentieth century, Jewish educators made use of Lincoln's legacy as a curricular tool for Jewish learning. Despite the fact that Lincoln was not a Jew, his life and career have been used to enhance and advance Jewish knowledge. Although three examples of this phenomenon appear below, it will be the task of future researchers to assess the various ways in which Lincoln's persona will have influenced American Jewish educational curricula and program materials over the course of the next half century.

Sadie Rose Weilerstein (1894–1993) became one of the most popular authors of Jewish textbooks from the 1930s to the 1970s. In 1930, she created an imaginary character named K'tonton, a young boy who was always getting into trouble but whose adventures transformed Jewish learning into an exciting experience for generations of American Jewish youth. By the 1970s, Weilerstein had published a dozen textbooks featuring K'tonton and many other lovable characters.[49]

One of Weilerstein's textbooks, Little New Angel, *first published in 1947, featured two young sisters, Ruthie and Debby, and their new baby brother, Michael. In each of the book's chapters, Ruthie, Debby, baby Michael, and their parents manage to teach readers something new and interesting about Jewish life in America. The chapter reprinted below is titled “A Seder on Lincoln's Birthday.” The fact that Weilerstein used the life of Abraham Lincoln as a strategy for teaching Jewish children about Passover is only one noteworthy facet of this chapter. Considering the fact that this work appeared eight years before the Supreme Court rendered its watershed decision in the case of* Brown vs. Board of Education, *Weilerstein's interest in civil rights for the American black is truly noteworthy. The author wanted her young Jewish readers to recognize that on Passover, Jews should celebrate both the Jewish exodus from Egypt and the emancipation of the Negro slaves in America. Weilerstein's “Lincoln's Birthday Seder” leads*

seamlessly into the story of George Washington Carver, "one of the little slave children that Abraham Lincoln helped to free." Carver's professional career demonstrated to the readers that Abraham Lincoln, like Moses in the story of the Exodus, had wrought unhemmed good by freeing slaves. "If Abraham Lincoln had not helped to free the slaves," Weilerstein wrote, "George Washington Carver might have stayed a slave all his life."

Rabbi Philip Goodman (1911–2006) joined the program staff of the National Jewish Welfare Board (JWB) in 1942. Until his retirement in 1976, Goodman wrote and coedited a wide range of Jewish educational publications. In 1953, Goodman published a volume titled Lincoln's Birthday: Program Material for Jewish Groups. *The book was published by the JWB to assist the Jewish community in commemorating the tercentenary of Jewish settlement in America (1654–1954). The volume's table of contents and especially its introduction—reproduced below—shed light on Goodman's conviction that Lincoln's birthday, a legal holiday in the United States, "may aid in developing an appreciation of the Jewish ideals of democracy that have helped to mold American life [and] create an understanding of the contributions that Jews have made to the growth of America."*

In 1992, Benjamin Edidin Scolnic (b. 1953) published an essay in which he presented "a model for the integration of Jewish and secular education" for Jewish parochial schools.[50] *Paralleling the dichotomy that separates critical history from memory, Scolnic argued that "Lincoln legends" are just as important in the realm of religious education as "the real-life Lincoln" is to the historian. Rabbinic legends shed light on values and principles that the ancient Jewish sages preserved, but "we can learn a great deal about the values of [America] by examining the process through which the Lincoln legends were developed."*

These interesting examples of Jewish educational and program material that appeared in the twentieth century demonstrate that Jewish educators believed that by studying Lincoln's life and legacy, American Jews could ultimately strengthen their Jewish roots.[51] *As Philip Goodman pointed out, Lincoln's life offered American Jewry an opportunity to celebrate the values that have been "an integral part of Jewish life for many centuries."*

A *Seder on Lincoln's Birthday*

"WHAT are we going to do tomorrow?" asked Debby.

"Tomorrow" was Lincoln's Birthday.

"You'll have a vacation from school," said Mother.

"But what will we *do*, Mother?"

Ruth and Debby were used to doing things on holidays. They lit Hanukkah lights on Hanukkah. They masqueraded on Purim.

Sadie Rose Weilerstein's textbook *Little New Angel*, first published in 1947, included a chapter titled "A Seder on Lincoln's Birthday." Reprinted from *Little New Angel* by Sadie Rose Weilerstein by permission of the University of Nebraska Press; copyright 1947 by the Jewish Publication Society.

A Seder on Lincoln's Birthday

by Sadie Rose Weilerstein

"What are we going to do tomorrow?" asked Debby.

"Tomorrow" was Lincoln's Birthday.

"You'll have a vacation from school," said Mother.

"But what will we *do*, Mother?"

Ruth and Debby were used to doing things on holidays. They lit Hanukkah lights on Hanukkah. They masqueraded on Purim. They ate turkey on Thanksgiving day and cherry tarts on Washington's Birthday.

"What would you like to do for Lincoln's Birthday?" Mother asked.

"We could have a Seder or something," Debby answered.

"But a Seder is for Pesach,"[52] said Ruthie.

"We could have a Seder *two* times," Debby insisted. "Abraham Lincoln saved the negro slaves, same as Moses saved us."

So next day the family had a Seder. It wasn't a *Pesach Seder* with *matzah* and the *mahnishtanah* and *Had Gadya*.[53] It was a Lincoln's Birthday Seder.

There was a log cabin for a centerpiece. Ruth and Debby had made it out of their Lincoln logs, and Mother had heaped a pile of peanuts on each side of it. She didn't say why.

"The first thing will be the Four Questions," Daddy said. "Every Seder must begin with four questions. Ask a question, Debby."

But Debby couldn't think of a question to ask. She tried, but not a question came into her mind. Ruth couldn't think of a question either.

"Well," Daddy said, "if you don't ask, you must tell. Tell a story, Debby."

So Debby told the story of Abraham Lincoln. She learned it in school. And now that she didn't *have* to ask a question, a question popped right out of her mouth.

"Was Abraham Lincoln a Jew, Daddy?"

"No," said Daddy, "he was a Christian."

"Then why was his name Abraham?"

"Because his mother loved the Bible stories. She gave her baby the same name as Abraham in the Bible."

"Did the slaves read the Bible stories?" Debby asked.

"They couldn't read," Daddy explained. "They weren't sent to school. But they knew the stories. They sang songs about them."

And Daddy and Mother sang *When Israel Was in Egypt Land.* Ruth and Debby joined in the chorus.

"Go down Moses.

Tell old Pharaoh to let my people go."

After that they sang *Little David Play on Your Harp,* and *Old Black Joe,* and *Way Down upon the Swanee River.*

And that made Debby think of another question.

"Did the negro slaves hide their babies in the Swanee River?"

She was thinking of Baby Moses, whose mother hid him in a basket in the Nile.

"No," Mother said, "they didn't hide their babies in the river. But they loved them

very much. That's why they were so happy about Abraham Lincoln. They wanted their babies to grow up to be free and not slaves."

And now Ruthie thought of a question.

"Why are black people black, Mother? Why can't they be white like us?"

"Because God made them black," Mother explained. "He said, 'I must take good care of these children of mine. They live in the middle of Africa where the sun is burning hot. I will put plenty of pigment in their skin. (Pigment is color.) Then the sun won't burn them and they will be comfortable and well.' This was long ago in the beginning of things."

"Any more questions?" asked Daddy.

And Ruthie, who had been looking at the piles of peanuts all through the Seder, asked, "What are the peanuts for, Mother?"

"That's the question I've been waiting for," said Mother. "The peanuts are to eat, after you've heard a story about them."

And mother told the story of […]

GEORGE WASHINGTON CARVER AND THE PEANUTS

The story is about one of the little slave children that Abraham Lincoln helped to free. His name was George Washington Carver. When he was hardly more than a baby, wicked men came and stole his mother away. But a kind farmer's wife looked after him.

Little George was so frightened, it was a long time before he learned to speak to people. He stammered and stuttered whenever he tried. But he talked to the little wild creatures in the wood, and they became his friends. He sang to the flowers and they taught him their secrets. And because he had no father or mother to talk to, he talked to God. He called God, "Mr. Creator."

Little George learned so much from the plants and books, that when he grew up he became a great and wise teacher, a scientist. First he taught the white boys and girls in a university in the north. But he kept thinking about his own people, the ragged, barefooted boys and girls in the south, whose fathers and grandfathers had been slaves just as he had been. They wanted so much to learn, but there was no one to teach them.

"They need me," George Washington Carver said. "I will go down to Tuskegee and teach them to be good farmers."

Tuskegee was a new school for colored people in Alabama.

One day the farmers came to Mr. Carver in great trouble.

"The Boll Weevil has come," they cried. "All our cotton plants are dying. The blossoms are falling to the ground."

The Boll Weevils were tiny bugs with ENORMOUS appetites. The ate and they ate and they ate until every cotton plant was killed.

"What shall we do?" the farmers cried. There were black farmers and white farmers among them. "We have no cotton to sell. Our children will go hungry."

"Plant peanuts," Mr. Carver said to them. "Boll Weevils never hurt peanuts. And peanuts are good for men and good for soil."

So the farmers planted peanuts. The plants grew green and sturdy. The blossoms bent over, burrowed into the ground and turned into plump pods.

But a new trouble came. Nobody wanted to buy the peanuts.

"We have all the bags of peanuts we can sell," said the peanut-stand man.

“What can we do with peanuts? We have all the salted peanuts we need,” said the storekeepers.

Again the farmers were sad. But this time they were angry too.

“Why did you tell us to plant peanuts?” they cried. “The peanuts will rot in the ground. We shall grow poor and our children will go hungry.”

Then George Washington Carver went off by himself and prayed to God.

“Dear Mr. Creator,” he prayed, “please tell me what the peanut was made for. What is it? What can we do with it?”

And he thought God answered: “Go into your laboratory. Take your burners and your pans and your beakers and your chemicals and your microscope. I will show you how to take the peanut apart and put it together again.”

Then George Washington Carver took bushel baskets full of peanuts and locked himself into his laboratory. All day long he worked, and all night, and the next day and night, and the next and the next and the next. Then at last he opened his door and called for his pupils. On the table was a long row of things that had not been there before—oil, cheese, milk, stains, ink, soap, flour, cattle feed. All these things George Washington Carver had made—out of PEANUTS.

And he kept on making things out of peanuts—three hundred different things. Now the poor farmers, the white ones and the colored ones, could sell all the peanuts they raised. They weren't poor any more. And it was all because of George Washington Carver.

“And Abraham Lincoln,” Debby added.

“True,” said Mother. “If Abraham Lincoln had not helped to free the slaves, George Washington Carver might have stayed a slave all his life.”

Then they ate their peanuts and the Seder was over.[54]

From *Lincoln's Birthday: Program Material for Jewish Groups*

Compiled and edited by Philip Goodman

Lincoln's Birthday on February 12th is a legal holiday in more than thirty states.

The celebration of Lincoln's Birthday is an inspiring occasion for the people of America. Lincoln's life is studded with gems of toil and perseverance, integrity of purpose, pursuit of justice, humaneness and humbleness, and is crowned with a peculiar genius all his own. From the obscurity of an environment of low social status and dire poverty through conscientious service and devotion to lofty ideals, Abe Lincoln rose to the pinnacle of honor in the United States of America. His achievement is one of the noblest inspirations for modern Americans.

For the Jewish people of our land it has added significance. Not only did Lincoln have Jewish friends but he was a friend of the Jews as well as of all other minority groups. The commemoration of the birthday of the Great Emancipator by Jewish groups should include an exposition of the values exemplified by the celebrant's life which have been an integral part of Jewish life for many centuries as well as a presentation of his biography and his relationships to the Jews. These permanent values—industry, studiousness, honesty, courage, loyalty, love of books, respect for all men and fear of God—are as valid today as they were for Honest Abe a century ago. Lincoln was not perfect. He was human, suffered frailties and overcame many

obstacles. Because he was human and yet succeeded in filling an exemplary role in American life, we cherish his memory and strive to learn from his life. Indeed, Lincoln embodied many values that have always been part and parcel of the Jewish heritage.

Appropriate celebrations of Lincoln's Birthday and other uses of the occasion for group programming may aid in developing an appreciation of the Jewish ideals of democracy that have helped to mold American life; create an understanding of the contributions that Jews have made to the growth of America; and promote better relationships among peoples of all faiths on the American scene.

There is an abundance of literature on the life, writings and speeches of Lincoln that is readily available in numerous volumes…. This book is primarily although not exclusively limited to the presentation of material for programming concerning Lincoln and the Jews.

Preparation for Lincoln's Birthday may be an integral part of a group's on-going program. Interest may be aroused through any number of the usual means used in group work to stimulate participation. Many aspects of group programming lend themselves to the introduction of the subject. House or club councils may assume the responsibility for initiating suitable projects.

Jewish Community Centers may invite Jewish chaplains, Jewish war veterans, boy scouts and girl scouts to participate in Lincoln's Birthday celebrations. While such events at Centers may highlight the Jewish interest, they should not preclude the possibility of the Center's cooperating with other civic agencies in sponsoring community-wide celebrations. The observance of Lincoln's Birthday may be combined with that of Brotherhood Week.

The celebration of Lincoln's Birthday offers opportunities for expanding the total Jewish program of the agency. Skillful programming for this occasion involves the integrated use of creative skills—drama, writing, arts and crafts, music—as well as appropriate games, stories, plays and pageants, discussions, trips to points of historical interest, parties, dances and other social activity….

An early publication of the National Jewish Welfare Board on Lincoln's Birthday has been out-of-print for many years. It is hoped that this book will meet the long-felt need to provide program material to aid Jewish groups in the observance of Lincoln's Birthday. Most of the material on Lincoln and his relationships with the Jews is unavailable. This compilation, with the inclusion of much new material hithertofore unpublished, is an effort to present within one binding program suggestions and actual material so as to spare its users the need to refer to sources not generally accessible. A conscious attempt was made to include the most useful material.[55]

Footsteps on the Ceiling and Idols on the Floor: Integrated Study of History and Story in the Conservative Jewish Day School

by Benjamin Edidin Scolnic

YOUNG HONEST ABE: THE FUNERAL OF NANCY HANKS AND "FOOTSTEPS ON THE CEILING"

If we have been raised in the United States we know the stories of Young Abe Lincoln. We heard them as children, and now, as parents, we share them with our own children. We talk about Young Abe walking twenty miles to borrow a book (when we can't get

our kids away from the VCR) or of Abe's struggling to read by firelight.

In every book I have read about Lincoln, whether for children or adults, there is at least a passage about the death of Nancy Hanks Lincoln, Abe's mother, when he was only nine years old. There was no funeral as such when they buried her. According to these books, Abe was extremely upset that proper honor was not done to his mother. Some writers maintain that he wrote to a preacher to request a more dignified ceremony at a later date.

The fact is that Lincoln never wrote to a preacher, as “history-legend” has it. Young Abe couldn't have done so; he did not know how to write (he would not learn until five years later). What we know about the culture of his time and place indicates that Lincoln probably wasn't even familiar with the concept of a funeral as we think of it. If he was concerned about such things, he had a strange way of showing it; there would be no monument or marker of any kind over his mother's grave during his lifetime.[56]

This is what history does to meaning. It levels it, often destroys it. There is no history about Nancy Hanks Lincoln's death except that she died. And since that is a terrible fact, it cries out to be cried over, it demands interpretation and analysis. How did young Abe feel? How did he cope? Did he cry? Did this death affect him in lasting ways?

So story fills in the gaps, somewhat like *derash* fills in the *p'shat*.[57] The modern writers superimpose their own feelings about what a funeral should be like and assume that Lincoln must have been terribly disappointed that a proper service was not conducted.

Less than a year after his mother's death, Abe's father left his sister and him totally alone. They were living in an unfinished cabin, without a real ceiling or floor. His father returned with their new stepmother, who immediately insisted that the cabin should be finished. She was especially happy with her new, whitewashed ceiling. Young Abe decided to have a good time. He got his older cousin to lift him upside down so that Abe could make footprints across the clean white ceiling. How would his new stepmother respond? She looked at the footprints and laughed. “Nobody but Abe Lincoln would ever have thought up such a thing,” she said. They cleaned up the ceiling together.

What does the story tell us? The new stepmother appreciates Abe. Footprints on the ceiling test her, and a family is created.

The story of the footprints on the ceiling is a cute story, but no cuter than any that most of us have in our own family memory-book. It is only in the context of Abraham Lincoln's life that the story attains historical importance. The roof of the Lincoln cabin was finished because of Abe's stepmother, it was unfinished before she came. She made them turn a hut into a house. Footprints on the ceiling mocked her efforts.

It is not important whether this story is historically true or not. As a written record, it carries the truth of literature or text. It is not a superimposition of meaning which runs counter to the custom of Abe's environment. This cute story becomes important because it represents the new stage of Abe's emotional life with a new mother.

History tells us that Abe never read by firelight. History tells us that Abe Lincoln only went to school for a short while, so he did not walk six miles back and forth for years, as the legends tell it.[58]

But history is not just what happened. History is also what we say happened. History has selected and developed certain stories about Abraham Lincoln's life. That selection process tells us more about American dreams and myths, about the values we want our children to have, than it does about Abraham Lincoln's actual experiences….

We are the stories that we tell about ourselves. Do we really think that the patient on the psychoanalyst's couch is accurately reporting exactly what happened to him? Memory is much more complex than that. In many ways, the patient "creates" his history by interpreting his memory and experiences. The analyst interprets his patient's case-history as story. Even a case-history, then, becomes a literary form….[59]

Each historical figure is a separate case, but the literary traditions about the Biblical Abraham and Abraham Lincoln are fairly typical in the way they develop answers to questions which may never have been asked when the Torah was written or Abraham Lincoln was living….

A story such as "Footsteps on the Ceiling" shows, in a most reassuring way, how human Abraham Lincoln was. The story helps the child to counter the feelings of inferiority. The impact of the story may be that "Abe Lincoln was just a prankster and look how he turned out…"

In the separation of levels of meaning, all meanings become clearer. After all is said and done, we are trying to create American Jews who can integrate their religious beliefs with their understanding of the modern world, who are not left with inner dichotomies. In bringing children back to the point where meaning is created, by following the same methodology whether the subject is religious or secular, we will enable the students to achieve their own versions of integration. We are trying to create human beings who understand the implications of history and of classic texts for their own lives. Each child, in his imagination, will achieve his own synthesis of the stories he is told….

CONCLUSIONS

What can we learn about America from the tales it tells about its heroes? Study of Abraham Lincoln would take us back, as William Safire's brilliant novel *Freedom*[60] does, to the real-life Lincoln, with all of the controversy and turbulence associated with his leadership. But what objective history has to say about Lincoln is only part of what America remembers about him. We can learn a great deal about the values of our country by examining the process through which the Lincoln legends were developed. Standing on the verge of the creation of meaning, from the perspective of Lincoln's own time, we can understand not only how but why those legends sprang into existence. The American dream will attain a new and different level of meaning and, thus, a new and different reality.[61]

6. WAS ABRAHAM LINCOLN JEWISH?

It is difficult to determine when American Jews began wondering whether Abraham Lincoln was actually a bone fide Jew. During his presidency, we do know that when Lincoln lived in the White House, the Jews of Louisville "jocularly" referred to Lincoln as "Rabbi Abraham," and in his oft-quoted eulogy for Lincoln, Rabbi Isaac M. Wise claimed that the president himself told him he had always believed he was a descendant of Jewish parentage. The author of Abraham Lincoln and the Jews, *Isaac Markens, asked Lincoln's son Robert if he had ever heard his*

parents discussing the possibility that the president came from Jewish descent. Robert claimed he had never in his life heard the topic discussed by his parents or by anyone in the family. In 1951, when Bertram W. Korn published his magnum opus, American Jewry and the Civil War, *he did not give Wise's assertion any credence, saying, "It is almost incomprehensible that Lincoln should have said the exact words quoted by Wise without having made similar statements to other acquaintances."*[62]

In spite of all evidence to the contrary, the belief that Lincoln may actually have been a descendant of Jewish lineage continues to endure. The first document presented below appeared in a publication titled Eden, *a monthly publication edited by the Junior Congregation of the Reading Road Temple, Cincinnati, Ohio. To commemorate Lincoln's birthday in February 1929, a student named Morton Reiser*[63] *composed an eight-verse poem titled "Some Say Lincoln Was a Jew," comparing the sixteenth president to "Moses of old."*

The second document, "Was There a Jewish President?," has enjoyed worldwide circulation via the Internet ever since 2006, when the article first appeared. This "urban legend" was attributed to Rabbi Jeff Kahn (b. 1952), then of Temple Har Shalom, Warren, New Jersey. Various versions of this same speculative suggestion have continued to spread, including some anti-Semitic renderings that have even appeared on the websites of white supremacist groups by way of explaining that it was actually Lincoln's "Jewishness" that compelled him to free the slaves![64]

The final document is a sermon written by Rabbi Adam J. Raskin (b. 1974), Beth Torah Congregation, Richardson, Texas. Raskin's sermon, delivered on February 14, 2009, for the bicentennial anniversary of Lincoln's birth, starts by recapitulating the "myth of Lincoln's Jewishness." The rabbi begins by reviewing many of the same ideas that originally appeared in the Kahn document, but he concludes by reminding the congregation of a famous story that the artist Frances B. Carpenter (1830–1900) immortalized. When asked why he never joined a church, Carpenter overheard Lincoln say:

> I have never united myself to any church, because I have found difficulty in giving my assent, without mental reservation, to the long, complicated statements of Christian doctrine which characterize their articles of Belief and Confessions of Faith. When any church will inscribe over its altar, as its sole qualification for membership, the Savior's condensed statement of the substance of both law and gospel: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all the mind [*sic*],"[65] [and also] "love thy neighbor as thyself"[66]—that church will I join with all my heart and all my soul.[67]

Lincoln's decision to cite these particular phrases from the Hebrew scriptures, particularly the admonition that comes from Deuteronomy 6:5—a phrase that traditional Jews recite three times a day—seemed to underscore Lincoln's affinity to the principles that are at the core of Jewish theology. This may be why, the rabbi goes on to suggest, Lincoln was drawn so powerfully toward the path of justice and righteousness during the course of his life.

From the days of Lincoln's presidency, when the Jews of Louisville apparently dubbed him "Rabbi Abraham," to the numerous contemporaneous "urban legends" on the Internet suggesting that Lincoln came from Jewish stock, it is clear that conjectures that Lincoln was a Jew by genealogical descent continue to flourish. Despite the fact that there exists no empirical evidence that Lincoln was a Jew by the standards of traditional Jewish law, it is more than

evident that many Americans—both Jews and non-Jews—are fascinated by the possibility, however remote, that Abraham Lincoln may have indeed been a Jew by descent.

As for American Jews, they have long accepted Lincoln as an honorary Jew, or, to paraphrase the president's own famous phrase, American Jews have persistently reconstructed Lincoln into an "almost chosen person."[68]

LINCOLN

by Morton Reiser

Some say Lincoln was a Jew,
For he had all the virtues:
He was kind and loving,
Honest, staunch, and true.
He it was who freed the slaves,
Like Moses did of old.
The Patriarch the Jews did save,
In our history 'tis told.[69]

Was There a Jewish President?

by Rabbi Jeff Kahn

On the twelfth of February, 1809, nearly 200 years ago, a young, poor illiterate woman from Virginia, Nancy Hanks Lincoln, gave birth to a son, in a log cabin, built along the banks of the south fork of Nolin Creek, near what is now Hodgenville, Kentucky. That baby, whom she named Abraham, grew to become one of our greatest, and most tragic, national leaders.

Lincoln was a man of great spiritual conviction. Yet, and I find this fact fascinatingly instructive, Abraham Lincoln was the only American president not to have declared himself a member of any particular religious faith. That fact has given rise to a great deal of interesting speculation. In fact, there are those who believe that Honest Abe was Jewish. After all, his name was Abraham. His great-grandfather was named Mordechai. Lincoln was the only President not to have a formal religious affiliation. He was neither raised in a church nor did he ever belong to a church.

And there's more…the town of Lincoln, in eastern England, whence his ancestors came, has an interesting Jewish history. A Jewish community was established there in 1159. During Crusader riots, the Sheriff of Lincoln saved the Jews by giving them official protection. St. Hugh, the great Bishop of Lincoln, taught love of Jews to his parishioners. His death was marked by an official period of mourning among Lincoln's Jews. Rabbi Joseph of Lincoln was a scholar mentioned in the Talmud; Aaron of Lincoln was a financier whose operations extended all over the country.

In 1255, Lincoln's Jews were accused of ritual murder. Ninety-one Lincoln Jews were sent to London for trial and 18 were executed. Notwithstanding, the Lincoln Jewish community flourished until 1290, when they were forcibly expelled by edict.

Most Jewish historians assume that all the Jews of Lincoln left in 1290. But could it be possible that some remained, practicing their Judaism in secret…passing the family secret from generation to generation? The more we learn of the secret life of Spanish Jewry following the Expulsion of 1492, the more we must at least consider the

possibility of the same thing occurring elsewhere.

When Abraham Lincoln was assassinated, whole Jewish communities sat shivah. Rabbis all over the country eulogized the fallen President. Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise, the man who created Reform Judaism in this country, began his eulogy with the words "… Brethren, the lamented Abraham Lincoln believed himself to be bone from our bone and flesh from our flesh. He supposed himself to be a descendant of Hebrew parentage. He said so in my presence."

Lincoln was often questioned about his religious beliefs. Time and again, he told of a special passage from Scripture that summed up his theology. It was the twentieth chapter of the Book of Exodus he recommended that every American study, learn and follow. In English it is usually referred to as the Ten Commandments.[70]

Abraham Lincoln and the *Pintele Yid*

By Rabbi Adam J. Raskin

Shabbat Shalom, and Happy President's Day Weekend to all! I'm sure that you all know that Monday is President's Day…and this year, President's Day is extra-special because of the bicentennial celebration of the birth of our 16th President, Abraham Lincoln… who also of course was the first Jewish president! Surely you've considered the evidence for Lincoln being a Jew…. Beyond the fact that he had a beard and wore a black hat…he also had a grandfather named Mordechai, worked as an attorney, loved to argue and debate, hated hunting, loved reading, had a tinge of depression, was treated only by Jewish doctors, and had in-laws who didn't think he was good enough for their daughter. Probably because he wasn't a doctor! Sounds *like a Jewish man to me!* Seriously though, Lincoln used to say about Mary Todd's parents that "God made do with one 'd' but the Todds demanded two!" And to top it all off, Lincoln has a street named after him in Jerusalem!

Now you should know that Snopes doesn't totally dismiss the myth of Lincoln's Jewishness. Not so much for the reasons I just listed, but because of other interesting tidbits…like the fact that the Jews of Lincoln, England, where the President's family hailed from were famously protected by the Sheriff of Lincoln during the Crusader Riots of 1159. St. Hugh, the bishop of Lincoln, regularly preached of loving Jews, and it was considered a haven of sorts when Jews fled from other places of persecution. Surprisingly, Lincoln never publicly claimed a religious affiliation, an unusual detail for the 19th Century. Surely to publicly claim to be a Jew would have hampered his rise to power in that day and age. Isaac Mayer Wise, the father of Reform Judaism in America who was among several of Lincoln's eulogizers said: "Bretheren [*sic*], the lamented Abraham Lincoln believed himself to be bone of our bone, flesh of our flesh. He supposed himself to be a descendent of Hebrew parentage. He said so in my presence." How about that for a testimonial! The problem is that we cannot corroborate that Lincoln said that to Rabbi Wise, nor any other suspicions about his ancestry. But there was one detail that Lincoln often mentioned publicly that piqued my interest. Since Lincoln was always so coy about his religious beliefs of affiliation, he was often asked about it by reporters, biographers, and colleagues. His answer was always: "There is one piece of Scripture that sums up my theology…the 20th Chapter of the Book of Exodus."

Friends, as we all know certainly this morning, the 20th chapter of the book of Exodus is none other than the thrilling scene at Mt. Sinai, where Moses receives the 10 Commandments. I find it fascinating that Lincoln did not say John 3:16, Matthew 7:3, Mark 10:27, or Luke 18:27 (I didn't make those up, they're all famous, important Christian scriptural citations)…. No Lincoln chose the most significant, identifiable, transformative moment in Jewish history as the crux of his own theology. Now that's something! The Midrash Tanchuma[71] teaches that all souls of Jews who were living at that time, as well as all the souls of Jews who would ever live in the future were present at Mt. Sinai. People who would be born Jewish, and people who would choose to become Jewish…some part of their inanimate life, something of their spiritual matter was present along with the 600,000 Jews who stood together at the base of that Mountain when we went from a band of slaves to a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. Where did the Midrash get this idea? In Deuteronomy 29:14, God says to Moses, I am not making this covenant with you alone, but both with those who are standing here with us this day before the Lord our God…and also with those *who are not* with us here this day! The covenant, the mitzvot, Jewish destiny is encoded, not so much in our DNA as deep within in our souls. [Abraham Joshua] Heschel taught us that "every person moves in two domains: in the domain of nature and in the domain of the spirit." Part of us is flesh and bones, and part of us, the nefesh, the neshama,[72] is the intangible yet animating substance that fills our physicality with life. In fact this idea has crystallized into a beautiful, powerful mystical concept known often by its Yiddish name: *dos pintele yid*, or for you Hebraists out there: *Netzotz ha'Yehudi*…but I'm sorry it sounds better to me in Yiddish. A *pintele yid*, according to Jewish mysticism[,] is a spark, a little point of light, the innermost quintessence of Jewish identity. "The idea is that all Jews, even if they are unaware of it or have been raised so un-Jewishly that they do not even know they are Jewish, have within them a Jewish essence that can be activated under certain circumstances. To some, this may sound like psychological nonsense. To others, this is a deep spiritual truth (I reckon you know which opinion I subscribe to). If every Jewish soul was at Mt. Sinai, then there is a certain memory of that event imprinted upon our souls. And that imprint is indestructible, and always has the potential—regardless of assimilation or lack of Jewish education—to emerge, and make its presence felt."[73]

Chevrei[74]—I see this all the time. Jews who had little Jewish education as children but something they can't put their finger on draws them back to Jewish life. Jews who spent most of their days unaffiliated, but wake up one day yearning for a connection. People who are not born as Jews, but feel in their soul a growing realization that their lot, their destiny is with the Jewish people. Kids whose parents aren't particularly interested in Judaism but who nevertheless become passionately involved in their own Jewish life (often inspired by Jewish youth groups or summer camps). That mysterious gravitational pull, says the tradition, is the *pintele yid.* I have felt it working in my own life, and I imagine many of you here today—if I asked for a show of hands—could give testimony to it as well.

In 1831, a young Abraham Lincoln was hired along with some other young men to navigate a flat boat down the Mississippi River to New Orleans where the cargo was to be dropped off. It was then that Lincoln encountered his first blush with the cruelty and brutality of slavery. Witnessing a slave auction, Lincoln was horrified by the

dehumanization of what he saw. He said to his friends, if I ever have a chance to take on slavery I will do so with a vengeance. I would love to imagine that this disdain for a widespread and globally accepted institution came from a certain *pintele yid*, a spark of Sinai that emerged in his soul and made him revile what he saw. Whether that is true or not, and whether Lincoln was Jewish or not, we are reminded by all the speculation that sometimes someone's Jewishness is not worn on their sleeve or particular obvious or second nature. Sometimes it is buried deep beneath a lot of family, historical, and circumstantial baggage. Wherever it is, let us never forget that this holy spark is the indestructible, ever burning ember of Jewish life. If you feel something deep inside of you, pulling you to learn, to explore, to deepen your Jewish life…perhaps that's your *pintele yid* yearning to be unleashed. Don't repress it dear friends…let it shine. Let it shine![75]

Epilogue

Toward the end of Philip Roth's blockbuster novel *Portnoy's Complaint*, Alexander Portnoy is reminiscing about a field trip he had taken to the courthouse in Newark, New Jersey, when he was in eighth grade. He recalls that there were two statues near the courthouse, one of George Washington and the other of Abraham Lincoln. Portnoy then offers his thoughts on these two great American presidents: "Washington, I must confess, leaves me cold. Maybe it's the horse, that he's leaning on a horse. At any rate, he is so obviously a *goy*. But Lincoln! I could cry. Look at him sitting there, so *oysgemitchet* [exhausted]. How he labored for the downtrodden—as will I!"[1]

Portnoy's comments about Washington and Lincoln not only are humorous but also possess an element of truth for the American Jew at the end of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first. It is true that Jews respect George Washington—they may also regard Thomas Jefferson highly and admire Theodore Roosevelt's forceful personality and so forth. Yet Portnoy's observation is indeed a reflection of reality. As Stanley Jerome, the lead character in Neil Simon's play *Brighton Beach Memoirs*, tells his cousin Nora as they plan their dinner conversation: "I'll mention someone like Abraham Lincoln and you look up and say, 'Now there's a man who really stood up for his principles.'"[2] For many American Jews, Lincoln became an American Jewish icon. They related so profoundly to Lincoln and his image that it seemed as though he actually *was* their relative!

On Friday, November 16, 2012, Steven Spielberg's much anticipated film *Lincoln* began playing in theaters all across North America. Spielberg engaged the Pulitzer Prize–winning playwright and screenwriter Tony Kushner to produce a screenplay for the film, which was based, in part, on Doris Kearns Goodwin's best-selling volume *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. Many critics called the film a cinematic triumph. A *New York Times* reviewer, for instance, described *Lincoln* as a "splendid" film and a "noble democratic masterpiece." Another reviewer exclaimed, "'Lincoln' makes politics exciting again," and NBCNews.com insisted that Spielberg's *Lincoln w*ill "live on long after it leaves theaters."[3]

Even before the film's national release, some commentators took note of the fact that *Lincoln* was written and directed by American Jews. According to one critic, "as imagined by Spielberg and Kushner, *Lincoln*'s Lincoln is the ultimate mensch."[4] Another reviewer wondered whether Spielberg, Kushner, and even Daniel Day-Lewis (who, according to the reviewer, is the son of a Jewish mother) had subconsciously created a movie that offered audiences "a Jewish version of history" by focusing the movie on Lincoln's efforts to persuade the U.S. House of Representatives to pass the Thirteenth Amendment, which would render the institution of slavery unconstitutional. As the reviewer observed, the story of Lincoln's determination to persuade the House of Representatives to pass the amendment was a story of "compassion, charity and the pursuit of justice—these values, which we identify as Jewish values."[5] "Has Spielberg given us a Jewish Lincoln? Or is it that Lincoln was 'Jewish' in his temperament, values and actions: consumed by social justice in his fighting a war to abolish slavery; Moses-like in leading a people to freedom; talmudic in his use of disputation among a 'team of rivals' to lead the nation; alternately morose and jovial…?"[6]

In spite of the thematic focus of this particular documentary history, some may consider it ironic that not a single Jewish character appears in Spielberg's film. That very fact has led some writers to postulate that in this respect, *Lincoln* is "a throwback to the days when Hollywood's

moguls, themselves Jewish-Americans, made movies about a seemingly non-Jewish America through the filter of their own very Jewish perspective." Critics will undoubtedly continue to debate whether or not Spielberg's and Kushner's Jewishness pushed them to focus on the story of Lincoln and the Thirteenth Amendment. Yet one fact cannot be disputed: to the present day, there are American Jews who insist that even if he was not a Jew according to *halakhah* (Jewish law), Abraham Lincoln was "most certainly a man with whom we share a common heritage."[7]

In his entertaining and touching book *Land of Lincoln*, Andrew Ferguson takes readers on a trip through contemporary America's world of Lincolniana. The book is filled with dozens of captivating anecdotes Ferguson collected as he visited an array of historical sites and encountered a cornucopia of colorful people, all of whom have some connection to the legacy of Abraham Lincoln. Ferguson concludes his book with a particularly touching encounter he had while visiting Springfield, Illinois, where Lincoln lived and where he is buried.

The story was told to Ferguson by Frank Walker, manager of the Hilton Hotel in Springfield. A few days prior to Ferguson's arrival, an elderly and very feeble man named Henri Dubin had been staying at the hotel. Dubin had difficulty getting around; he was suffering from Parkinson's disease. The old man told Walker that it had taken him nearly forty years to gather the funds he needed to make his trip to Springfield in order to pay his respects to Lincoln. The reader is then told why the aging and ill Dubin had come to Springfield:

> [Dubin] said he'd been in the concentration camp. He pulled up his sleeve when he said this. Every time he mentioned the concentration camp he pulled up his sleeve, and you could see the number there. He said he knew about Abraham Lincoln and George Washington from when he learned about them in school as a boy.
>
> …When he was in the concentration camp, and he was all alone in his cell, it was the worst time in his life and he didn't think he could go on anymore. And he said Mr. Lincoln came to him.
>
> Mr. Lincoln stood right in front of him, just like I'm standing here in front of you. And Lincoln said to him, "You never forget: All men are created equal. This is true for all men for all times. And these men who would do this thing to you, who put you here, they're no better than you. You are their equal, because *all men are created equal*. You keep remembering this, and you persevere, you'll be all right!"
>
> Well, from this time onward, the man says he knew he was going to be all right. He knew he was going to persevere. And he vowed if he ever got out of that concentration camp, he would come to Springfield, to thank Mr. Lincoln, he was so grateful. That is what he said.[8]

To say that Lincoln has been a fascinating symbol of courage and leadership to millions of people is to state the obvious. To say that Lincoln has long been a Jewish lodestar is to state a fact. As Henri Dubin's story movingly illustrates, not only have Jews long been inspirited by Lincoln's life and legacy, but they have continuously been steeled by a sense that the idea of Lincoln has the potential to lift the fallen spirits of every generation. This conviction—the belief that Lincoln is the paradigmatic exemplar of America's hope for a better world—may actually be the most enduring of all the bonds that have led American Jews to call Lincoln "Rabbi Abraham."

If Lincoln can justly be called the first typical American he can more justly be said to represent the summation of all the noblest qualities in Judaism.[9]

Notes

Acknowledgments

1. See, for example, Jacob Rader Marcus, *The American Jew, 1585–1990: A History* (Brooklyn: Carlson Publishing, 1995), vii.

2. Robert Green Ingersoll, *The Works of Robert G. Ingersoll*, Dresden ed., vol. 2 (New York: C. P. Farrell, 1900), 420.

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1. *Louisville Daily Journal*, April 23, 1865.

2. William C. Davis, *Lincoln's Men: How President Lincoln Became Father to an Army and a Nation* (New York: Free Press, 1999).

3. See Maxwell Whiteman, "Jews in the Antislavery Movement," in *The Kidnapped and the Ransomed; the Narrative of Peter and Vina Still after Forty Years of Slavery*, by Kate E. R. Pickard (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1970). For bibliographic sources on Jews and the antislavery movement in America, see Jonathan D. Sarna and Adam D. Mendelsohn, eds., *Jews and the Civil War: A Reader* (New York: New York University Press, 2010), 413–14.

4. Mary Frances Berry, "Lincoln and Civil Rights for Blacks," *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 2, no. 1 (1980), http://quod.lib.umich.edu/j/jala/2629860.0002.105?rgn=main;view=fulltext (accessed November 19, 2012).

5. Carter G. Woodson, *The Negro in Our History* (Washington, D.C.: Associated Publishers, 1922), 381.

6. Fred C. Ainsworth and Joseph W. Kirkley, eds., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, series III, vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1899), 157.

7. Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 169.

8. *Israelite*, January 23, 1863, 228.

9. Robert N. Rosen, *The Jewish Confederates* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2000), 148–53.

10. Pierce Butler, *Judah P. Benjamin* (Philadelphia: G. W. Jacobs, 1907), 193.

11. Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 11–12.

12. Butler, *Judah P. Benjamin*, 196.

13. Rosen, *Jewish Confederates*, 11–12.

14. *Louisville Daily Journal*, April 23, 1865.

15. Genesis 3:22 (Judaic Classics version).

16. Hertz, *Tribute*, 45, 111, 98.

17. Ibid., 45.

18. From Rabbi Hyman G. Enelow's prayer delivered at the dedication ceremony for the Abraham Lincoln Memorial at Hodgenville, Kentucky, on November 9, 1911. See the *Israelite*, November 16, 1911, 4.

19. Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 195.

20. Ibid., 198.

21. Ainsworth and Kirkley, eds., *War of the Rebellion*, series III, volume 1, 157.

22. Sylvia Barack Fishman, *Jewish Life and American Jewish Culture* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1999), 15.

23. As quoted in Stephen J. Whitfield, *In Search of American Jewish Culture* (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 1999), 30.

1. Immigrants and the Old Northwest: Lincoln's First Encounters with American Jewry

1. Robert P. Swierenga, "The Settlement of the Old Northwest: Ethnic Pluralism in a Featureless Plain," *Journal of the Early Republic* 9, no. 1 (Spring 1989): 73. For quote, see Emanuel Hertz, *Abraham Lincoln: A New Portrait*, 2 vols. (New York: Horace Liveright, 1931), 1:338.

2. Swierenga, “Settlement,” 74, 83.

3. Jacob Rader Marcus, *To Count a People: American Jewish Population Data, 1585–1984* (New York: University Press of America, 1990).

4. Ibid.

5. The best sources for information on Lincoln's Jewish associations are Isaac Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* (New York: Isaac Markens, 1909), and the meticulously documented Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951).

6. One of Samuel Rosenwald and Augusta Hammerslough Rosenwald's children was Julius Rosenwald (1862–1932), a man who would become a millionaire by transforming the mail-order catalog of Sears, Roebuck & Company into a national corporation.

7. According to Isaac Markens, Hammerslough claimed that he and his brothers “enjoyed very friendly relations with Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln.” See Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 22.

8. Elizabeth Porter Todd was married to the politically controversial Ninian W. Edwards (1809–89), whose father was Ninian Edwards (1775–1833), the man who served as the only governor of the Illinois Territory (1809–18). The senior Edwards was also one of the first two U.S. senators from Illinois (1818–24) and was the third governor of the state of Illinois.

9. Hammerslough also claimed that his firm in Springfield provided the black plumes that ornamented the funeral cortege that carried Lincoln's body to its final resting place in Springfield's Oak Ridge Cemetery. See Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 22.

10. Ibid., 23.

11. See Rice's obituary, *New York Times*, June 8, 1914. During the Civil War, the military “sutler” was a licensed store owner who was assigned to a regiment or military department of the Union army. The sutlers stocked items such as tobacco, liquor (for the officers), rubber ponchos, and the like for soldiers to purchase. For more on sutlers during the Civil War, see Francis Albert Lord, *Civil War Sutlers and Their Wares* (New York: T. Yoseloff, 1969).

12. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 23–24. According to Markens, Rice and Lincoln were such good friends that Rice offered to make a suit of clothing for Lincoln to wear on his inauguration in 1861. Lincoln declined the offer because, according to Rice, Lincoln had previously agreed to accept a suit of clothes from another friend in Springfield—probably Julius Hammerslough. Markens states that Rice did not receive a government appointment to serve as a sutler, but the existence of a rare 50-cent sutler's coin bearing Rice's name confirms that he did have the post, at least for a brief period of time. To see an image of the Rice sutler's coin, go to the Shapell Manuscript website, http://www.shapell.org/manuscript.aspx?3366078 (accessed August 8, 2012).

13. See Robert S. Frisch, “Salzenstein's Store: Abraham Lincoln Shopped Here,” *Chicago Jewish History* 26, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 6–7.

14. Noted Lincoln artist Lloyd Ostendorf created a drawing to commemorate the ax story. To view Salzenstein's store plainly visible in the background of Ostendorf's drawing, see the Abraham Lincoln Collectibles website, http://www.abelincoln.com/orginal/1–12.html (accessed August 8, 2012).

15. On Huttenbauer, see Emilie Jane Levy, “My Family” (history term paper, Vassar College, 1948), GF–411. Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

16. George Harding (1827–1902), a contemporary of Lincoln and a distinguished patent attorney, later recalled how shocked he was when he first set eyes on Lincoln in Cincinnati in 1855: “[He was a] tall, rawly boned, ungainly back woodsman, with coarse, ill-fitting clothing, his trousers hardly reaching his ankles.” See Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), 174.

17. It is difficult to determine precisely when this incident occurred. According to a fellow lawyer, Henry C. Whitney (1831–1905), who wrote a memoir describing his life with Lincoln on the circuit, the sitting took place in the fall of 1857. Whitney also made mention of another incident in which Lincoln sat for a poor photographer whose identity is not indicated. Although the photograph left Lincoln looking like “a wandering Jew,” the photographer displayed it proudly in his “outer showcase.” See Henry C. Whitney, *Life on the Circuit with Lincoln* (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, 1940), 50. Alschuler's 1860 photograph of Lincoln was taken only two weeks after the election. It is the first in which we see the beginnings of the president's trademark beard.

18. On Jonas and Lincoln, see Korn, *American Jewry*, 189–94. With regard to Jonas's role in the Kentucky state legislature, Korn suggests that he served as a Kentucky legislator, though he subsequently writes that Jonas's first run for elective office was when he ran for the Illinois General Assembly in 1842. For a fine description of Jonas's contributions to the Jewish community of Quincy, Illinois, see David A. Frolick, “From Strangers to Neighbors: The Children of Abraham in Quincy, Illinois,” *Journal of Illinois History* 7 (Spring 2004): 2–36.

19. Korn, *American Jewry*, 191.

20. Ibid.

21. Lincoln's name was put into nomination for the vice presidency at the Republican Party's first national convention, which took place in Philadelphia, June 17–19, 1856. See Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), and James D. Bilotta, *Race and the Rise of the Republican Party, 1848–1865* (New York: Peter Lang, 1992).

22. Korn, *American Jewry*, 191; John E. Boos, *Rare Personal Accounts of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. William R. Feeheley and Bill Snack (Cadillac, Mich.: Railsplitter Publishers, 2005), 40.

23. Boos, *Personal Accounts*, 40.

24. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 18.

25. Ibid., 191–92.

26. Korn, *American Jewry*, 226–27. On Isaac N. Morris, see the online *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress* (http://bioguide.congress.gov).

27. Korn, *American Jewry*, 228–29. Morris was among those interested in attracting Jewish communal support for political candidates. During the 1868 presidential campaign, Morris tried to reassure Jews that despite his "odious" order (General Orders No. 11), Ulysses S. Grant was a friend of the Jewish community. See Jonathan D. Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* (New York: Schocken, 2012), 76–77.

28. A fine summary of this plot to kill Lincoln appears on the website of the Central Intelligence Agency, https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/additional-publications/civil-war/SML.htm (accessed August 30, 2012).

29. Korn, *American Jewry*, 193–94.

30. See Samuel Rose-Carmack, "The Jews of Quincy, Illinois" (term paper, Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion), SC–15611, AJA.

31. Frolick, "From Strangers to Neighbors," 22. See also Korn, *American Jewry*, 193–94.

32. For Pinner quote, see Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 35. On Pinner's anti-slavery activities, see ibid., 34–36. See also Max J. Kohler, "The Jews and the American Anti-Slavery Movement," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 5, no. 5 (1897): 152–53. According to Markens, Pinner's name does not appear on the official roll of Missouri delegates to the convention. Pinner subsequently told Markens that his name had been omitted deliberately in retribution for his anti-Bates activity. (He took pride in pointing out that "by preventing the nomination of Bates he paved the way for Lincoln and made his nomination possible and his election probable.") The Houghton Library of Harvard University possesses a collection of ten interesting letters (1860–75) from Moritz Pinner to Wendell Phillips, the well-known lawyer, orator, and abolitionist. These communications prove that Pinner worked against Bates and quickly abandoned Seward in favor of Lincoln. Pinner's affinity for Lincoln as a candidate is apparent in his letters to Phillips. See http://www.math.rutgers.edu/~zeilberg/family/WPLetters.html (accessed August 8, 2012). A letter from Wendell Phillips to fellow abolitionist Cassius Marcellus Clay (1810–1903) confirms that Pinner had been appointed quartermaster on the staff of Major General Kearney. Phillips's letter, dated August 19, 1862, is part of the Cassius Marcellus Clay Collection of the Abraham Lincoln Library and Museum at Lincoln Memorial University. See transcript of the letter at http://www.math.rutgers.edu/~zeilberg/family/phillips.html (accessed August 23, 2012).

33. On Pinner and Dembitz, see Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 34–36. There is no question that Dembitz attended the Republican Convention of 1860 in Chicago, and it is reasonable to believe that he did cast his vote for Lincoln on the first ballot, while some of his fellow delegates cast their votes for William H. Seward or Benjamin Wade. Although several sources contend that Dembitz was the man who actually placed Lincoln's name in nomination for the presidency, the published minutes of the convention do not verify that claim. See *The Proceedings of the Republican National Convention, Held at Chicago, May 16, 17, 18, 1860* (Chicago, 1860).

34. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 27.

35. Simon Wolf, *The Presidents I Have Known from 1860–1918* (Washington, D.C.: Byron S. Adams Press, 1918), 4–5.

36. Ibid., 27.

37. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 25. Markens wrote that he received a letter from Dila Kohn Adler wherein she described her father's impressions of his first meeting with Lincoln. Dila was married to Dankmar Adler (1844–1900), a distinguished architect who was the son of Rabbi Liebman Adler (1812–92). On Kohn, see Hyman L. Meites, *History of the Jews of Chicago* (Chicago: Wellington Publishing, 1924), 44–45. See also Abram Vossen Goodman, "A Jewish Peddler's Diary, 1841–1842," *American Jewish Archives Journal* 3, no. 3 (1951): 81–111.

38. Joshua 1:9. Harold Holzer notes that Kohn's flag was one of several gifts Lincoln received as he prepared to assume office. See *Lincoln President-Elect: Abraham Lincoln and the Great Secession Winter 1860* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008), 187. Variants of this phrase appear throughout the Hebrew scriptures, and some historians, like Holzer, believe that Kohn cited Deuteronomy 31:5, while many others contend that Kohn used verses from the book of Joshua (either 1:7 and 9 or 10:25). For example, see Goodman, "Jewish Peddler's Diary," 81. Although an "old glass negative" photograph of the flag survived until the 1980s, the flag itself has apparently been lost. Kohn's daughter Dila spoke about this incident on several occasions. See *American Israelite*, February 13, 1908, 7. On the history of the missing flag, see Joseph Levinson, "Local Man Continues Search for American Flag Presented to Abraham Lincoln," *Chicago Jewish History* 33, no. 1 (Winter 2009): 4–5, 14.

39. For more on Otterbourg's life and career as a diplomat, see Ruth L. Benjamin, "Marcus Otterbourg, United States

Minister to Mexico, 1867," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 1, no. 32 (1931): 65–98. See also *Universal Jewish Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Otterbourg, Marcus."

40. Benjamin, "Marcus Otterbourg," 66.

41. On Schurz, see Rudolf Geiger, *Der deutsche Amerikaner: Carl Schurz—vom deutschen Revolutionär zum amerikanischen Staatsmann* (Gernsbach: Katz, 2007), and Hans L. Trefousse, *Carl Schurz: A Biography; The North's Civil War* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1998).

42. Benjamin, "Marcus Otterbourg," 66. Jonas was probably the first Jew to be appointed by the Lincoln administration. His first day as postmaster in Quincy, Illinois, was May 19, 1861. See the *Quincy Daily Herald*, May 25, 1861, 3.

43. Abram J. Dittenhoefer, *How We Elected Lincoln: Personal Recollections* (1916; repr., Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 15.

44. Ibid., 37.

45. Ibid., 92–94, 97.

46. Ibid., 45–74, for details on Dittenhoefer's visits to the White House during Lincoln's first term in office.

47. Kaufmann immigrated to the United States from Hesse Darmstadt in 1848. A lawyer and an intellectual, Kaufmann quickly became a prominent figure in New York. According to Markens, Lincoln wanted to appoint Kaufmann the U.S. ambassador to Italy, but Kaufmann declined the offer. See Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 32–33.

48. Dittenhoefer, *How We Elected Lincoln*, 4.

49. *Israelite*, February 15, 1861, 202.

50. Lincoln's inaugural address, March 4, 1861. See www.avalon.law.yale.edu/19th_century/lincoln1.asp (accessed September 10, 2012).

51. *Israelite*, April 5, 1861, 317.

52. One of the most extensive rosters of Lincoln's Jewish friends appeared in a 1940 newspaper article titled "Abraham Lincoln's Many Friends in the B'nai Brith." It is interesting to note that this article also mentions the names of politicians such as Lorenzo Brentano (1813–91) and Philip Dorscheimer (1797–1868) who may have been members of B'nai B'rith but who did not openly identify themselves as Jews. *Jewish Advocate*, February 9, 1940, 1.

53. On Wolf, see Esther L. Panitz, *Simon Wolf: Private Conscience and Public Image* (Rutherford, London: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1987). See also Sarna, *General Grant*, 50–55. On Wolf's relationships with U.S. presidents, see Wolf, *Presidents I Have Known*.

54. This story comes from a *Champaign News-Gazette* article dated Thursday, February 12, 1959. Courtesy Office of the Publisher, the News-Gazette.

55. Transcription obtained from Champaign, Illinois County Archives/Urbana Free Library, November 19, 2007.

56. The Northern Cross Railroad from Meredosia to Jacksonville, later extended to Springfield, was the first rail route in Illinois over which a locomotive was operated.

57. Anna Paschall Hannum, ed., *A Quaker Forty-Niner: The Adventures of Charles Edward Pancoast in the American Frontier* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1930), 46–48.

58. All four letters reproduced here are available at Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/alhtml/alhome.html (accessed January 7, 2013).

59. Wolf, *Presidents I Have Known*, 5–7.

60. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 33–34.

61. Jonathan Young Scammon was a prominent Chicago lawyer, banker, and newspaperman. Scammon's contact with Lincoln may be traced back to 1839, when there was a legal exchange between the two men. Over the years, Lincoln and Scammon became good friends. Robert Todd, Lincoln's son, apprenticed with Scammon and in 1865 established a legal practice with Scammon's son, Charles. Scammon was one of those selected to serve as a pallbearer for President Lincoln when the funeral cortege arrived in Chicago.

62. Little is known about Abraham S. Cohen. He was evidently a talented correspondent who specialized in reporting on law stories. See obituaries found in the *New York Times*, December 29, 1867, and *New York Evening Express*, December 28, 1867.

63. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 25–26.

64. From Philip Goodman, ed., *Lincoln's Birthday: Program Material for Jewish Groups* (New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, 1953), 30–31. Courtesy JWB Jewish Chaplains Council.

65. George Henry Preble, *History of the Flag of the United States of America, and of the Naval and Yacht-Club Signals, Seals, and Arms, and Principal National Songs of the United States, with a Chronicle of the Symbols, Standards, Banners, and Flags of Ancient and Modern Nations* (Boston: A. Williams and Company, 1880), 406.

66. Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier, and Citizen*, ed. Louis Edward Levy (New York: Levytype

Company, 1895), 427–28. According to Wolf, the *Reform Advocate* printed excerpts from McKinley's Ottawa speech on July 13, 1895.

67. See Richard S. Lambert, *For the Time Is at Hand: An Account of the Prophesies of Henry Wentworth Monk* (New York: Andrew Melrose, 1947), 81–82.

68. Regarding Mary Todd Lincoln's reference to this matter, see Justin G. Turner and Linda Levitt Turner, *Mary Todd Lincoln: Her Life and Letters* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1972), 218. See also Lester I. Vogel, *To See a Promised Land: Americans and the Holy Land in the Nineteenth Century* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1993), 41. In an alternative version of this same recollection, Lincoln whispered his desire to visit Jerusalem in his wife's ear only moments before John Wilkes Booth entered the presidential box at Ford's Theatre on April 14, 1865. See Dorothy Meserve Kunhardt and Philip B. Kunhardt, Jr., *Twenty Days* (Secaucus, N.J.: Castle Books, 1965), 29. In 1866, Mary Todd Lincoln wrote that her husband "appeared to anticipate much pleasure, from a visit to Palestine," although he was at least now "rejoicing in the presence of his Saviour, and was in the midst of the Heavenly Jerusalem." See Mary Todd Lincoln's letter to James Smith, December 17, 1866, quoted in Turner and Turner, *Mary Todd Lincoln*, 400.

69. Lambert, *For the Time Is at Hand*, 81–82.

70. Solomons's niece, Rachel Rosalie Phillips, lived with her uncle Adolphus during this period, and her diary preserves reminiscences of visiting the White House with Solomons and meeting Lincoln personally. A copy of Rachel Phillips's diary is located in the David M. Klein Collection, MS 695, box 1, folder 2, AJA.

71. On Alexander Gardner, see Mark D. Katz, *Witness to an Era: The Life and Photographs of Alexander Gardner* (New York: Viking Studio, 1990).

72. Although Solomons's partner was a photographer named Franklin Philp (1826–87), the original document does indeed refer to the firm as "Philip and Solomons." We must assume this is a typographical error in the original.

73. Perhaps the most famous poses from that session is the "cracked glass" photograph of Abraham Lincoln. The crack comes from the original negative, which was broken and discarded back in 1865. The "cracked glass" photo with its disturbing flaw has often been said to have betokened the president's impending doom and remains one of most recognizable photographs of the sixteenth president.

74. *American Hebrew* 84, no. 15 (February 12, 1909).

2. "The Most Favored Family Visitor at the White House": The Enigmatic Relationship between Lincoln and Isachar Zacharie, M.D.

1. Zacharie's first name appears with many different spellings in the documents, including Issachar, Issacher, Isaac, Issachor and Isachar.

2. Bertram Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 194.

3. For the most expansive treatments of Zacharie, see ibid., 194–202, 230–39, and Charles M. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie: Lincoln's Chiropodist," *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 43, no. 2 (December 1953): 71–126.

4. Like countless English children who were born to modest means during the Victorian era, Zacharie had little formal education and was compelled to search for a useful trade at a very young age. For a helpful documentation of Zacharie's apprenticeships in England, see Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 72–74. Segal notes that Zacharie established a friendship with the distinguished American surgeon Valentine Mott (1785–1865). Zacharie dedicates his book on chiropody to Mott, who taught at Columbia College (which became Columbia University in 1857) and, from 1834 to 1841, studied and taught in Europe. In 1841, Mott returned to Columbia, and the two men might well have become acquainted. See Ira M. Rutkow, *History of Surgery in the United States, 1775–1900* (San Francisco: Norman Publishing, 1988). Segal also notes that in Zacharie's scrapbook there was a letter of introduction attesting to his having studied with the distinguished British surgeon Sir Astley Cooper (1868–1941). See reference to Zacharie's "album," below (n. 7). Segal seems to doubt these references because Zacharie would have been so very young at the time, but children commonly went to work at the unthinkable age of five or six during the Victorian era. See Sally Mitchell, *Daily Life in Victorian England* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1996), 43–47. On the history of podiatry and chiropody, see the introductory chapter of David R. Tollafield and Linda M. Merriman, *Clinical Skills in Treating the Foot* (London: Churchill/Livingstone, 1997), 1–6.

5. See Zacharie's advertisement in the *New York Times*, February 11, 1858, wherein it states: "Corns, Bunions, Club Nails, Nails penetrating the flesh, extracted in five minutes, without pain, so that the boot can be worn immediately without the least inconvenience to the patient by Dr. Zacharie, Surgeon Chiropodist. No. 760 Broadway."

6. On Zacharie's peregrinations, see Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 74–76. Zacharie's letters of reference suggest that the young foot doctor lived in several American cities before opening a New York office for his podiatry business in 1858. In a statement Zacharie made in an 1881 British Census Return, his wife gave birth to a daughter in California in 1855. His name is also found in the records of Congregation Mickve Israel of Savannah, Georgia. See Rabbi Saul J. Rubin, *Third to None: The Saga of Savannah Jewry 1733–1983* (Savannah: Congregation Mickve Israel, 1983), 129. Zacharie may have opened a grocery business in 1857, but this fact does not support the implication that he was a professional charlatan. At the age of twenty-eight or twenty-

nine, he would have been a fairly young man, and the many surviving letters of reference from the late 1840s testify to the fact that Zacharie was a skilled practitioner of podiatric technique.

7. An album containing a letter of reference written by President Lincoln and signed by him and Secretary of State William H. Seward (on September 23, 1862) together with other testimonials to Zacharie's professional abilities (dating from 1846 to 1872), with a photograph of Dr. Zacharie, by Turner & Killick, art photographers of Islington, England, n.d., was being advertised online, with a detailed description, by the famed auctioneers Christie's (Sale 9364, Lot 92). See http://www.christies.com/LotFinder/lot_details.aspx?intObjectID=1794852 (accessed May 19, 2011).

8. In a newspaper article detailing Zacharie's proposal, the *New York Herald*'s correspondent could not refrain from making a grimacing pun: Zacharie, he wrote, wanted to provide the Union army with "a corps of corn doctors, or foot soldiers." See *New York Herald*, October 3, 1862, as quoted in Korn, *American Jewry*, 194.

9. *New York Herald*, October 3, 1862.

10. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 90. On George S. Denison, see James Marten, "The Making of a Carpetbagger: George S. Denison and the South, 1854–1866," *Louisiana History: The Journal of the Louisiana Historical Association* 34, no. 2 (Spring 1993): 133–60.

11. Korn, *American Jewry*, 231, 235.

12. Ibid., 236–39.

13. For quotes, see ibid., 194, 201.

14. On the Emancipation Proclamation, see John Hope Franklin, *The Emancipation Proclamation* (1963; repr., Wheeling, Ill.: Harlan Davidson, 1995).

15. Korn, *American Jewry*, 195.

16. Evidently, some government figures were discussing the idea of a negotiated peace with the Confederacy at this same time. For more on this subject, see Fred H. Harrington, "A Peace Mission of 1863," *American Historical Review* 46 (1940): 76–86.

17. A copy of Stanton's order was reprinted in the *New York Times*, January 14, 1896.

18. Raymond H. Banks, *The King of Louisiana, 1862–1865, and Other Government Work: A Biography of Major General Nathaniel Prentice Banks* (Las Vegas: R. H. Banks, 2005); Stephen A. Dupree, *Planting the Union Flag in Texas: The Campaigns of Major General Nathaniel P. Banks in the West* (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2008); Fred Harvey Harrington, *Fighting Politician: Major General N. P. Banks* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1948); James G. Hollandsworth, *Pretense of Glory: The Life of General Nathaniel P. Banks* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1998).

19. Isachar Zacharie to William H. Seward, November 24, 1862, SC-13337, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio. Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. It may very well have been Banks who first introduced Secretary of State Seward to his capable foot doctor.

20. Nathaniel P. Banks to Isaac Zacharie, January 1, 1863, Bertram W. Korn Collection, MS 99, box 34, folder 9, AJA.

21. Korn, *American Jewry*, 196–97.

22. Isachar Zacharie to Abraham Lincoln, April 25, 1863, appendix C, ibid., 234.

23. Isachar Zacharie to Abraham Lincoln, February 19, 1863, ibid., 231.

24. Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 118–19.

25. *New York Herald*, October 21, 1863.

26. See Harrington, "Peace Mission of 1863."

27. Korn, *American Jewry*, 233.

28. *New York Herald*, October 21, 1863.

29. See Robert L. Kerby, *The Confederate Invasion of New Mexico and Arizona* (Tucson: Westernlore Press, 1958); Andrew E. Masich, *The Civil War in Arizona: The Story of the California Volunteers, 1861–1865* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006); and Andrew Rolle, *The Lost Cause: The Confederate Exodus to Mexico* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1965).

30. Korn, *American Jewry*, 198.

31. Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, September 8, 1863, and Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, July 30, 1863, as cited in Korn, *American Jewry*, 196.

32. That Zacharie was surprised to encounter Benjamin at the meeting can be discerned from the fact that he referred to this encounter as an "unexpected meeting" in the letter he wrote to Benjamin the following day. See Isachar Zacharie to Judah P. Benjamin, September 28, 1863. Original copy of the letter can be found in the domestic correspondence of the Confederate Department of State, box B, file 1, series F, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

33. Ibid.

34. Ibid.

35. Ibid.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, October 24, 1863, cited in Korn, *American Jewry*, 198.

40. Ibid., 238.

41. Francis Lieber, *Lincoln or McClellan: Appeal to the Germans of America* (New York: Loyal Publication Society, 1864), 4. On Lieber's career, see Lewis R. Harley, *Francis Lieber: His Life and Political Philosophy* (Clark, N.J.: Lawbook Exchange, 2003), and Frank B. Freidel, *Francis Lieber, Nineteenth-Century Liberal* (Clark, N.J.: Lawbook Exchange, 2003).

42. Korn, *American Jewry*, 200. For Lewis quote, see Howard S. Stein, "Samuel A. Lewis: Nineteenth-Century Jewish American Leader" (term paper, Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, January 7, 2008), 15, SC-15490, AJA.

43. For a helpful summary of the historical evolution of American Jews participating qua Jews in the political arena, see Jonathan D. Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* (New York: Schocken, 2012), 69–79.

44. Myer S. Isaacs to Abraham Lincoln, October 26, 1864, cited from "From Haven to Home: 350 Years of Jewish Life in America," Library of Congress, http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/haven-home.html (accessed August 18, 2012).

45. Korn, *American Jewry*, 239.

46. Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, July 31, 1872, in the Nathaniel P. Banks Papers, box 51, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. This letter also appeared in *The Nation*, August 8, 1872, p. 82, and in the *New York Daily Tribune*, August 2, 1872.

47. *New York Times*, January 14, 1896.

48. According to the website of the Order of the Secret Monitor, Zacharie "joined Bon Accord Mark Lodge in 1882 where he met a number of other brethren who had received the Secret Monitor degree during their travels." On May 5, 1887, a number of brethren met at Dr. Zacharie's house and resolved to form a Conclave of Secret Monitors, to be called the Alfred Meadows Conclave, after the well-known surgeon. Zacharie was nominated as the first Supreme Ruler. A few weeks later, the first Grand Council of the Order was formed on June 17, 1887, with Zacharie nominated as the first Grand Supreme Ruler. It held its first meeting the following month (July 2) when it was resolved that the governing body be styled "*The Grand Council of the Order of the Secret Monitor for the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Colonies and Dependencies of the British Crown*." See http://www.orderofthesecretmonitor.co.uk/News_27.html (accessed May 19, 2011).

49. With the help of census records, a copy of his death certificate, and a photo of his tombstone, we know that Zacharie died on September 16, 1900, at the age of seventy-three. We may therefore surmise that he was born in 1827. There has been much confusion and misinformation about Zacharie's dates of birth and death. His date of death is often incorrectly said to be 1897. Some sources say he was born in 1820; others say 1825. Perhaps this is because, in 1864, the *New York Times* claimed that Zacharie was between forty and forty-five years old. Although most biographical sketches insist that Zacharie was born in England and immigrated to the United States in the 1840s, one source contends he was born in South Carolina. See the *New York Times*, September 23, 1864.

50. In spite of Zacharie's idiosyncratic personality, it is difficult to believe that so many sophisticated and discerning men like Lincoln, Banks, Seward, and Stanton would have all been taken in by a thoroughgoing charlatan. Clearly the president's podiatrist had a compelling side as well—qualities that Lincoln obviously found trustworthy. See Korn, *American Jewry*, 201–2. See also Segal, "Isachar Zacharie," 126.

51. Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, December 28, 1863, Bertram W. Korn Collection, MS 99, box 34, folder 9, AJA.

52. Korn, *American Jewry*, 201–2; Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, December 28, 1863, MS 99, box 34, folder 9, AJA.

53. Korn, *American Jewry*, 195.

54. *New York Herald*, October 3, 1862.

55. William Cornell Jewett (1823–93), also known as "Colorado" Jewett, was a well-known publicist and outspoken peace advocate.

56. This is a reference to Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles (1802–78).

57. *New York Herald*, October 21, 1863.

58. Korn, *American Jewry*, 194–202, 230–39.

59. David Dixon Porter (1813–91) was a distinguished naval hero. David Glasgow Farragut (1801–70) was the first rear admiral, vice admiral, and admiral in the U.S. Navy. The two men were brothers by adoption—Porter's father had adopted Farragut when he was a young man—and the two brothers fought together during the Civil War.

60. SC-13337, AJA.

61. Zacharie wrote to Benjamin the following day and referred to their encounter as an “unexpected meeting.” Isachar Zacharie to Judah P. Benjamin, September 28, 1863, domestic correspondence of the Confederate Department of State, Library of Congress.

62. Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, October 9, 1863, SC-13335, AJA.

63. Isachar Zacharie to Judah P. Benjamin, September 28, 1863, domestic correspondence of the Confederate Department of State, Library of Congress.

64. Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, October 9, 1863, SC-13335, AJA. The Willard Hotel, located at 1401–09 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, has had a unique niche in the history of Washington, D.C., and the nation. See “A National Register of Historic Places in Washington, D.C.,” http://www.nps.gov/nr/travel/wash/dc36.htm (accessed August 30, 2012).

65. Isachar Zacharie to Nathaniel P. Banks, October 16, 1863, SC-13335, AJA.

66. Korn, *American Jewry*, 237.

67. Abraham Lincoln, *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, ed. Roy P. Basler, vol. 8 (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 12 (hereafter *Collected Works*).

68. Korn, *American Jewry*, 237.

69. *The World: New York*, Saturday, September 24, 1864.

70. Samuel A. Lewis to Abraham Lincoln, Wednesday, October 26, 1864 (meeting with Jewish committee), Abraham Lincoln Papers, series 1, General Correspondence, 1833–1916, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

71. On Myer S. Isaacs, see obituary, *New York Times*, May 25, 1904.

72. Myer Isaacs to Abraham Lincoln, October 26, 1864, available at Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/alhtml/alhome.html (accessed January 3, 2012).

73. See Edwin Stanton's response to President Lincoln's January 25, 1865, request, dated the same day, in the Abraham Lincoln Collection at the Library of Congress as cited on “Antietam on the Web,” http://aotw.org/officers.php?officer_id=371 (accessed August 30, 2012).

74. Naphtali J. Rubinger, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* (New York: Jonathan David Publishers, 1962), 37–38.

75. Abraham Lincoln to Edwin M. Stanton, January 25, 1865, *Collected Works*, 8:238.

76. Rubinger, *Lincoln and the Jews*, 37–38.

77. Kellogg served as a representative from Connecticut in the U.S. House of Representatives from 1869 to 1875.

78. “Freaks of Legislation: Odd Bills and Reports by Congressional Committees,” *New York Times*, January 14, 1896, 10.

3. Lincoln and the Chaplaincy Controversy

1. The quote “justice and liberality” comes from Rabbi Isaac Leeser's eulogy on Lincoln. See Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 135.

2. For the most complete and detailed history of both the “chaplaincy controversy” and General Grant's Orders No. 11 expelling the Jews from the Military Department of Tennessee, see Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 56–97, 121–55.

3. Ibid., 57.

4. There are many gaps in our knowledge of Allen's activities after he resigned from his role as an army chaplain. After the Civil War, he moved to New York City, where he married Julia Spanier in 1866. Subsequently, Allen became the director of Hebrew studies at the Talmud Torah (Hebrew School) of New York's Congregation Shearith Israel. In 1873, Allen immigrated to Germany in order to be with his wife's family in Hannover, Prussia. A copy of a letter from Allen to a friend in the United States is located in the American Jewish Archives in Cincinnati, Ohio. Allen described his deepening identification with traditional Jewish practice and his satisfaction with the religious devotion of Hannover Jewry. “Our Holy Religion is observed by our people here as it was in times gone by,” he wrote, “when no reforms had crept in to mar the observance of our rites and ceremonies.” He attributed his religious transformation to the influence of his wife's uncle, the *Landesrabbiner* (chief rabbi) of Hannover Province. Allen kept a journal while he was functioning as a chaplain in September 1861. This diary was transcribed by David de Sola Pool, “The Diary of Chaplain Michael M. Allen, September, 1861,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 39, no. 2 (December 1949): 177–82. Allen died on May 19, 1907, and is buried at the Jewish cemetery, An der Strangriede, in Hannover. For additional information on the first Jew to serve as a U.S. Army chaplain, see also “Michael Mitchell Allen Chaplain, ‘Cameron Dragoons’” on the website of the Jewish-American History Foundation, http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/mmallen.htm (accessed August 20, 2012).

5. Korn, *American Jewry*, 58–60. Very little is known about Colonel Max Friedman, who played an important role in this episode. He was born in Nuremberg, immigrated to the United States, and settled in Philadelphia. After the conclusion of the Civil War, Friedman moved to New York, where he worked as a successful Wall Street broker. See obituary, *New York Times*,

February 12, 1900, 7. On Friedman and the Sixty-Fifth Regiment, see Samuel P. Bates (Samuel Penniman), *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861–1865* (Harrisburg: B. Singerly, 1869–71), 568, 577.

6. For the most detailed reconstruction of Fischel's biography, see Jonathan Waxman, "Arnold Fischel: 'Unsung Hero' in American Israel," *American Jewish Historical Quarterly* 60, no. 4 (June 1971): 325–43.

7. Ibid., 325–38.

8. Korn, *American Jewry*, 62–67.

9. For quote, see ibid., 65.

10. *Israelite*, November 29, 1861, 172.

11. Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004), 119–20.

12. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites, officially organized in 1859, was headquartered in New York. The sensational case of Edgardo Mortara, which first began attracting international attention in 1858, provided an impetus for the establishment of this board. Mortara was an Italian Jewish boy who was forcibly removed from his parents' home by papal authorities after his family's maid announced that she had supervised the child's conversion to Catholicism some years earlier. The Board of Delegates of American Israelites was the first successful attempt to create a national Jewish organization that would seek to defend the civil and political rights of Jews in America and abroad.

13. Board of Delegates of American Israelites Minute Book, 1859–70, SC-1194, box 952, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio (original at the American Jewish Historical Society, New York). Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. A prominent report on the activities of the Board of Delegates appeared in the *New York Times*, December 6, 1861, 5.

14. For quote, see Korn, *American Jewry*, 69.

15. Ibid., 69–70. Although the original copy of Lincoln's memorandum to Fischel dated December 13, 1861, seems to have been lost, Lincoln's note promising he will take steps to correct the problem is quoted in its entirety in the *Jewish Messenger*, December 27, 1861, 101.

16. Korn, *American Jewry*, 70.

17. Isaac M. Wise cites the *Presbyter* in the *Israelite*, March 28, 1862, 308. After quoting the *Presbyter*'s point of view, Wise lambastes the paper's editor with three colorful columns of bitter recriminations condemning the *Presbyter*'s point of view.

18. Waxman, "Arnold Fischel," 341–43.

19. Korn, *American Jewry*, 70–72.

20. Ibid., 341.

21. According to Lance J. Sussman, Leeser's biographer, Leeser was the "Secretary and Founder" of the Philadelphia Board of Rabbis. See Sussman, *Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995), 224. For an electronic scan and text of Leeser's letter to Lincoln, see http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/loc/Leeser.html (accessed August 25, 2012).

22. Isaac Leeser to Abraham Lincoln, August 21, 1862, Library of Congress, www.loc.gov/exhibits/haventohome/haven-challenges.html. One can view the text of this, as well as the written exchange between Hay and Hammond inscribed on the back of the letter, on the website of the Jewish Virtual Library, http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/loc/Leeser.html (accessed August 25, 2012). For more information on Frankel and his appointment, see Korn, *American Jewry*, 77–80.

23. Even though Jacob Frankel was a cantor (hazan) and did not possess a formal certificate of rabbinical ordination (*hasmakhah*), he did officially hold the office of "rabbi" at Rodeph Shalom Congregation in Philadelphia. Being an occupant of the rabbinical office at the Philadelphia congregation evidently made Frankel a rabbi in the eyes of the federal government. For more information on Frankel and his appointment, see Korn, *American Jewry*, 77–80. For a colorful description of Frankel's funeral and a fine description of his character, see *American Israelite*, January 21, 1887, 9.

24. Fischel's name appears in a variety of spellings, including "Fischell" and "Fishell." Unless citing a direct quotation—as in the case of this document—we will consistently use the commonly accepted spelling: Fischel.

25. This name was commonly spelled "Bene Yeshurun" during the nineteenth century. At some point in the twentieth century, the congregation adopted a variant spelling, "B'nai Yeshurun," which it has used to the present day.

26. Conkling was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, having been elected to the 37th Congress. He held his seat from March 4, 1861, to March 3, 1863.

27. Board of Delegates of American Israelites Minute Book, 1859–70, SC-1194, box 952, AJA (original at the American Jewish Historical Society, New York).

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid., SC-1194–1195, AJA (original at the American Jewish Historical Society, New York).

30. On E. Delafield Smith, see obituary in the *New York Times*, April 13, 1878.

31. *Lincoln and the Jews, Portfolio No. 1: Facsimiles of Notable Documents in American Jewish History* (Washington:

Klutznick Exhibit Hall of B'nai B'rith, 1968), courtesy of the AJA.

32. See http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/af121561.html (accessed January 7, 2013). All original letters are at the American Jewish Historical Society, New York. Fischel copied both of these letters verbatim in his December 1861 letter to Henry Hart, president of the Board of Delegates of American Israelites. The original Delafield Smith letter survived, but the text of the Grinnell letter comes from Fischel's letter to Hart. Fischel apparently read Grinnell's signature as “M. A. Grinnell” instead of “M. H. Grinnell.”

33. Henry I. Hart was a prominent New York businessman and Jewish communal leader. His premature death at the age of forty-seven may explain why his contributions to Jewish communal life have been so little noted. See obituary in the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate*, 5624/1863, 238–39, 285–86. See also *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 12 (1904): 136.

34. Myer S. Isaacs, an officer of the BODAI, subsequently published a detailed account of Fischel's activities, including the significant wording of Lincoln's memorandum to Fischel dated December 15, 1861, in his paper, the *Jewish Messenger*, December 27, 1861, 101.

35. See http://www.jewish-history.com/civilwar/fischel.htm. All original letters are at the American Jewish Historical Society, New York.

36. Lincoln's personal secretary John Hay expressed these sentiments and assured Leeser that the president would make such an appointment. See John Hay to Isaac Leeser, September 8, 1862, in Korn, *American Jewry*, 77.

37. The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, series 1, General Correspondence, 1833–1916, http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/malquery.html (accessed September 8, 2012).

38. Adding insult to injury, the BODAI failed to fully recompense Fischel for his efforts, as it had pledged. See Korn, *American Jewry*, 75–77, 80–81. For quote, see p. 72.

39. Copy in SC-4610, AJA. Original found in the Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, series 1, General Correspondence, 1833–1916.

4. Lincoln and the Revocation of General Orders No. 11

1. The famous order is sometimes confusingly labeled “General Orders No. 12.” Historian Jonathan D. Sarna has explained the numerical confusion:

> This is the “official text” of the order, issued at Grant's field headquarters in Holly Springs and preserved in the Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Series I, vol. 17, Part II, 424. Another text, issued from Grant's department headquarters at Oxford, Mississippi, is designated “General Orders No. 12” and carries slightly different wording. Still a third text, with yet other minor differences in wording, was published in the *New York Herald*, January 5, 1863. The discrepancy in numbering was caused by the discovery that a completely unrelated “General Orders No. 11” was issued by the Department of the Tennessee at La Grange, TN on November 26 [1862]. While the text issued at Oxford therefore corrected the numbering and slightly improved the language of the order, “General Orders No. 11” remained the name by which the order was known. For the corrected text issued at Oxford, see John Y. Simon, ed., *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, vol. 7 (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1979), 50. Note that the official text properly uses the plural form (“General Orders”), since generals inevitably issued many orders. Unofficially, though, the singular form, “General Order No. 11,” was common.

See Sarna, *When General Grant Expelled the Jews* (New York: Schocken, 2012), 7–8.

2. Sarna, *General Grant*, constitutes the most expansive account of this entire incident as well as its effect on Grant's ongoing relationship with the Jewish community. Sarna reproduces the basic text of the order on p. 7. For another fine treatment of this incident, see Stephen V. Ash, “Civil War Exodus: The Jews and Grant's General Order No. 11,” *Historian* 44, no. 4 (August 1982): 505–23. See also Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 121–55. Isaac Markens also provides a variety of primary source material, though regrettably without notation; see *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* (New York: Isaac Markens, 1909), 10–16. A photograph of one of the actual telegrams containing this order appears in Sarna, *General Grant*, 9.

3. For quote, see Korn, *American Jewry*, 122.

4. On the problem of illegal trade, see Ash, “Civil War Exodus,” 505–10. See also Korn, *American Jewry*, 121–22.

5. On the use of the word “Jew” during the Civil War era, see James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 622 n. 61.

6. For an elucidation of these various explanations, see Sarna, *General Grant*, 45–48. See also Ash, “Civil War Exodus,” 508–10. Isaac M. Wise blamed the order on Grant's military colleagues who, he asserted, wanted to rid themselves of Jewish competition as traders. See the *Israelite*, January 2, 1863, 202.

7. Sarna concluded that the “most likely” explanation for the issuance of this order pertains to Grant's displaced anger at his father. See *General Grant*, 47–48. Although there is absolutely no question that Grant drank alcohol throughout his adult life,

most modern historians insist that there is no convincing evidence that Grant's drinking was either habitual or problematic. Still, as one historian noted, “there is plenty of evidence that Grant did drink moderately.” See Charles G. Ellington, *The Trial of U. S. Grant: The Pacific Coast Years, 1852–1854* (Glendale, Calif.: A.H. Clark, 1987), 35. A historian of bourbon has written, “[Grant] liked liquor and a little whisky showed on him.” See Gerald Carson, *The Social History of Bourbon: An Unhurried Account of Our Star-Spangled American Drink* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), 75.

8. General Ulysses S. Grant to Assistant Secretary of War Christopher Parsons Wolcott, December 17, 1862, in Robert N. Scott, ed., *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (hereafter *Official Records*), series I, vol. 17, part 2 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1902), 421–22.

9. The full text of this letter from Ulysses S. Grant to Congressman I. N. Morris of Illinois, September 14, 1868, was published in the *New York Times*, November 30, 1868. For another rare and clearly obsequious comment relating to the Jews by Grant, see also Korn, *American Jewry*, 144. On Grant's relationship with American Jewry, see Sarna, *General Grant*.

10. Sarna, *General Grant*, 8–9, 18–20; *Israelite*, January 23, 1863, 229.

11. *Israelite*, January 2, 1863; *Jewish Messenger*, January 9, 1863; *Jewish Record*, January 13, 1863.

12. For quote, see Ash, “Civil War Exodus,” 515.

13. *Jewish Record*, January 13, 1863. Kaskel's name appears in documents under many different spellings, including Ceasar J. Kaskel, Cesar Kaskell, and Cesar F. Kaskell. His brother Julius's name, too, has been misspelled in published documents as J. W. Kaswell. According to their obituaries in the *New York Times*, the names were spelled Cesar J. Kaskel and Julius W. Kaskel.

14. On Cesar J. Kaskel, see Korn, *American Jewry*, 124–25, 128. On Julius W.'s time in Burlington, Iowa, see Augustine M. Antrobus, *History of Des Moines County Iowa and its People* (Chicago: S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1915), 115, 191. On the Kaskels in Leadville, see Mitchell A. Levin, *This Day…in Jewish History: A Collection of Jewish History and Current Jewish Events*, wherein it says that on May 19, 1882, “the Leadville, CO Jewish community suffered a financial loss when a building owned by New Yorkers Caesar J. Kaskel and Jacob Michaelis burned. The building was the home to a clothing store managed by Julius W. Kaskel.” See http://thisdayinjewishhistory.blogspot.com/2012/05/this-day-may-19-in-jewish-history-by.html (accessed August 24, 2012). For an interesting description of their clothing store in New York, see “What Men Will Wear: Masculine Fashions as Exemplified at Kaskel & Kaskel's Store,” *New York Times*, October 9, 1885, 8. For notice of Cesar J.'s death, see *New York Times*, April 1, 1892, 5; for Julius W., see *New York Times*, March 9, 1909, 9.

15. See Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 12.

16. For text of the telegram, see *Official Records*, series I, vol. 17, part 2, 506.

17. This information comes from Isaac M. Wise; see the *Israelite*, January 16, 1863, 218.

18. Daniel Wolf (affectionately known as “Uncle Dan” Wolf) was considered a Jewish pioneer of Cincinnati. He immigrated to Cincinnati from present-day Germany when he was twelve years old, and by the time of the Civil War he was a leader in the Jewish community. He was elected several times to the Cincinnati city council, and he served one term in the Ohio State Legislature (1884–86). For more on Wolf's career, see his obituary in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, February 14, 1904, A8.

19. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 12. On Congressman Gurley, see *Biographical Dictionary of the United States Congress*, http://bioguide.congress.gov (accessed August 28, 2012).

20. According to Isaac M. Wise in an editorial describing Kaskel's trip to Washington, D.C., “Mr. Kaskel arrived in Washington, January 3, and was introduced to the President.” See the *Israelite*, January 16, 1863, 218. Isaac Markens, who clearly had been in personal communication with Cesar's brother, Julius W., about this episode, confirms the meeting took place on the eve of January 3—“at dusk.” See Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 12–13. The *Lincoln Log*, however, which chronicles every day in Lincoln's life, contends the visit took place on Sunday morning, January 4. See *The Lincoln Log: A Daily Chronology of the Life of Abraham Lincoln*, http://www.thelincolnlog.org/view (accessed August 30, 2012).

21. Korn, *American Jewry*, 125.

22. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 13.

23. Korn, *American Jewry*, 125.

24. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 13.

25. Korn, *American Jewry*, 275.

26. Ibid., 126.

27. Sarna, *General Grant*, 24–27.

28. *Israelite*, January 16, 1863, 218.

29. *Israelite*, January 23, 1863, 228.

30. Ash's essay “Civil War Exodus” argues this point persuasively. See pp. 522–23.

31. *Israelite*, January 2, 1863, 202. See also Ash, “Civil War Exodus.”

32. *Israelite*, January 16, 1863, 218.

33. “Expulsion of Jews from General Grant's Department—The Circumstances Stated and Documents Quoted,” *Jewish*

Record, December 30, 1862.

34. Colonel John Van Deusen Du Bois composed an order similar to Grant's General Orders No. 11 several weeks earlier. Wise took note of this incident in his paper. See also Korn, *American Jewry*, 139–40.

35. This is the only known document that refers to Grant's order as No. 29. See n. 1 above for further explanation.

36. William M. Wiles was the provost marshal general, Fourteenth Army Corps, Nashville, Tenn. Rosecrans was his commanding officer.

37. William Starke Rosecrans (1819–98) was a graduate of West Point and rose to prominence during the first years of the Civil War. His military career came to a sudden end following his disastrous defeat at the Battle of Chickamauga in 1863. Rosecrans was known to quarrel with his superiors, including Grant and Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. See Peter Cozzens, *This Terrible Sound: The Battle of Chickamauga* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992).

38. *Israelite*, January 2, 1863, 202.

39. This telegram has the Kaskel brothers' name spelled with two *l*s: Kaskell (see note 13 above). *War of the Rebellion*, series I, vol. 17, part 2, 506.

40. In addition to serving as president of the B'nai B'rith Lodge, Henry Kuttner also served as the rabbi of St. Louis's Beth El Congregation. Hoffman was a local businessman.

41. For a description of this incident, see Korn, *American Jewry*, 126, who aptly reflected, "Was there no one in Washington who objected to an order which 'proscribed an entire religious class' except the President?"

42. St. Louis B'nai B'rith to Abraham Lincoln, Monday, January 5, 1863 (resolution protesting Grant's order expelling Jews), Abraham Lincoln Papers, series 1, General Correspondence, 1833–1916, Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

43. *New York Times*, January 5, 1863, 5.

44. This name also appears as Goldschmit.

45. *Israelite*, January 9, 1863.

46. *Israelite*, January 16, 1863, 218.

47. *Israelite*, January 23, 1863, 228.

48. *New York Times*, January 18, 1863, 4.

49. Wise errs here. Low was from San Francisco, and he was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives from June 3, 1862, to March 3, 1863.

50. *Israelite*, February 28, 1868, 4.

5. Lincoln and the Movement to Christianize the U.S. Constitution

1. Steven Keith Green, "The National Reform Association and the Religious Amendments to the Constitution, 1864–1876" (master's thesis, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1987), 14. See also Isaac Kramnick and R. Laurence Moore, *The Godless Constitution: The Case against Religious Correctness* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1997), 145–47.

2. Isaac Leeser read about Sumner's actions on behalf of the Covenanters on January 10, 1861. See the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* 18, no. 43 (January 17, 1861): 1.

3. Ibid.

4. Jefferson's letter to the Danbury Baptists. See Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress, http://memory.loc.gov/ammemcollection/jefferson_papers (accessed October 5, 2012).

5. *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* 18, no. 43 (January 17, 1861): 1.

6. Alexander's obituary can be found in J. W. Sproull and D. B. Willson, *The Reformed Presbyterian and Covenanter*, vol. 33 (Pittsburgh: Myer and Shinkle Company, 1895), 92. Toward the end of his life, Alexander reconstructed the early history of the National Reform Association's beginnings. See James Mitchell Foster, *Christ the King* (Boston: James H. Earle, 1894), 15–40. For quotations, see pp. 15 and 20.

7. On this church and its beloved pastor, John Taylor Pressly (1795–1870), see *Allegheny City, 1840–1907* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia Pub., 2007), 16.

8. Foster, *Christ the King*, 26.

9. Ibid., 24–26.

10. *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* 21 (August 1863): 222.

11. *Proceedings of the National Convention to Secure the Religious Amendment of the Constitution of the United States: held in New York, Feb. 26 and 27, 1873: with an Account of the Origin and Progress of the Movement* (New York: John Polhemus Printer, 1873), viii.

12. *Israelite*, February 19, 1864, 268. Like Leeser, Wise took note of this coalition of advocates and issued a warning to his

readers about their agenda. See the *Israelite*, June 5, 1863, 380.

13. Foster, *Christ the King*, 37.

14. Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 135, 37, 154.

15. *Jewish Exponent* 10 (February 1911): 4.

16. "A Tribute to Lincoln by Rabbi [Nathan] Krass," *American Hebrew & Jewish Messenger*, June 2, 1911, 148.

17. Simon Wolf, *The Presidents I Have Known from 1860–1918* (Washington, D.C.: Byron S. Adams Press, 1918), 29.

18. See "Lincoln's Birthday" by Simon Wolf in the *American Israelite*, April 6, 1888, 5.

19. For a quotation suggesting that the adoption of a Christian amendment would create a "house divided," see Isaac M. Wise's editorial in the *Israelite*, February 19, 1864, 268.

20. *Proceedings of the National Convention*, vi–viii.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid.

23. *Israelite*, June 5, 1863, 380.

24. *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* 21 (August 1863): 219–22.

25. Board of Delegates of American Israelites Minute Book, 1859–70, SC-1194, box 952, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio (original at the American Jewish Historical Society, New York). Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. See also *New York Times*, June 12, 1865.

26. The Hebrew word *rishuth* literally means "wickedness" or "evilness," and for Leeser the term referred to an inveterate injustice brought about by a baseless hatred of the Jew. See the *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* 12, no. 10 (January 1865): 433–41. On "Rishuth," see Jeffrey S. Gurock, *Anti-Semitism in America*, vol. 6 of *American Jewish History* (New York: Routledge, 1998), 189.

27. Board of Delegates of American Israelites Minute Book, 1859–70, SC-1194, AJA (original at the American Jewish Historical Society, New York).

6. "A Great Man in Israel Has Fallen": American Jewry Mourns Lincoln

1. In the Holy Scriptures, Passover was originally established as a seven-day festival. Throughout the Diaspora, Passover has been traditionally celebrated for eight days. Today, a seven-day Passover is celebrated among Reform Jews and also in Israel.

2. *Israelite*, April 21, 1865, 339.

3. Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 138.

4. *Jewish Messenger*, April 21, 1865, 124.

5. Ibid., 110–11.

6. See David B. Chesebrough, *"No Sorrow Like Our Sorrow"*: *Northern Protestant Ministers and the Assassination of Lincoln* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1994), 16–40.

7. David R. Goldfield, *America Aflame: How the Civil War Created a Nation* (New York: Bloomsbury Press, 2011), 367.

8. Hertz, *Tribute*, 111.

9. Ibid., 111, 114, 121.

10. Ibid., 111, 113. The phrase "a great man has fallen in Israel" comes from 2 Samuel 3:38 (*Ha-lo teidu ki sar v'gadol nafal ha-yom ha-zeh b'yisrael*).

11. Hertz, *Tribute*, 135.

12. Founded in 1838, Oheb Israel was originally called Fells Point Hebrew Friendship Congregation, Oheb Israel (Eden Street Synagogue). Hochheimer assumed Oheb Israel's pulpit in 1859. See Robert P. Swierenga, *The Forerunners: Dutch Jewry in the North American Diaspora* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1994), 197–98. See Hertz, *Tribute*, 59.

13. Hertz, *Tribute*, xix. Szold's story about the distraught woman may have been essentially true. We know that Szold did in fact meet with Lincoln at the White House and asked him to pardon twenty-two-year-old Private George Kuhn of the 118th Pennsylvania Volunteers. According to newspaper accounts, Lincoln, though sympathetic, declined the appeal (though he agreed to provide Szold with a letter of introduction to General George Meade). There is no mention of Kuhn's mother having accompanied Szold to the White House. Later, Szold attended Kuhn's gruesome execution and, according to one account, fled from the disturbing scene so quickly that he left his purse in the commander's tent. See Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 109, 270 nn. 68–70. On Szold and the Kuhn execution, see Henry N. Blake, *Three Years in the Army of the Potomac* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1865), 238–40.

14. Hertz, *Tribute*, 44–45.

15. Ibid., 144.

16. Ibid., 3, 6. Alluding to the psalmist (110:1), Morais also prayed that “our sainted President” be permitted “to sit at [God's] right hand.” In Jewish tradition, the privilege of sitting on the right is a mark of distinction (see 1 Kings 2:19). Morais meant to suggest that just as David enjoyed a privileged relationship with God, so too would Abraham Lincoln now “sit at God's right hand.” According to Christian belief, Jesus employs this same phrase to reveal himself as the Messiah (see Luke 22:67–69).

17. Hertz, *Tribute*, 19. The term “*Kiddush Ha-Shem*” literally means “Sanctification of God's Name.” For more on the historical meaning of this concept, see Norman Lamm, “*Kiddush haShem and Hillul ha-Shem*,” *Encyclopedia Judaica* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing, 1972), vol. 10, col. 977–83. See also Avraham Holtz, “*Kiddush Hashem* and *Hillul Hashem*,” *Judaism* 10, no. 4 (1961): 360–67.

18. Hertz, *Tribute*, 95.

19. Ibid., 17, 58, 146.

20. Markens mentions Gotthelf's eulogy, though he does not quote from it. See Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 42. Similarly, Gotthelf's eulogy does not appear in Hertz's *Tribute of the Synagogue*. On Gotthelf, see Julius Herscovici, *Bernhard Henry Gotthelf* (Vicksburg, Miss.: Herscovici, 2001). On the pro-southern sentiment in Louisville and Kentucky, see Henry C. Hubbart, “‘Pro-Southern' Influences in the Free West, 1840–1865,” *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 20, no. 1 (June 1933): 45–62.

21. *Louisville Daily Journal*, April 23, 1865. The citation is also noted in Merrill D. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 231.

22. Hertz, *Tribute*, 31–32, 35. Shortly after Lincoln's assassination, Joachimsen was thrown from his horse and seriously injured. Receiving an honorable discharge from the military, he returned to New York, where he became a prominent attorney and a leader in the Jewish community. For more on Joachimsen, see especially his obituary in the *New York Times*, January 7, 1890, 5. See also Jacob Rader Marcus and Judith M. Daniels, *The Concise Dictionary of American Jewish Biography* (New York: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1994), s.v. “Joachimsen.” On Congregation Temimi (sometimes spelled “Tememe” or “Temime”) Derech, see Irwin Lachoff and Catherine C. Kahn, *The Jewish Community of New Orleans* (Charleston, S.C.: Arcadia, 2005), 23–24.

23. Born in Kolin, Bohemia, Illowy studied for the rabbinate in Pressburg, in present-day Hungary. Although he was an ardent defender of traditional Jewish practice in the United States, he was politically liberal and, like many of his Jewish contemporaries, had been a supporter of the liberal revolutions that swept over Europe in the last months of 1848. The conservative backlash that arose in the wake of the failure of these liberal revolts prompted many dejected partisans to abandon the cause in Europe and immigrate to the United States. By June 1865, only a few weeks after Lincoln's death, Illowy had relocated to Cincinnati. On Illowy, see especially Irwin Lachoff, “Rabbi Bernard Illowy: Counter Reformer,” *Southern Jewish History* 5 (2002): 43–67. For quote, see p. 53. See also Marcus and Daniels, *American Jewish Biography*, s.v. “Illowy.”

24. Lachoff, “Rabbi Bernard Illowy”; Hertz, *Tribute*, 160–63.

25. For quote, see the *New York Times*, April 20, 1865. See also Jonathan D. Sarna, *American Judaism: A History* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2004), 122. For quote, see the *Jewish Messenger*, May 5, 1865, 139.

26. See *New York Times*, May 3, 1865, 1. See also Harold Holzer, *Lincoln and the Jews: The Last Best Hope of Earth* (Los Angeles: Skirball Cultural Center, 2002), 14. For more details concerning the role that Jews played in Lincoln's “funeral pageant,” see Korn, *American Jewry*, 240–44. For quotation, see 2 Samuel 1:19.

27. William M. Kramer, “‘They Have Killed Our Man But Not Our Cause’: The California Jewish Mourners of Abraham Lincoln,” *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* 2, no. 4 (July 1970): 214–15. See also Ava Kahn, ed., *Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush: A Documentary History, 1849–1880* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 406, 423–24, 433–34.

28. See Minutes of the Board of Temple Israel, April 18, 1865, Archives of Temple Israel, Boston, Mass. (copy in American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio). Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

29. *Israelite*, June 16, 1865, 404.

30. Hertz, *Tribute*, 138–39.

31. Ibid., 133–37. Hertz incorrectly indicates that Beth-El Emeth was located in New York City. Leeser spent the balance of his rabbinical career in Philadelphia. For quotation, see Job 1:21.

32. Hochheimer's eulogy includes quotations from scripture in both the Hebrew original and the German translation.

33. Genesis 13:8.

34. I wish to express deep gratitude to Professor Elizabeth Petuchowski, former adjunct associate professor in the German department of the University of Cincinnati, for contributing these fine English translations from the German originals.

35. Leviticus 10:1.

36. Leviticus 10:6.

37. Hertz, *Tribute*, 57–62.

38. Morais's reference to “our lamented Everett” refers to Edward Everett (1794–1865), congressman, senator, president of Harvard University, governor of Massachusetts, and secretary of state under Millard Fillmore. Everett, who died on January 15, 1865, was the most prominent American orator of his time and was also an ardent Lincoln supporter. His oration at Gettysburg—over two hours in length—was completely overshadowed by Lincoln's immortal two-minute address.

39. Job 34:22.

40. Deuteronomy 32:4.

41. Hertz, *Tribute*, 1–5.

42. The last line of this excerpt is a citation from Pirke Avot 4:18.

43. I wish again to express deep gratitude to Professor Elizabeth Petuchowski for generously contributing these fine English translations from the German originals.

44. See *Babylonian Talmud Mo'ed Katan* 28a, modified.

45. Einhorn is alluding to a rabbinic legend that suggests that during the exodus from Egypt, the Red Sea parted before the Israelites “for the sake of the bones of Joseph” (see Exodus 13:19). See Jacob Z. Lauterbach, *Mekilta De-Rabbi Ishmael*, 2nd ed., vol. 1 (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1976), 220.

46. The Hebrew term “*Kiddush Ha-Shem*” literally means “Sanctification of the Name (of God).” However, in classical Jewish writing, it is commonly used as a euphemism for Jewish martyrdom, when a Jew is prepared to sacrifice his life rather than transgress any of God's cardinal laws. Einhorn is unquestionably expressing the idea of “Jewish martyrdom.”

47. Hertz, *Tribute*, 13–19.

48. Genesis 12:1.

49. Genesis 15:1.

50. Deuteronomy 32:49.

51. This version from Hertz, *Tribute*, 160–63. It was also printed in the *New Orleans Times* of April 23, 1865.

52. Genesis 12:1–4.

53. Lamentations 2:10–13.

54. Lamentations 5:16.

55. Job 1:21.

56. Hosea 14:1.

57. Deuteronomy 32:4.

58. Genesis 4:13.

59. Genesis 12:2.

60. Numbers 25:13.

61. Psalm 146:3.

62. Isaiah 2:22.

63. Genesis 22:18.

64. Genesis 12:4.

65. Hertz, *Tribute*, 92–99.

66. Jeremiah 9:26.

67. Psalm 24:3–4.

68. Habakkuk 2:4.

69. 2 Samuel 1:23.

70. Psalm 79:10.

71. *Louisville Daily Journal*, April 23, 1865.

72. Job 1:21. See Hertz, *Tribute*, 137.

73. According to the April 20, 1865, *New York Herald*, the “Al. Mola. Rachamim” [*sic*] was chanted at New York's B'nai Israel Congregation. See Hertz, *Tribute*, 175.

74. Hertz, *Tribute*, 165.

75. *Jewish Messenger*, April 21, 1865, 124.

76. Joseph Shoninger (1829–1910), a talented musician, was the spiritual leader of Temple Israel in Boston from 1856 to 1874. See Meaghan Dwyer-Ryan, Susan L. Porter, and Lisa Fagin Davis, *Becoming American Jews: Temple Israel of Boston*

(Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 2009), 15.

77. Temple Israel Board Minutes, April 18, 1865 (original located in the Archives of Temple Israel, Boston). According to the document, the German original was translated by a congregant in the 1960s.

78. *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* 23, no. 2 (Nissan 5625/May 1865): 86–88.

79. *New York Times,* April 21, 1865. According to the article, the governor made April 20 the day of mourning, but others felt the governor should have selected April 19, corresponding to the day of Lincoln's funeral in the nation's capital. “[T]he result was that on two consecutive days church services were needed by the people.”

80. This obvious misspelling may refer to a small congregation named Shaarey Beracha, established in 1858. See Hyman B. Grinstein, *The Rise of the Jewish Community of New York, 1654–1860* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1945), 474.

81. *New York Times,* April 21, 1865. For mention of the various names in this document, see the index in Grinstein, *Rise of the Jewish Community*.

82. This selection first appeared in the *Jewish Record* and subsequently was published in Korn's *American Jewry*.

83. This is probably a typographical error. The name of the lodge would most likely have been “Rehoboth.”

84. This probably is a reference to the Board of Delegates of American Israelites.

85. Psalm 25:6.

86. Psalm 25:13.

87. Psalm 46:2.

88. Psalm 103:4.

89. Lamentations 3:39.

90. Job 3:19.

91. Psalm 78:39.

92. Job 34:15.

93. Job 4:17.

94. Psalm 56:10.

95. Psalm 144:4.

96. Psalm 125:4.

97. Psalm 149:5.

98. Isaiah 58:8.

99. Psalm 121:7.

100. Psalm 121:4.

101. 1 Samuel 2:6.

102. Psalm 85:6.

103. Psalm 130:7.

104. Ecclesiastes 1:4.

105. Psalm 33:4.

106. Ecclesiastes 12:7.

107. Psalm 112:2.

108. Job 1:21.

109. Psalm 146:6.

110. Numbers 16:48.

111. This selection first appeared in the *Jewish Record*. This version is from Korn, *American Jewry*, 240–44.

7. Conflicting Obligations: Shavuot and the National Day of Humiliation and Mourning

1. Lincoln's body lay in state in Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, New York, Albany, Buffalo, Cleveland, Columbus, Indianapolis, Chicago, and Springfield. For more on Lincoln's funeral, see James L. Swanson, *The Chase for Jefferson Davis and the Death Pageant for Lincoln's Corpse* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010).

2. “Document Archive,” webpage of the American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency/ucsb.edu/index_docs.php (accessed September 2, 2012).

3. For more on the various occasions on which Lincoln tributes were delivered, see David B. Chesebrough, *“No Sorrow Like Our Sorrow”: Northern Protestant Ministers and the Assassination of Lincoln* (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1994), xiii. For the text of Johnson's proclamations, see the “Document Archive,” webpage of the American Presidency Project. The expression “gladness and rejoicing” comes from Psalm 45:15.

4. *Jewish Messenger*, May 5, 1865, 140.

5. Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 164–65.

6. *Shivah* is a seven-day period of formal mourning that Jews observe after the funeral of a close relative. The first thirty days following the burial (which include the *shivah*) are called *shloshim*.

7. Hertz, *Tribute*, 39–41.

8. Ibid., 151.

9. Very little is known about Morris Deleeuw (whose name was more frequently spelled “De Leeuw”). He seems to have served a number of small New York synagogues in various capacities, including that of the congregation's beadle. A brief notice of his death appeared in the *New York Times*, June 11, 1915, 15.

10. Hertz, *Tribute*, 176.

11. *Jewish Messenger*, May 5, 1865, 140.

12. Deuteronomy 16:11.

13. Lyons's comments appeared the following day, June 2, 1865, in the *New York Herald*. Emanuel Hertz republished that newspaper article in his edited volume, *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (164–68).

14. Genesis 50:10.

15. Hertz, *Tribute*, 164–68.

16. Ibid., 39.

17. Ibid., 39–47. Translation from the German original by Elizabeth Petuchowski.

18. Ibid., 7, 9, 12.

19. Ibid., 7–12.

20. Deleeuw's remarks appeared the following day, June 2, 1865, in the *New York Tribune*. The *Tribune*'s correspondent introduced the published version of Deleeuw's address by noting, “There was a fine attendance at the Jewish Synagogue, B'nai Israel, corner of Stanton and Forsyth streets, and the ceremonies performed were more than usually solemn.” Hertz republished that newspaper article in his edited volume, *Abraham Lincoln*: *The Tribute of the Synagogue* (176–77).

21. Deuteronomy 32:35.

22. See Hertz, *Tribute*, 176–77.

8. Criticisms and Commendations: Conflicting Views on the Lincoln Presidency

1. *Jewish Messenger*, December 25, 1891, 8. On Schurz, see chapter 1 of this book.

2. Julia Ward Howe, *Reminiscences, 1819–1899* (New York: Houghton, Mifflin, 1899), 153–54. See also *Jewish Messenger*, July 7, 1899, 6.

3. See Jennifer L. Weber, “Lincoln's Critics: The Copperheads,” *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 32, no. 1 (Winter 2011): 33–47, and David Goldfield, “Lincoln's Image in the American Schoolbook,” *American Studies Journal* 53 (2009), http://www.asjournal.org/archive/53/166.html (accessed September 15, 2012).

4. Donald T. Phillips, *Lincoln on Leadership: Executive Strategies for Tough Times* (New York: Warner Books, 1992), 8.

5. As quoted in Doris Kearns Goodwin, *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), 310.

6. For an electronic reproduction of Nast's cartoon, see the website of Illinois Periodicals Online, http://www.lib.niu.edu/2001/iht820129.html (accessed September 20, 2012).

7. Murat Halstead to Timothy C. Day, June 8, July 16, 1861, as quoted in Carl Sandburg, *Abraham Lincoln; the Prairie Years and the War Years* (New York: Harcourt, 1954), 351. See also Sarah J. Day, *The Man on a Hill Top* (Philadelphia: Ware Brothers, 1931), 243, 247.

8. See Weber, “Lincoln's Critics,” 33–35. See also Jennifer L. Weber, *Copperheads: The Rise and Fall of Lincoln's Opponents in the North* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 1–42.

9. Weber, “Lincoln's Critics,” 33–35. See also Weber, *Copperheads*, 4. Weber's history of the Copperheads asserts that they were powerful opponents obstructing the president's agenda again and again. Weber's thesis challenges historians who argue that the Copperheads were essentially a chimera. See Frank L. Klement and Steven K. Rogstad, *Lincoln's Critics: The Copperheads of the North* (Shippensburg, Pa.: White Mane, 1999).

10. Chester G. Hearn, *Lincoln, the Cabinet, and the Generals* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 157.

11. Weber, “Lincoln's Critics,” 35.

12. Ibid., 42.

13. Charles Bancroft, *The Footprints of Time* (Holmes Beach, Fla.: Gaunt, 2009), 672; Joan Waugh, *U. S. Grant: American Hero, American Myth* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 87.

14. Weber, “Lincoln's Critics,” 44.

15. James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 177.

16. Goodwin, *Team of Rivals*, 731.

17. *Israelite*, June 16, 1865, 404.

18. *Israelite*, January 18, 1861, 230.

19. Morris J. Raphall, *Bible View of Slavery: A Discourse, Delivered at the Jewish Synagogue, “Bnai Jeshurum* [sic]” *New York, on the Day of the National Fast, Jan. 4, 1861* (New York: Rudd & Carleton, 1861), 15.

20. Ibid., 29, 38.

21. *Israelite*, February 15, 1861, 262.

22. Henry Wilson (1812–75), a U.S. senator from Massachusetts from 1855 to 1873, was frequently known as the “Natick Cobbler” because he was a shoemaker in Natick, Massachusetts, before he was sent to the U.S. Senate. In 1872, he was elected vice president of the United States. See Ernest McKay, *Henry Wilson, Practical Radical: Portrait of a Politician* (Port Washington, N.Y.: Kennikat Press, 1971).

23. *Israelite*, February 14, 1862, 260.

24. See newspaper article containing Rabbi Morris Raphall's oration on the “Day of Humiliation and Fasting” observed earlier that year (see next note). The correspondent noted that some large Christian denominations ignored the president's appeal altogether.

25. *Israelite*, August 14, 1863, 49. It should be noted that Wise's complaint about Lincoln's repeatedly calling on the nation to commemorate a Thanksgiving Day precedes Lincoln's historic first proclamation asking the nation “to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November…as a day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the Heavens.” Lincoln's “Proclamation of Thanksgiving” was issued on October 3, 1863. It was essentially a response to an appeal sent to him by the same woman who composed the nursery rhyme “Mary Had a Little Lamb,” Sarah Josepha Buell Hale (1788–1879). Hale had been writing annually to the presidents of the United States since the 1840s in the hope of persuading them to create a unified and national thanksgiving celebration. Evidently, Lincoln was the first U.S. president to respond. For the text of Lincoln's “Proclamation of Thanksgiving,” written for Lincoln by Secretary of State William H. Seward, see the *Abraham Lincoln Online* website, http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/thanks.htm (accessed September 12, 2012).

26. Simon Wolf, *The Presidents I Have Known from 1860–1918* (Washington, D.C.: Byron S. Adams Press, 1918), 21.

27. Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 170–171.

28. Ibid., 135.

29. Ibid., 92, 97.

30. Ibid., 95.

31. *Die Deborah*, April 28, 1865.

32. On Wise, see Sefton D. Temkin, *Isaac Mayer Wise: Shaping American Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992).

33. The famous saying of Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, after Greek forces under his command defeated a Roman legion at Asculum in 279 B.C.E.

34. *Israelite*, November 30, 1860.

35. A Philistine deity used here to represent an inappropriate object of veneration.

36. *In spe*, meaning “in the hope” or “future,” such as, “She is my mother-in-law, *in spe*.” Obviously, Wise is suggesting that all of those who are hoping for a patronage position have gathered to fete Lincoln.

37. *Israelite*, February 15, 1861, 262.

38. See www.avalon.law.yale.edu/19thcentury/lincoln.asp (accessed November 18, 2012).

39. *Israelite*, March 15, 1861.

40. Lincoln would soon dole out some political appointments to Jews. In May 1861, he made his friend Abraham Jonas postmaster of Quincy, Illinois. On August 10, 1861, Lincoln named Marcus Otterbourg the U.S. consul in Mexico.

41. *Chicago Tribune*, March 26, 1861, 1.

42. Wilson was an outspoken opponent to slavery. For more on Wilson, see note 22 above.

43. *Israelite*, April 5, 1861, 317.

44. Hertz, *Tribute*, 95.

45. *Israelite*, August 19, 1864, 60.

46. On Leeser, see Lance J. Sussman, *Isaac Leeser and the Making of American Judaism* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1995).

47. See the website of the American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=69829 (accessed July 18, 2013).

48. Behrend had two other sons besides Adajah, one of whom fought for the Confederacy while his brother fought for the Union. See "Justice Behrend Eighty Years Old," *Jewish Exponent*, July 16, 1909, 11.

49. Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier, and Citizen*, ed. Louis Edward Levy (New York: Levytype Company, 1895), 4.

50. *Occident and American Jewish Advocate* 20, no. 10 (January 1863): 457–61.

51. See "Presidential Proclamation 97—Appointing a Day of National Humiliation, Fasting, and Prayer" on the website of the American Presidency Project, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=69891 (accessed September 15, 2012).

52. *Jewish Messenger*, May 8, 1863, 154.

53. Isaac Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* (New York: Isaac Markens, 1909), 28–29.

54. Hosea 8:14.

55. *Jewish Messenger*, May 8, 1863, 154.

56. John Eaton and Ethel Osgood Mason, *Grant, Lincoln, and the Freedmen; Reminiscences of the Civil War, with Special Reference to the Work for the Contrabands and Freedmen of the Mississippi Valley* (1907; repr. New York: Negro Universities Press, 1969), 174–75; Frederick Douglass, *Life and Times of Frederick Douglass* (Hartford, Conn.: Park Publishing Co., 1881), 441.

57. It is possible that our "correspondent" is Simon Wolf ("S. W.").

58. *Jewish Messenger*, March 17, 1865, 96.

59. See William C. Davis, *Lincoln's Men: How President Lincoln Became Father to an Army and a Nation* (New York: Free Press, 1999).

60. *Jewish Messenger*, January 31, 1862, 31.

61. Although the familiar phrase "our peculiar institution" is typically associated with historian Kenneth M. Stampp's outstanding volume by the same name, the phrase itself was in usage long before the onset of the Civil War. John C. Calhoun was one of the first to use the phrase when he delivered his "Speech on the Reception of Abolition Petitions: Revised Report" on February 6, 1837. See John C. Calhoun, *Speeches of John C. Calhoun Delivered in the Congress of the United States from 1811 to the Present Time* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1843), 222.

62. For the complete text of Spiegel's January 22, 1864, letter to his wife, see Jean Powers Soman and Frank L. Byrne, eds., *A Jewish Colonel in the Civil War: Marcus Spiegel of the Ohio Volunteers* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1994), 314–17. The original letter (SC-11848) has been deposited at the American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio, courtesy of Jean Powers Soman.

63. Colley Cibber, *Richard III*, altered, act 5, scene 3, reprinted in *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 2nd ed. (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), 144.

64. Though Lincoln had excluded then Union-occupied parishes of Louisiana from the Emancipation Proclamation, General Banks had effectively ended slavery in January 1864 in the entire area under his control. Joe Gray Taylor, *Louisiana Reconstructed, 1863–1877* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1974), 33.

65. The prewar Slave Code, derived from the French *Code Noir*. Ulrich Bonnell Phillips, *American Negro Slavery: A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of the Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Regime* (1918; Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1966), 493–94.

66. In using the phrase "I am not so for party purposes," Spiegel meant to say that his revised views on slavery had nothing to do with his affiliation with a political party.

67. We do not know the dates of Goldstein's birth and death. Jacob Kabakoff, who studied his life and Hebrew writings carefully, suggested that Goldstein returned to Central Europe after the Civil War. We know nothing more about him from that

point. See Kabakoff, “Isaac Goldstein—Pioneer Hebrew Merchant-Author,” *Hebrew Studies* 17 (1976): 110–25.

68. Goldstein's “Acrostic” appeared in the *Jewish Messenger*, May 26, 1865, 165. It was republished in Philip Goodman, ed., *Lincoln's Birthday: Program Material for Jewish Groups* (New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, 1953), 53. Courtesy JWB Jewish Chaplain's Council.

69. At the time, Eleanor Cohen was engaged to Benjamin Mendez Seixas (1832–84). She and Seixas married a few weeks later. Eleanor would move to New York with her new husband.

70. Eleanor Cohen's diary appeared in Jacob Rader Marcus, *The American Jewish Woman: A Documentary History* (New York: Ktav Publishing, 1981), 260–67. Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

71. Harris Newmark, Maurice Harris Newmark, Marco Ross Newmark, and James Perry Worden, *Sixty Years in Southern California, 1853–1913, Containing the Reminiscences of Harris Newmark* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1930), 337–38. See also William M. Kramer, “They Have Killed Our Man But Not Our Cause': The California Jewish Mourners of Abraham Lincoln,” *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly* 2, no. 4 (July 1970): 209.

72. For a recollection of one of these occasions, see the typed transcription of the Civil War–era diary of Adolphus and Josephine's teenage niece, Rachel Rosalie Phillips (1846–70), the daughter of Josephine's older brother, Jonas Phillips (1816–90). Josephine's letter to her brother-in-law, Adolphus, proves that she, too, visited the White House and met Lincoln in person. A copy of Rachel Rosalie Phillips's diary is in the David M. Klein Collection, MS-695, AJA.

73. By “shool,” Josephine meant “synagogue.”

74. Hebrew for “lectern” or “pulpit.”

75. The funeral train left Washington, D.C., on April 21; stopped in Baltimore, Harrisburg, Philadelphia, and New York; and then moved on to other cities en route to Springfield, Illinois, the martyred president's final resting place. Philip Van Doren Stern, ed., *The Life and Writings of Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Random House, 1940), 190–91.

76. Josephine was referring to the fact that Secretary of State William H. Seward and his son had been wounded in his home by another conspirator at the same time that Lincoln was shot.

77. Josephine's father was Naphtali Phillips (1773–1870). “Beck” was an older sister, Rebecca.

78. A small photograph patented in Paris.

79. Josephine is referring to the photograph of Lincoln that was taken at Adolphus Solomons's publishing firm, Philp and Solomons. Solomons maintained it was the last photograph of Lincoln.

80. Isaac Franklin Phillips (1854–1929) was Josephine's younger brother.

81. John Singleton Mosby (1833–1916) commanded a battalion in Virginia's First Cavalry known as Mosby's Rangers or Mosby's Raiders. Mosby's battalion became famous for its lightning-quick raids.

82. Rachel Seixas Solomons (1828–81) was Adolphus's wife. Mary Jane Solomons (1819–1905) was Adolphus's older sister.

83. Philip Goodman, “A Personal Tribute to Lincoln by Josephine Phillips,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society* 41, no. 2 (December 1951): 204–7. Courtesy American Jewish Historical Society, New York and Newton Centre, Mass.

84. Temkin, *Isaac Mayer Wise*, 124.

85. Reverend James F. Chalfant (1821–84), a Methodist minister in Cincinnati and at one time a presiding elder of the district conference.

86. *Die Deborah*, April 28, 1865.

9. Memorializing and Judaizing Lincoln

1. For Cooley quotation, see Barry Schwartz, “Iconography and Collective Memory: Lincoln's Image in the American Mind,” *Sociological Quarterly* 32, no. 3 (Autumn 1991): 302.

2. For quotation, see Roy P. Basler, *The Lincoln Legend: A Study in Changing Conceptions* (1935; repr., New York: Octagon Books, 1969). On the apotheosis of Abraham Lincoln in American history, see Merrill D. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994). See also Lloyd Lewis, *Myths after Lincoln* (New York: Grosset and Dunlap, 1929). Ira D. Cardiff was one of the first to accuse historians of deliberately beatifying Lincoln in order to satisfy the tastes of priests and politicians; see Cardiff, *The Deification of Lincoln* (Boston: Christopher Publishing House, 1943).

3. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 53–55; Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 67. On the question concerning Stanton's phrase “Now he belongs to the ages” versus “Now he belongs to the angels,” see Adam Gopnik, *Angels and Ages: A Short Book about Darwin, Lincoln, and Modern Life* (New York: Vintage Books, 2009).

4. Trying to determine what the comparative value of a $1 contribution would be today depends on the scale of measure one chooses to employ. In terms of the wage index, $1 might be comparable to a $100 donation in 2011. See http://www.measuringworth.com/uscompare/relativevalue.php (accessed August 30, 2012).

5. On Hammerslough, see the *Israelite*, June 9, 1865, 397. For an example of an appeal in a synagogue, see Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 168. For the roster of Jewish subscribers in New York, see the *Jewish Messenger*, May 19, 1865, 155, and June 2, 1865, 171. For the monument efforts in Cincinnati, see the *Israelite*, July 7, 1865, 5.

6. See Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory;* and Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln in the Post-Heroic Era: History and Memory in Late Twentieth-Century America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

7. *Washington Times*, October 7, 2006.

8. Julius E. Francis, *The Lincoln Memorial Collection: Relics of the War of the Rebellion* (Buffalo: Matthews, Northrup & Company, 1887), 25–26. See also James Percoco, *Summers with Lincoln*: *Looking for the Man in the Monuments* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008).

9. *New York Times*, February 17, 1869, 1; February 22, 1874, 3; February 17, 1879, 5.

10. *New York Times*, February 17, 1869, 5–6.

11. For quotation, see the online article "Editors Interview on Herndon's Lincoln," *Abraham Lincoln Online*, http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/books/herndon.htm (accessed August 30, 2012). See also William Henry Herndon and Jesse William Weik, *Herndon's Lincoln*, ed. Douglas L. Wilson and Rodney O. Davis (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006).

12. David Goldfield, "Lincoln's Image in the American Schoolbook," *American Studies Journal*, no. 53 (2009): 4, http://www.asjournal.org/archive/53/166.html (accessed on January 8, 2012).

13. Josiah G. Holland, *Life of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Mass.: G. Bill, 1866); Ward H. Lamon and Chauncey F. Black, *The Life Of Abraham Lincoln; From His Birth To His Inauguration As President* (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1872); John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln: A History* (New York, 1886). On Nicolay and Hay, see also Michael Burlingame, *Abraham Lincoln: The Observations of John G. Nicolay and John Hay* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2007). See also Michael Burlingame, "Nicolay and Hay: Court Historians," *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 3–19; and William H. Herndon and Jesse W. Weik, *Lincoln; The True Story of a Great Life, The History and Personal Recollections of Abraham Lincoln* (Springfield, Ill.: Herndon Lincoln Publishing Company, 1921).

14. See *American Hebrew*, December 2, 1892, 145; *American Israelite*, October 19, 1893, 4; and *Jewish Messenger*, March 9, 1894, 2.

15. *Jewish Messenger*, February 12, 1892, 4.

16. Hertz, *Tribute*, 187–88.

17. Ibid., 189–90. On the rise of anti-Semitism during this period, see John Higham, "Anti-Semitism in the Gilded Age: A Reinterpretation," *Mississippi Valley Historical Review* 43, no. 4 (March 1957): 559–78.

18. *American Hebrew and Jewish Messenger*, February 19, 1897, 442. On Herman Baar, see obituary in ibid., September 9, 1904, 432.

19. Hertz, *Tribute*, 193–94, 233, 245.

20. Ibid., 208.

21. Ephraim Lisitzky, *In the Grip of Cross-Currents* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1959), 82.

22. E. J. Hobsbawm and T. O. Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 279; Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 199–200.

23. *American Hebrew and Jewish Messenger*, July 21, 1905, 213.

24. Ibid.

25. Hertz, *Tribute*, 648, 678; *American Hebrew and Jewish Messenger*, February 15, 1918, 429. The Abraham Lincoln House in Milwaukee was located at the corner of Ninth and Sherman Streets. The house was a predecessor of the Jewish Community Center. For more information on the Lincoln House in Milwaukee, see http://www.jewishmuseummilwaukee.org/history/collections/organizations.php#abraham-lincoln (accessed August 30, 2012).

26. As quoted in Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 195–96.

27. Hertz, *Tribute*, 643.

28. On the triplets, see Ava F. Kahn, ed., *Jewish Voices of the California Gold Rush: A Documentary History, 1849–1880* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2002), 41.

29. For quotation, see Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 230–31. See also *Jewish Exponent*, February 15, 1918.

30. Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 295–96. For the complete text of Allen's address, see the *Jewish Advocate*, October 28, 1926, A7.

31. *American Israelite*, June 16, 1927, 8.

32. *New York Times*, May 21, 1865, 5.

33. Hertz, *Tribute*, 168.

34. Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951), 215–16.

35. *Israelite*, June 9, 1865, 396–97; *National Lincoln Monument: Address to the Public* (Springfield, Ill.: National Monument Association, 1868).

36. On Chicago's Central Music Hall, see A. T. Andreas, *The History of Chicago*, vol. 3 (Chicago: Andreas Press, 1885), 652.

37. This is an allusion to Elijah's final departure and the exclamation of his disciple Elisha. See 2 Kings 2:12.

38. 2 Kings 2:12.

39. Isaiah 9:6.

40. Hertz, *Tribute*, 191–207.

41. 1 Samuel 16:7.

42. Amos 5:24.

43. Philipson was quoting from *Ode Recited at the Harvard Commemoration*, by James Russell Lowell (1819–91), written in 1865. Philipson's sermon is found in Hertz, *Tribute*, 232–34.

44. Alexander K. McClure (1828–1909) was a writer, politician, and prominent communal leader in Philadelphia. In 1860, he actively supported Lincoln's candidacy. Later in life, he published a number of volumes containing his reminiscences of Lincoln.

45. 1 Samuel 16:7.

46. Hertz, *Tribute*, 255–62.

47. The “Free Synagogue” was located at 117 North Seventh Street in Philadelphia. This location had been the home of the historic Mickve Israel Congregation from 1860 to 1909. After the congregation sold this property, Dembitz organized a “Free Synagogue,” which met in the facility. For necrologies on Dembitz, see the *Jewish Exponent*, June 28, 1940, 7, and the *New York Times*, June 27, 1940, 23.

48. See Exodus 15:23–24 and Numbers 33:8.

49. *Jewish Exponent*, February 17, 1911, 8.

50. Genesis 25:23 and Matthew 23:11.

51. Hertz, *Tribute*, 437–46.

52. Deuteronomy 6:5.

53. Ferdinand M. Isserman Papers, MS-6, box 15, folder 6, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio. Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives, at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio.

54. Carrie Naumburg Cohen (1849–1947) was one of the most prominent Jewish women in Pittsburgh at this time. She volunteered in numerous Jewish women's charitable organizations. Her father served as a cantor, reader, and teacher for the Rodeph Shalom Congregation. She married Josiah Cohen (1841–1930), Allegheny County's first Jewish judge.

55. Edward Tak (1881–1943) was a highly regarded violinist. He was the concertmaster for the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra as well as for the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra. On Tak, see the website of the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra, http://www.stokowski.org/Principal_Musicians_San_Francisco_Symphony.htm#Concert masters Index Point (accessed September 15, 2012).

56. Carl Bernthaler (1879–1925) was a musician and assistant conductor of the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra.

57. Alfred C. Dieffenbach was a prominent Unitarian minister.

58. *Jewish Criterion*, February 12, 1909, 4–5. Courtesy Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project–Rodef Shalom Congregation Archives.

59. Psalm 24:3–4.

60. The author of this poem is anonymous.

61. Matthew 26:39.

62. Hertz, *Tribute*, 306–17.

63. Ibid., 349–59.

64. Ibid., 399.

65. Matthew 18:7.

66. Psalm 19:9.

67. Hertz, *Tribute*, 383–400.

68. *New York Times*, February 11, 1909, 5.

69. Malachi 2:10.

70. Hertz, *Tribute*, 360–64.

10. “His Name Will Ever Be Green in Your Hearts”: Jews and the Cultural Preservation of Lincoln's Legacy

1. Judith Rice, “Ida M. Tarbell: A Progressive Look at Lincoln,” *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 19, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 57–72.

2. For biographical information on Markens, see Max J. Kohler, “Isaac Markens,” *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*, no. 32 (1931): 129–32. For additional information, see Jacob Rader Marcus and Judith M. Daniels, *The Concise Dictionary of American Jewish Biography* (New York: Carlson Publishing Inc., 1994), s.v. “Markens, Isaac.”

3. Isaac Markens, *Hebrews in America: A Series of Historical and Biographical Sketches* (New York: Isaac Markens, 1888). For the most detailed obituary on Markens, see Kohler, “Isaac Markens,” 129–32.

4. Markens, *Hebrews in America*, 131–32, 166, 185, 196, 210, 255, 266. See also Kohler, “Isaac Markens,” 131–32.

5. The Chicago Historical Society owns an important collection of Markens-Lincoln letters. A number of these remarkable communications, together with a helpful summary of the Lincoln-Markens relationship, appear in Paul M. Angle, ed., with the assistance of Richard G. Case, *A Portrait of Abraham Lincoln in Letters by His Oldest Son* (Chicago: Chicago Historical Society, 1968). Courtesy the Chicago History Museum.

6. On Markens and the “original copy” of the Gettysburg Address, see Martin P. Johnson, “Who Stole the Gettysburg Address?” *Journal of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 24, no. 2 (Summer 2003): 1–19. On Markens and the Bixby letter, see Jason Emerson, “America's Most Famous Letter,” *American Heritage Magazine* 57, no. 1 (February/March 2006), reproduced at http://www.americanheritage.com/articles/magazine/ah/2006/1/2006_1_41.shtml (accessed September 5, 2012).

7. A necrology on Markens indicated that in 1918 he published a monograph titled “Origin of Famous Lincoln Saying,” and that in 1917 he issued an article titled “Manassas, an Israelite of Colonial Days.” See Kohler, “Isaac Markens,” 132.

8. On the resolutions calling for Illinois to mark the centennial of Lincoln's birth, see *Lincoln Centennial: Addresses Delivered at the Memorial Exercises held at Springfield, Illinois, February 12, 1908* (Springfield, Ill.: Journal Company Printers, 1908), 4. See also Isaac Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews* (New York: Isaac Markens, 1909), 8.

9. Emanuel Hertz, “Lincoln and the Jews: An Appreciation of the Work of the Late Isaac Markens” (delivered over WRNY, Hotel Roosevelt, September 2, 1928), 7, 5. This speech was subsequently published as an offprint and distributed widely. An electronic copy is available on the website of the Internet Archive, http://www28.us.archive.org/stream/lincolnjews00hert#page/n0/mode/2up (accessed September 10, 2012).

10. Evidently Markens completed some thirty chapters of his biographical study on Lincoln. Unfortunately, the manuscript appears to have been lost. See Angle, *Portrait of Abraham Lincoln in Letters*, xii.

11. On Hertz, see obituaries in the *New York Herald Tribune*, May 24, 1940, and the *New York Times*, May 24, 1940.

12. The Washington Heights Synagogue was located on 161st Street in New York City. Hertz was the president of the synagogue in 1915, when the congregation erected its first building. See *American Hebrew and Jewish Messenger*, September 24, 1915, 594.

13. Obituary, *New York Herald Tribune*, May 24, 1940.

14. Hertz, *Address on Abraham Lincoln* (Washington, D.C.: Government Press, 1924).

15. Hertz, “Lincoln and the Jews,” 7, 5–6.

16. Emanuel Hertz, *Abraham Lincoln: A New Portrait*, 2 vols. (New York: Horace Liveright, 1931), 1:7.

17. Emanuel Hertz, *Lincoln Talks: An Oral Biography* (New York: Viking Press, 1939), xii; *Who's Who in American Jewry* (New York: Jewish Biographical Bureau, 1926), 262; obituary, *New York Herald Tribune*, May 24, 1940.

18. Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), viii. For Markens's preliminary work, see *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 46–47.

19. Hertz's volume contains more than twenty-five eulogies and sermons written in 1865 alone, and the remainder of the volume contains more than forty additional sermons and addresses written from 1888 to 1927. Recently, two fine collections of nineteenth-century topical Jewish sermons have appeared: Naomi W. Cohen, *What the Rabbis Said: The Public Discourse of Nineteenth-Century American Rabbis* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), contains excerpts of sermons focusing on a variety of issues, and Elliot Gertel, *Jewish Belief and Practice in Nineteenth Century America: Seminal Essays by Outstanding Pulpit Rabbis of the Era* (Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 2006), is an anthology of eighteen essays written by eleven rabbis from 1856 to 1900.

20. On Newman and the history of the Abraham Lincoln Book Store, see Barbara Hughett, *The Civil War Round Table: Fifty*

Years of Scholarship and Fellowship (Chicago: Civil War Round Table, 1990), and John Y. Simon, "A Memorial to Ralph G. Newman," *Illinois Heritage* 3, nos. 1–2 (Fall–Winter 2000): 26–28. Daniel Weinberg, the current owner of the Abraham Lincoln Book Store, had been Newman's partner for several years prior to his acquiring total ownership of the store. Weinberg remembered that Newman identified himself as a gastronomic Jew (that is to say, one whose Jewishness comes from enjoying so-called Jewish food).

21. For more on the founders of the Civil War Round Table in Chicago, see Hughett, *Civil War Round Table*. On Gertz, who later in life served as president of the Greater Chicago Council of the American Jewish Congress, see Barbara Hughett, *To Life: The Story of a Chicago Lawyer* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1994). On Eisenschiml, see Otto Eisenschiml, *O. E.: Historian without an Armchair* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1963), and William Hanchett, "The Historian as Gamesman: Otto Eisenschiml, 1880–1963," *Civil War History* 36 (1990): 5–16. In addition to Gertz and Eisenschiml, other Jewish pioneers of the Civil War Round Table included Seymour J. Frank (1898–1956) and Alexander Isaacs (1907–75). On Frank, see *Chicago Daily Tribune*, September 14, 1956, C11. On Isaacs, see *Chicago Tribune*, February 20, 1975, B18.

22. On Harold Holzer, see Holzer homepage, http://www.haroldholzer.com/hh_2_bio.html (accessed August 30, 2012). On the Shapell Manuscript Foundation, see Shapell homepage, http://www.shapell.org/ (accessed August 30, 2012).

23. James G. Randall, "Has the Lincoln Theme Been Exhausted?" *American Historical Review* 41, no. 2 (January 1936): 270–94.

24. On Korn, see Gary P. Zola, "Bertram Wallace Korn," in *Encyclopedia of American Jewish History*, ed. Stephen H. Norwood and Eunice Pollack (Santa Barbara: ABC-Clio, 2007); and Kerry M. Olitzky, Lance J. Sussman, and Malcolm H. Stern, *Reform Judaism in America: A Biographical Dictionary and Sourcebook* (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1993), 112–13. Due to his prodigious scholarship, his work as the rabbi of a large and historic metropolitan congregation, and his distinguished career as a military chaplain, Korn emerged as one of the most prominent Reform rabbis and highly regarded American Jewish historians during the post–World War II years.

25. Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1951). For quotes, see 206, 203.

26. On Roosevelt's attitude toward Lincoln, see Jason R. Jividen, "Theodore Roosevelt's Use and Abuse of Abraham Lincoln" (unpublished paper prepared for presentation at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, Louisiana, 2007). See also Merrill D. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000); William F. Hanna, "Theodore Roosevelt and the Lincoln Image," *Lincoln Herald* 94, no. 4 (Spring 1992): 2–9; and David McCullough, *Morningside on Horseback: The Story of an Extraordinary Family, a Vanished Way of Life, and the Unique Child Who Became Theodore Roosevelt* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001), 59, 367.

27. For quote, see Hermann Hagedorn, ed., *The Works of Theodore Roosevelt*, vol. 20 (New York: Scribner's, 1926), 375–76.

28. Q. David Bowers, *More Adventures with Rare Coins: Fifty Favorite Numismatic Stories* (Wolfeboro, N.H.: Bowers and Merena Galleries, 2002), 29–30.

29. Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 196.

30. Bowers, *Rare Coins*, 30.

31. Ibid., 31. See also David Margolick, "Foolish Penny," *New York Times*, February 11, 2007. For quote, see the informative obituary on Brenner, *New York Times*, April 6, 1924, 27. In the fall of 1909, Brenner wrote to Farran Zerbe, the president of the American Numismatic Association: "It is mighty hard for me to express my sentiments with regard to the initials on the cent. The name of an artist on the coin is essential for the student of history as it enables him to trace environments and conditions of the time said coin was produced. Much fume has been made about my initials as a means of advertisement; such is not the case.…The cent not alone represents in part my art, but represents a type of art of our period." See Bowers, *Rare Coins*, 31.

32. Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 196. For a detailed analysis explicating how Brenner's work is a confluence of his status as an immigrant and his belief in the American ideal, see Paul U. Kellogg, "Two New Worlds and a Sculptor's Clay," *Survey* 35 (October 1915–March 1916): 19–22.

33. On Lincoln in music and the arts, see the website of the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, http://abrahamlincoln200.org/lincolns-legacy/music-arts/default.aspx (accessed August 23, 2012). For more on Lincoln and material culture, see Fred Reed, *Abraham Lincoln: The Image of His Greatness* (Atlanta: Whitman, 2009).

34. Stephen J. Whitfield, *In Search of American Jewish Culture* (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 1999), 30.

35. The famous quotation comes from Anaïs Nin, *Seduction of the Minotaur* (Denver, Colo.: A. Swallow, 1961), 124. Coincidentally, Nin uses this phrase in a novel, and her fictional character incorrectly ascribes the phrase's origin to the Talmud. For an interesting discussion on this confusion, see Jonathan K. Crane and Joseph B. Kadane, "Seeing Things: The Internet, The Talmud, and Anaïs Nin," *Review of Rabbinic Judaism* 11, no. 2 (2008): 342–45.

36. See obituary in the *New York Times*, April 27, 1922.

37. See Robert N. Rosen, *Confederate Charleston: An Illustrated History of the City and its People during the Civil War*

(Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1994), 88.

38. The “Old Capitol Prison” was originally built in 1800 as a tavern and boardinghouse. After the capitol building was burned in the War of 1812, government business took place in the “Old Capitol Prison” until a new capitol building could be built. See William E. Doster, *Lincoln and Episodes of the Civil War* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1915), 74–111.

39. *New York Daily Tribune*, February 13, 1901.

40. For more information on Solomons's career and his biography, see “Guide to the Papers of Adolphus Simeon Solomons (1826–1910)” on the website of the American Jewish Historical Society, http://findingaids.cjh.org/?pID=364847 (accessed August 28, 2012).

41. *American Hebrew* 84, no. 15 (February 12, 1909): 386–87, 394.

42. Joan Sturhahn, *Carvalho, Artist-Photographer-Adventurer-Patriot: Portrait of a Forgotten American* (Merrick, N.Y.: Richwood, 1976), esp. 162–65. See also Justin G. Turner, *A Note on Solomon Nuñes Carvalho and His Portrait of Abraham Lincoln* (Los Angeles: Plantin Press, 1960). On Carvalho's life, see Arlene B. Hirschfelder, *Photo Odyssey: Solomon Carvalho's Remarkable Western Adventure, 1853–1854* (New York: Clarion Books, 2000). See also Bertram W. Korn's introduction to Solomon Nuñes Carvalho, *Incidents of Travel and Adventure in the Far West* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1954), 13–52.

43. Frank Dempster Sherman and Clinton Scollard, *The Poems of Frank Dempster Sherman* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1917).

44. There is some confusion about Ezekiel's bust of Lincoln. Evidently, Ezekiel produced two bronze busts from his original clay mold. One of these busts is currently located at the Crescent Hill Branch of the Louisville Free Public Library, and a second bust is on display at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles. Although some histories indicate Ezekiel sculpted the bust in 1880, the artist himself recalls the commission came in 1896. Historians await more accurate and detailed information about the provenance of this piece of art. See Joseph Gutmann and Stanley F. Chyet, eds., *Moses Jacob Ezekiel: Memoirs from the Baths of Diocletian* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975), 365.

45. Ibid, 272, 365.

46. Alice Kalish, *Max Kalish as I Knew Him* (Los Angeles: Alice Kalish, 1969), 32. While he was a student at Gettysburg College (class of 1866), Bikle attended the dedication of the National Cemetery and heard Abraham Lincoln deliver the Gettysburg Address. See Inventory of Bikle's Papers at Gettysburg College, http://gettysburg.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/singleitem/collection/p126301c0118/id/95/rec/4 (accessed September 2, 2012).

47. *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, September 23, 1927. © 1927 The Plain Dealer; all rights reserved; used with permission.

48. *Cleveland Press*, February 12, 1932.

49. On Rumshinsky, see Bret Charles Werb, “Rumshinsky's Greatest Hits: A Chronological Survey of Yiddish-American Songs, 1910–1931” (M.A. thesis, University of California, Los Angeles, 1987). See also Joseph Rumshinsky, Milken Archive of Jewish Music, http://www.milkenarchive.org/people/view/all/506/Joseph+Rumshinsky (accessed September 1, 2012). I would like to express my deep appreciation to Thomas Kernan, a musicology doctoral candidate at the University of Cincinnati's College-Conservatory of Music, for bringing the works of Weinberg and Rumshinsky to my attention and for sharing his fine images of the compositions with me.

50. See Michael Paul Rogin, *Blackface, White Noise: Jewish Immigrants in the Hollywood Melting Pot* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

51. I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Gil Ribak, executive director of the Institute on American-Jewish Israeli Relations at American Jewish University, for his assistance with this Yiddish translation.

52. For more on Weinberg, see Milken Archive of Jewish Music, http://www.milkearchive.org/people/view/all/550/Jacob+Weinberg (accessed September 1, 2012).

53. On the history of the Dessoff Choir, see the choir's website at http://www.dessoff.org/new/history/ (accessed September 14, 2012). This same website also confirms the date that Weinberg's “Gettysburg Address” was performed at Carnegie Hall.

54. Aaron Copland had heard the original version of Weinberg's “Gettysburg Address” before he began work on his “Lincoln Portrait.” It is difficult to know whether Copland's memorable technique of having quotations from Lincoln's speeches read with musical accompaniment influenced Weinberg's 1943 version of his “Gettysburg Address” or if Copland was actually inspired by Weinberg. See Howard Pollack, *Aaron Copland: The Life and Work of an Uncommon Man* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999), 358. I am deeply indebted to Thomas Kernan, doctoral student at the College-Conservatory of Music, University of Cincinnati, for generously sharing his research on the Weinberg compositions.

55. Jeffrey Magee, *Irving Berlin's American Musical Theater* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 27.

56. Benjamin Sears, *The Irving Berlin Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 106–7.

57. Originally this couplet read “When black folks lived in slavery / Who was it set the darky free?” Robert Kimball and Linda Emmet, eds., *The Complete Lyrics of Irving Berlin* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2001), 353.

58. See Pollack, *Aaron Copland*, 358.

59. Ibid., 23–28. On the parallel between the phrase “And God said” and “And this is what he said,” see Elizabeth Bergman Crist, *Music for the Common Man: Aaron Copland during the Depression and War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 156–58. See also “Insider's Perspective: Aaron Copland's *Lincoln Portrait*” on the website of the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas at Austin, http://www.hrc.utexas.edu/enews/2009/march/insider.html (accessed August 30, 2012).

60. Markens's letter and Lincoln's response, preserved at the Chicago Historical Society, were published in Angle, *Portrait of Abraham Lincoln in Letters*, xi.

61. Markens, *Abraham Lincoln and the Jews*, 12–13.

62. Markens's question: “Can you tell anything more definite than that of Nicolay, on the question of President Lincoln's preference of Andrew Johnson for the Vice Presidency in 1864, or any other facts relating to the matter?”

63. Markens had asked: “Can you tell me the whereabouts of the letter of Queen Victoria to your mother?”

64. February 13, 1918, letter from Robert T. Lincoln to Isaac Markens, from the Robert Todd Lincoln collection at the Chicago History Museum. Published in Angle, *Portrait of Abraham Lincoln in Letters*, 55–56.

65. Hertz, *Tribute*, xix–xx.

66. Bertram W. Korn, *Eventful Years and Experiences* (Cincinnati: American Jewish Archives, 1954), 16–20, 108. General Orders No. 332, AGO, Oct. 9, 1863 (Record Group 94); Special Orders No. 41, Headquarters of the Army, Feb. 18, 1869 (RG 94); Records of Volunteer Officers of the Quartermaster Department, Civil War, 1861–65 (RG 92); War Department Records, National Archives, Washington, D.C. Raphall to Lincoln, March 1, 1864 (in appreciation of a favor done Levy after his discharge), S. F. Chalfin to Levy, July 16, 1864, Robert Todd Lincoln Collection of Papers of Abraham Lincoln, Library of Congress, where “Cherie” M. Levy's name is incorrectly recorded as “Chemie,” Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, http://memory.loc.gov.

67. *Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society* 48, no. 2 (1955): 187–90.

68. Harold Holzer, *Lincoln and the Jews: The Last Best Hope of Earth* (Los Angeles: Skirball Cultural Center, 2002). For biographical information on Harold Holzer, see his website at http://www.haroldholzer.com/hh_2_bio.html (accessed August 30, 2012). With regard to the “Golden Rule,” it was Hillel who said: “What is hateful to thee, do not do unto thy fellow man: this is the whole Law; the rest is mere commentary” (*Babylonian Talmud Shabbat* 31a). Almost the same thing was taught by the Apostle Paul; see Galatians 5:14 and Romans 13:8. The quotation “the beauty of Israel was slain upon the high places” comes from 2 Samuel 1:19.

11. “Lincoln! Thou Shouldst Be Living at This Hour!” Lincoln as a Moral Compass for American Jews

1. President Woodrow Wilson coined the phrase “watchful waiting” in his annual message to Congress on December 2, 1913, when he said: “We shall not, I believe, be obliged to alter our policy of watchful waiting.”

2. Mary Wright-Davis, *The Book of Lincoln* (New York: George H. Doran, 1919), 340. For quotation and other poetic appeals for Lincoln's return, see Merrill D. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 315.

3. It is difficult to determine who first posed the question “What would Lincoln do?” It seems that Andrew Carnegie made this inquiry in 1898 in a speech he gave comparing Lincoln and McKinley unfavorably. On Taft, see *New York Times*, February 13, 1908, 5. See also Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 385.

4. This quotation comes from Lincoln's first inaugural address, March 4, 1861. See website of *Abraham Lincoln Online*, http://showcase.netins.net/web/creative/lincoln/speeches/1inaug.htm (accessed September 1, 2012).

5. *President Harding's Address at the Dedication of the Lincoln Memorial* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 8. See also President Calvin Coolidge's “Address at Gettysburg Battlefield,” May 30, 1928, on website of the Calvin Coolidge Foundation, http://www.calvin-coolidge.org/address-at-gettysburg-battle-field.html (accessed September 2, 2012).

6. Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Address at the Dedication of the Memorial on the Gettysburg Battlefield, Gettysburg, Pennsylvania,” July 3, 1938, on the American Presidency Project website, http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=15669 (accessed September 5, 2012).

7. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 320–22.

8. Harry S. Truman, “Address to the NAACP at the Lincoln Memorial, June 28, 1947,” on the PBS website *The American Experience*, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/features/primary-resources/truman-naacp47/, (accessed September 1, 2012).

9. Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 352–53.

10. Alex Ross, “Voice of the Century,” *New Yorker*, April 13, 2009, on the *New Yorker* website archive, http://www.newyorker.com/arts/critics/atlarge/2009/04/13/090413crat_atlarge_ross (accessed August 28, 2012). See also Peterson, *Lincoln in American Memory*, 353.

11. *Jewish Exponent*, February 12, 1909. The quote comes from the speech Lincoln delivered at the First Republican State Convention of Illinois in Bloomington, May 29, 1856. See "Lincoln's Lost Speech," *McClure's Magazine*, September 1896, 319–31. The quote is more frequently given as "Those who deny freedom to others deserve it not for themselves; and, under the rule of a just God, cannot long retain it." The Solis-Cohen address also appears in Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 342–48.

12. *Jewish Exponent*, February 26, 1909, 9. The text of Harrison's 1909 sermon on Lincoln does not seem to have survived, but Harrison gave another address titled "What Would Lincoln Do?" in 1914.

13. *American Israelite*, March 3, 1921, 4; *Jewish Exponent*, December 22, 1922, 10.

14. *Jewish Exponent*, February 12, 1937, 4.

15. *Jewish Advocate*, February 8, 1945, 8.

16. For the full text of this address, see the Joachim Prinz website, http://www.joachimprinz.com/civilrights.htm (accessed September 5, 2012).

17. *American Israelite*, February 10, 1949, 4.

18. *Jewish Advocate*, February 20, 1986, 11. On the NCCJ, see Kevin Michael Schultz, *Tri-Faith America: How Catholics and Jews Held Postwar America to Its Protestant Promise* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). On National Brotherhood Week, see ibid., 65.

19. It was Mario Cuomo who delivered an address titled "Abraham Lincoln and Our Unfinished Business." Years earlier, Adlai Stevenson gave similar speeches titled "Unfinished Work of Emancipation" and "The Struggle for Human Liberty." See Waldo Warder Braden, *Building the Myth: Selected Speeches Memorializing Abraham Lincoln* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1990), 218–44.

20. *Jewish Advocate*, February 9, 1956, A2.

21. Ibid.

22. See http://archives.library.cofc.edu/findingaids/mss1075.html (accessed January 6, 2012). I am deeply grateful to Dr. Dale Rosengarten, curator of the Jewish Heritage Collection, Special Collections Department, Addlestone Library at the College of Charleston, Charleston, South Carolina, for bringing this document to my attention and for granting permission to publish its contents. On Raisin, see *CCAR Yearbook* 56 (1946): 267–68.

23. This quote is from Douglass's "Oration in Memory of Abraham Lincoln," delivered at the unveiling of the Freedmen's Monument in Memory of Abraham Lincoln in Lincoln Park, Washington, D.C., April 14, 1876. The precise quotation is: "Any man can say things that are true of Abraham Lincoln, but no man can say anything that is new of Abraham Lincoln." See website of the University of Rochester Frederick Douglass Project, http://www.lib.rochester.edu/index.cfm?PAGE=4402 (accessed September 15, 2012).

24. Henry Woodfin Grady (1850–89), a journalist and orator, distinguished himself as a brilliant and entertaining spokesman for the notion of a "new South." Ironically, Raisin's call for racial reconciliation does not align with Grady's perspective. Grady believed that whites would remain supreme in the "new South." See Harold E. Davis, *Henry Grady's New South: Atlanta, a Brave and Beautiful City* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1990).

25. James Sloan Gibbons (1810–92), a committed abolitionist, is credited for having written the lyrics to the famous Civil War song "We Are Coming, Father Abraham, 300,000 More." Raisin uses a common variant lyric, wherein the number is 600,000! He was motivated by his determination to assist the nation win a fight that, in his mind, was aimed at bringing slavery to an end. See Helen Kendrick Johnson, Frederic Dean, Reginald De Koven, and Gerrit Smith, *The World's Best Music*, vol. 4 (New York: University Society, 1902), 880–83.

26. In the original verse, this phrase is "kindly-earnest."

27. Raisin is quoting the final verses of James Russell Lowell's (1819–91) famous poem "Commemoration Ode," first delivered at Harvard University on July 21, 1865. Later, he added a strophe on Lincoln.

28. Charles M. Sheldon, *In His Steps: "What Would Jesus Do?"* (Chicago: Advance Publishing, 1898).

29. A youth leader at Calvary Reformed Church in Holland, Michigan, named Janie Tinklenberg owned a copy of Sheldon's book. In 1989, Tinklenberg began asking her students Sheldon's question. Taking note of the popularity of friendship bracelets and "wait until marriage" rings, Tinklenberg approached the Lesco Corporation in Holland to interest them in producing woven bracelets with the letters "WWJD?"—an acronym for "What would Jesus do?" The acronym and the phrase became an immediate sensation.

30. On Harrison's 1909 address, see note 12.

31. Hertz, *Tribute*, 447–57.

32. For more on the bureau and the Central Jewish Institute, see Alexander M. Dushkin, *Jewish Education in New York* (New York: Bureau of Jewish Education, 1918).

33. The text of the program also appears in Isaac B. Berkson, *Theories of Americanization; A Critical Study, with Special Emphasis on the Jewish Group* (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1920), 217.

34. In English, this familiar quotation from *Pirkei Avot* 1:2 is often rendered: “The world stands on three pillars: on Torah, on worship, and on acts of loving kindness.”

35. Berkson, *Theories of Americanization*, 217.

36. *New York Times*, February 13, 1923, 3.

37. The “newly revised” edition of the *Union Prayerbook* for sabbaths, festivals, and weekdays appeared in 1940, and a volume for the High Holy Days appeared in 1945. See Michael A. Meyer, *Response to Modernity: A History of the Reform Movement in Judaism* (New York: Oxford University Press), 321.

38. Samuel Cohon Papers, MS-276, box 21, folder 7, American Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, Ohio. Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. Cohon indicated at the top of this sermon that he had composed another sermon on Lincoln the year before, in 1920, titled “In the Light of Lincoln.”

39. Today the congregation's name is Anshe Emet.

40. Both Shmaya and Avtalyon (“Abtalyon” in text) were rabbinic sages who lived during the first century B.C.E.

41. Deuteronomy 6:5.

42. Philip A. Langh, “Jewish Ideals in Lincoln,” *Sentinel* 58, no. 7 (February 13, 1925): 8, 35. This sermon also appeared in Hertz, *Tribute*, 511–15.

43. *Jewish Advocate*, February 14, 1933, 2.

44. Samuel H. Goldenson Papers, 1918–1947, MS-81, box 2, folder 4, AJA.

45. The American playwright Robert E. Sherwood (1896–1955) wrote *Abe Lincoln in Illinois* in 1938. The three-act play focused on Lincoln's childhood and pre-presidential years and earned Sherwood the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 1939.

46. Ferdinand M. Isserman Papers, 1870–1971, MS-6, box 15, folder 5, AJA.

47. This draft of the sermon can be found in the Charles E. Shulman Papers, 1917–1969, MS-124, box 6, folder 9, AJA.

48. Brackets are in the original.

49. Tehilla Lichtenstein Papers, 1927–70, MS-22, box 2, folder 1, AJA.

50. Brackets are in the original.

51. Brackets are in the original.

52. Brackets are in the original.

53. Rabbi Soloff is citing a famous quotation that appears numerous times in the classical writings of the ancient rabbis. One famous citation comes from the Talmud, Tractate *Pesachim* 52, where we find the phrase *sh'mitoch sh'lo lishma, ba-lishma* (meaning “for out of [doing something good] with an ulterior motive there comes [something good] for its own sake”).

54. A sermon by Rabbi Rav A. Soloff, East End Temple, New York, N.Y., February 12, 1960, Abraham Lincoln Nearprint file, AJA.

55. *Jewish Chronicle*, February 12, 1970, 4. Courtesy Pittsburgh Jewish Newspaper Project–Rodef Shalom Congregation Archives. The final quote is from the Fifteenth Amendment.

12. Lincoln Miscellany

1. Barry Schwartz, *Abraham Lincoln and the Forge of National Memory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 312.

2. Burke McCarty, *Little Sermons in Socialism by Abraham Lincoln*, an offprint from the *Chicago Daily Socialist*, 1910, 2. A digital copy of this pamphlet is available on the website of the Internet Archive, http://archive.org/stream/littlesermonsins00mcca#page/n0/mode/2up (accessed September 12, 2012).

3. Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 204–8.

4. Ibid., 204.

5. Julian Levinson, *Exiles on Main Street: Jewish American Writers and American Literary Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 139.

6. Beth S. Wenger, *History Lessons: The Creation of American Jewish Heritage* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 91–92; Merle Bachman, *Recovering “Yiddishland”: Threshold Moments in American Literature* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2008), 121.

7. Sarah Sackman, “The Identity Politics of Jews and African-Americans in the Spanish Civil War” (undergraduate prize essay, Queens College, Cambridge, U.K., 2006), 12. A copy of this essay is in the American Jewish Archives (SC-15985d), Cincinnati, Ohio. Courtesy of The Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives (hereafter AJA), at the Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion, Cincinnati, Ohio. A digitized copy is available on the website of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, http://www.alba-valb.org/resources/document-library/the-identity-politics-of-jews-and-african-

americans-during-the-spanish-civil-war/?searchterm=winner (accessed September 6, 2012). See also Peter N. Carroll, *The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade: Americans in the Spanish Civil War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994). For quotation, see Marion Merriman and Warren Lerude, *American Commander in Spain: Robert Hale Merriman and the Abraham Lincoln Brigade* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1986), 89.

8. The "Reply to the New York Workingmen's Democratic Republican Association" was delivered on March 21, 1864. On Arthur Szyk and his Americana, see the website of the Arthur Szyk Society, http://www.szyk.org/america (accessed September 12, 2012).

9. For two very different interpretations regarding the history of the Gettysburg Address, see Gabor S. Boritt, *The Gettysburg Gospel: The Lincoln Speech That Nobody Knows* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2006), and Garry Wills, *Lincoln at Gettysburg: The Words That Remade America* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992).

10. Boritt, *Gettysburg Gospel*, 201.

11. Ron Chernow, *The Warburgs: The Twentieth-Century Odyssey of a Remarkable Jewish Family* (New York: Random House, 1993), 101.

12. Leonard Baker, *Days of Sorrow and Pain: Leo Baeck and the Berlin Jews* (New York: Macmillan, 1978), 110, 257.

13. Ibid., 326.

14. Dov Noy, "Archiving and Presenting Folk Literature in an Ethnological Museum," *Journal of American Folklore* 75, no. 295 (January–March 1962): 23–28.

15. On the ring, see ibid., 25. For the most detailed overview of the phrase's development, see Archer Taylor, "This Too Will Pass," in *Volksüberlieferung: Festschrift für Kurt Ranke*, ed. F. Harkort, K. C. Peeters, and R. Wildhaber (Göttingen: Schwartz, 1968), 345–50. It is possible that Lincoln read the story in a book of legends compiled by Edward FitzGerald, *Polonius: A Collection of Wise Saws and Modern Instances* (London: W. Pickering, 1852). On p. 120, there is an anecdote titled "Solomon's Seal": "The Sultan asked Solomon for a Signet motto that should hold good for Adversity or Prosperity. Solomon gave him, 'this also shall pass away.'"

16. On Stanley Kunitz, see obituary, *Jewish Telegraphic Agency*, May 19, 2006. Kunitz shared his thoughts about his Jewishness with Gary Pacernick; see Pacernick, *Meaning and Memory: Interviews with Fourteen Jewish Poets* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2001), 39–47. See also Jeanne Braham, *The Light Within the Light: Portraits of Donald Hall, Richard Wilbur, Maxine Kumin, and Stanley Kunitz* (Boston: David R. Godine, 2007).

17. Schwartz, *Forge of National Memory*, 14–15.

18. Ibid., xi.

19. Maslow hypothesized that psychological fulfillment came in steps. The basic level of fulfillment came from having physical needs met, and the next highest level was the human's desire to have social needs met. He called the highest level of fulfillment "self-actualization," wherein humans managed to fulfill their potentiality.

20. For quote, see website *Biographies of Psychologists*, http://psy.rin.ru/eng/article/48–101.html (accessed February 17, 2012).

21. For quotes, see Abraham H. Maslow, *The Farther Reaches of Human Nature* (New York: Arkana Books, 1971), 260. See also pp. 229 and 351.

22. Andrew Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007), 72–76.

23. Wenger, *History Lessons*, 91.

24. The author is obviously referring to a prominent list of abolitionists from the antebellum era: Horace Greeley (1811–72), Wendell Phillips (1811–84), John Brown (1800–1859), and John Greenleaf Whittier (1807–92).

25. This is a reference to the "Great Wall" of China. The writer is stressing that the obstacles obstructing the way for contemporary youth are as formidable as the Great Wall of China.

26. *Forverts*, February 10, 1900. I would like to express my gratitude to Rabbi Sholom Kalmanson of Cincinnati for his generous help in translating this text into English.

27. Charles Carleton Coffin left a famous eyewitness account of Lincoln's visit to Richmond on April 3, 1865. See Coffin, "Late Scenes in Richmond," *Atlantic Monthly*, June 1865, 754. Coffin also wrote about this later in life; see *Freedom Triumphant; the Fourth Period of the War of the Rebellion from September, 1864, to Its Close* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1891), 436–40.

28. On Lincoln's sleepless nights, see David Herbert Donald, *Lincoln* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 390.

29. Reuben Iceland, a Yiddish poet and translator, was born in Radomysl Wielki, in present-day Poland. He immigrated to the United States in 1903. All of the English translations for the Yiddish poems in this section come from *America in Yiddish Poetry: An Anthology*, selected and translated by Jehiel B. Cooperman and Sarah H. Cooperman (New York: Exposition Press, 1967). Iceland's poem is on pp. 61–63.

30. Ibid., 398–99. Isaac Elhanan Rontch was a Yiddish writer and frequent contributor to *Jewish Currents* magazine.

31. Ibid., 375. Leonid Feinberg was a Yiddish writer and poet who contributed articles and poems to many Yiddish papers in the United States. Born in the Province of Podolia, in present-day Ukraine, Feinberg studied in Odessa and subsequently at the University of Moscow. He immigrated to the United States in the 1920s.

32. Ibid., 418–19. Malka Lee, a Yiddish writer who produced numerous volumes of poetry, was born in Monastrishtsh, Galicia. She immigrated to the United States in 1921.

33. The rabbi's outspoken support of President Lincoln during the Civil War resulted in his receiving an honorary membership in the Union League of Philadelphia, despite the fact that Jews were excluded from full membership in that society.

34. Tisha b'Av is a fast day that commemorates the destruction of the First and Second Temples. It has also become a day of general mourning for other major disasters that have befallen the Jewish people.

35. See Robert Alter, *Pen of Iron* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

36. We know that Lincoln had once met the rabbi. Morais came to Washington to ask that a Jewish soldier sentenced to death for desertion be given clemency.

37. Alexander was the first Jew to be elected governor in the United States. He served from 1915 to 1919.

38. On Abraham Alpert (1871?–1939), see obituary in the *New York Times*, September 3, 1939, 19. Alpert, a founder of the Boston chapter of HIAS and author of humorous stories, should not be confused with the Hebrew poet Isaac Rabinowitz (1843–1900), who also took the pen name "Ish Kovno."

39. See Isaiah 37:3.

40. See Numbers 22:38.

41. See Psalm 102:17.

42. *Jewish Messenger*, July 10, 1863, 22.

43. English parody on the Gettysburg Address by the Hebraist Abraham Alpert ("Ish Kovno") was delivered at a reception for the governor of Idaho, Moses Alexander, sponsored by the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society on August 26, 1915, in Faneuil Hall, Boston, Mass. AJA.

44. See www.nal.usda.gov/lincolns-milwaukee-speech (accessed September 5, 2012).

45. See Talmud, *Ta'anit* 21a.

46. Noy, "Archiving and Presenting Folk Literature," 23–28. Noy preserved another story (IFA 126), recorded by Mrs. Heda Jazon from the Turkish storyteller Jehuda Franko. It is told as follows:

> King Solomon once searched for a cure against depression. He assembled his wise men together. They meditated for a long time and then gave him the following advice: Make yourself a ring and have hereon engraved the words "This too will pass." The King carried out the advice. He had the ring made and used to wear it. Every time he felt sad and depressed, he looked at the ring, whereon his mood changed and he would feel cheerful.
>
> A folktale hunter who is interested mainly in the plot, type and motifs of the story may ask why King Solomon, the wisest of the wise, needed to assemble his advisors and ask them for help. But our ethnological experience directed us in a quite different way. We asked the narrator: Was there ever such a ring? Has anybody ever seen it? If Solomon's children inherited it, to whom did they leave it? And here comes the answer—the narrator proves the truth of his story by showing a ring. Of course it is not the original ring of King Solomon. But it was copied from a ring, which was copied from a ring, which was copied from a ring, which was copied from the original ring of Solomon. And there is even a specimen of it, a silver ring, engraved with three Hebrew letters GZY, the initials for the three Hebrew words *Gam Zu Ya-avor* "This too will pass."

See p. 25.

47. Noy wrote: "This GZY amulet in the form of a ring is known not only in the Orient. In the 1952 issue of *Yeda-Am*, the journal of the Israel Folklore Society, photographs were published of a 'good-luck ring' sold commercially by a Jewish company in the U.S.A. during World War II. The ring bore an engraved English inscription, 'For Your Boy in the Service,' and three strange Hebrew letters, which are nothing else than GZY, the Hebrew initials of 'This too will pass.'" See ibid., 25.

48. Text comes from the website of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), which claims it has been verified against the verbatim copy printed in the *Transactions of the Wisconsin State Agricultural Society, 1858–1859*, 287–99, as reprinted in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History* 10, no. 3 (1926–27). See USDA website, http://www.nal.usda.gov/lincolns-milwaukee-speech (accessed September 5, 2012).

49. On Weilerstein, see Jonathan Krasner, "Sadie Rose Weilerstein through the Looking Glass: K'tonton and the American Jewish Zeitgeist," in *The Women Who Reconstructed American Jewish Education, 1910–1965*, ed. Carol K. Ingall (Hanover, N.H.: Brandeis University Press, 2010), 117–41. See also Paula Hyman and Deborah Dash Moore, eds., *Jewish Women in America: An Historical Encyclopedia* (New York: Routledge, 1997), s.v. "Weilerstein, Sadie."

50. Benjamin Edidin Scolnic, "Footsteps on the Ceiling and Idols on the Floor—Integrated Study of History and Story in the Conservative Jewish Day School," in *Curriculum, Community and Commitment: Views of the American Jewish Day School in*

Memory of Bennett I. Solomon, ed. Daniel J. Margolis and Elliot Salo Schoenberg (West Orange, N.J.: Behrman House, 1992), 122–31. © Behrman House., Inc., reprinted with permission, www.behrmanhouse.com.

51. It is hardly uncommon to discover new examples of Lincoln serving as a Jewish educational role model. For example, the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum's blog page, "Out of the Top Hat," recently posted a short story about Lincoln written in simple Hebrew for beginners. The story is an undocumented legend wherein a politician visiting the White House finds Lincoln polishing his own boots. The guest was so surprised by this sight that he blurted out, "What! You shine your own shoes?" Lincoln immediately retorted: "Whose shoes would I be shining—someone else's?" See http://www.alplm.org/blog/tag/jewish (accessed on January 15, 2013).

52. *Pesach* is the Hebrew word for Passover. The seder refers to the Passover service and festival meal wherein the story of the Exodus from Egypt is retold in Jewish homes.

53. The *mahnishtanah* is the recitation of the Four Questions that takes place at the beginning of the Passover seder. *Had Gadya* refers to the cumulative song that is sung at the conclusion of the Passover seder.

54. Sadie Rose Weilerstein, *Little New Angel* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1947), 91–102. Reprinted by permission of the University of Nebraska Press, copyright 1947 by the Jewish Publication Society.

55. Philip Goodman, comp. and ed., *Lincoln's Birthday: Program Material for Jewish Groups* (New York: National Jewish Welfare Board, Jewish Center Division, 1953), 9–10.

56. For the lack of a stone marking Lincoln's mother's grave, see Albert J. Beveridge, *Abraham Lincoln: 1809–1858*, vol. 1 (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1928), 49. On the customs of the Kentucky Baptists, see William E. Barton, *The Life of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 1 (Brooklyn: Bobbs-Merrill, 1925), 116; Stephen B. Oates, *Abraham Lincoln: The Man Behind the Myths* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 36; and Richard R. Current, *The Lincoln Nobody Knows* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1958), 30.

57. *P'shat* refers to the plain or simple meaning in the exegesis of rabbinical texts, and *d'rash* refers to the applied or interpretive meaning.

58. Counting every day Lincoln had of school in his sporadic education, we get a total of about a year of formal training of any kind. See Oates, *Man Behind the Myths*, 37, and Beveridge, *Abraham Lincoln*, 63. See Oates for why Lincoln could not have read by the fireplace.

59. James Hillman, *Healing Fiction* (Berrytown, N.Y.: Station Hill, 1983), 3–49.

60. William Safire, *Freedom* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1987).

61. Excerpted from *Curriculum, Community and Commitment: Views of the American Jewish Day School in Memory of Bennett I. Solomon*, ed. Daniel J. Margolis and Elliot Salo Schoenberg (West Orange, N.J.: Behrman House, 1992), 124–31.

62. Bertram W. Korn, *American Jewry and the Civil War*, 296 n. 1. See the eulogies delivered by I. M. Wise and Lewis N. Dembitz, reprinted in chapter 6, for more on this topic.

63. After composing his Lincoln poem at age ten, Morton Reiser (1919–87) went on to become a distinguished professor of psychiatry at Yale University School of Medicine and one of the nation's pioneers in the field of neuro-psychoanalysis and psychosomatics.

64. See http://msgboard.snopes.com/cgi-bin/ultimatebb.cgi?ubb=get_topic;f=36;t=000819;p=1; and also http://wiki.answers.com/Q/Was_Abraham_Lincoln_Jewish (accessed August 15, 2012).

65. Although the biblical verse in Deuteronomy 6:5 reads "with all my might," a text that is very familiar to Jews, Carpenter recollected that Lincoln cited the biblical verse as it appears in the Book of Matthew (22:37)—"with all my mind."

66. See Leviticus 19:18.

67. Francis B. Carpenter, *The Inner Life of Abraham Lincoln: Six Months at the White House* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1867), 190.

68. Lincoln's address in Trenton, New Jersey, February 21, 1861, www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/trenton1.htm (accessed June 29, 2013).

69. *Eden*, February 10, 1929, 2.

70. Rabbi Jeffrey Hahn's Internet essay has literally gone "viral" and can be found on numerous webpages, often under the title "Was There a Jewish President?" My thanks to Rabbi Kahn for granting permission to reprint the essay. Examples included the website of Planet Berry, http://www.planetberries.com/was-there-a-jewish-president.html (accessed September 12, 2012), and the website of Bible Believers, http://www.biblebelievers.org.au/pandora.htm (accessed September 12, 2012). For similar essays on Lincoln's Jewish heritage, see "Abraham Lincoln and the Jews" on AISH.com, http://www.aish.com/j/f/Abraham_Lincoln_and_the_Jews.html (accessed December 31, 2012). See also the website of the *Riverfront Times*, http://www.riverfronttimes.com/2009–02–11/news/abraham-lincoln-was-a-jew-an-unreal-exclusive/ (accessed September 12, 2012). A website titled *USA the Republic* is one of several unsavory web pages that promulgate this theorem in order to foster bigotry and advance stereotyping, The creators of this URL maintain that Lincoln not only was Jewish but was a blood relative of the Rothschilds! See http://www.usa-the-republic.com/items%200f%20interest/abraham%201incoln.html (accessed September 12, 2012). A professor in the Business School at Rutgers University, Elizabeth C. Hirschman, has suggested that Lincoln was Jewish, asserting that he was part of an anthropological grouping called the Melungeons. See Melungeon.com

website at http://www.melungeons.com/articles/mar2005.htm (accessed September 12, 2012). Finally, for an unabashedly anti-Semitic twist on Lincoln's Jewishness, see Lyndle J. Gharst, "So You Thought Lincoln Was a Hero: King Lincoln's Reign of Terror" on the website of Israel Elect, http://www.israelect.com/reference/WillieMartin/LINCOLN.htm (accessed September 12, 2012).

71. *Midrash Tanhuma* refers to three separate collections of rabbinic legends drawn largely from the Bible. Scholars generally believe that these collections were redacted and compiled sometime between 400 and 600 C.E.

72. *Nefesh* or *neshama* is Hebrew for "soul."

73. In the written text of this sermon, Raskin indicated that his readers would learn more about the mystical concept of the *pintele yid* by reading an essay titled "An Essential Point" written by an unidentified author, "Philologos." Raskin noted that this essay appeared in the *Forward* on November 24, 2006. It can be read on the online website of the *Forward*, http://forward.com/articles/9020/an-essential-point/ (accessed September 12, 2012).

74. *Chevrei* is Hebrew for "my friends."

75. This sermon is found on the website of Congregation Beth Torah, Richardson, Texas, www.congregationbethtorah.org/congregation/pdf/Abraham_Lincoln_and_the_Pintele_Yid.pdf (accessed September 10, 2012). A copy of this sermon is in the AJA, SC-15983. Courtesy of Rabbi Adam J. Raskin.

Epilogue

1. Philip Roth, *Portnoy's Complaint* (New York: Random House, 1969), 247.

2. Neal Simon, *Brighton Beach Memoirs* (Toronto, Canada: Samuel French, 1984), 37.

3. See A. O. Scott, "Daniel Day-Lewis in Steven Spielberg's film 'Lincoln,'" *New York Times*, November 8, 2012, http://movies.nytimes.com/2012/11/09/movies/lincoln-by-steven-spielberg-stars-daniel-day-lewis.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0 (accessed December 31, 2012); Ty Burr, "'Lincoln' Carries the Weight of History," *Boston Globe*, November 8, 2012, http://www.boston.com/ae/movies/2012/11/08/steven-spielberg-with-tony-kushner-with-help-from-daniel-day-lewis-tell-one-our-country-greatest-stories-using-dialogue-filled/gZ01bEjx4TkCDcmNQBSwZK/story.html (accessed on December 31, 2012); and Gael Fashingbauer Cooper, "Spielberg's 'Lincoln' Forces Movie goers to Care about Backroom Politics" in *NBCNews.com*, November 9, 2012, http://entertainment.nbcnews.com/_news/2012/11/09/15024846-spielbergs-lincoln-forces-moviegoers-to-care-about-backroom-politics?lite (accessed on December 31, 2012).

4. J. Hoberman, "Avraham Lincoln Avinu: Spielberg's Timely New Civil War Biopic Portrays a Man Leading His People to the Gates of the Promised Land," *Tablet Magazine*, November 9, 2012, http://www.tabletmag.com/jewish-arts-and-culture/116078/avraham-linoln-avinu (accessed on December 31, 2012).

5. Tom Teicholz, "The First Jewish President? Lincoln, in the Abrahamic Tradition," *LA Jewish Journal*, JewishJournal.com, November 14, 2012, http://www.jewishjournal.com/cover_story/article/the_first_jewish_president_lincoln_in_the_abrahamic_tradition (accessed on December 31, 2012).

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid. Regarding the "Old Hollywood" tradition of Jews using the movies to redefine American history, see Neal Gabler, *An Empire of Their Own: How the Jews Invented Hollywood* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1988).

8. Andrew Ferguson, *Land of Lincoln: Adventures in Abe's America* (New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 2007), 267–72.

9. The quote comes from an address of Rabbi Bernard Revel, delivered at the Centenary Celebration of Lincoln's 100th Birthday, New York, February 12, 1909. See Emanuel Hertz, ed., *Abraham Lincoln: The Tribute of the Synagogue* (New York: Bloch Publishing, 1927), 361.

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